



Greater Manchester Weekly Winter Stakeholder Briefing

11th January 2024 – Issue 7

This weekly briefing is intended to update stakeholders on how services in Greater Manchester are performing and how we work together to manage demand and provide care and support to the public.

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Media statement

Mark Fisher, chief executive of NHS Greater Manchester

“Staff have worked incredibly hard to provide care around-the-clock, and keep people safe during the strikes, but that work doesn’t end today. Winter pressures and the current cold snap means the NHS and social care providers continue to be extremely busy.

“Cold weather can have serious consequences for health, and old people, and those with heart or lung conditions can be particularly at risk. If you have a pre-existing medical condition, you should heat your home to a temperature that is comfortable for you, heating the rooms you use most. We urge people to take extra care of themselves and to check in with their loved ones to ensure they are staying safe and keeping warm.

“If you need urgent medical help and you’re not sure where to go, use NHS 111, including the online chat to get assessed and directed to the right place for you.”

Weekly narrative

This week continues to see several pressures across all services. A few hospitals remain particularly pressured with high numbers of attendances at emergency departments, long waiting times, challenged patient flow and staff shortages.

All partners across Greater Manchester’s health and social care system have been working to mitigate disruption from industrial action which finished on Tuesday morning. Work is underway to reschedule appointments and operations.

While industrial action may have ended, winter pressures and the cold weather means that all services continue to work under significant pressure. The public can keep helping by continuing to use NHS services appropriately, picking the right service for their needs; and keeping emergency departments for life-threatening injuries or emergencies. People should ensure they are up to date on their vaccines and that repeat prescriptions are ordered in advance.

People can also help by supporting family and friends get home as soon as practically possible when they are ready to be discharged from hospital.

Primary care data

There are approximately 1,800 primary care providers, with a workforce of around 22,000.

- ✚ Dentistry – of 229 practices reporting, 33% of dental practices are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 20% of practices facing extreme



demand.

- ✚ General practice - of 273 practices reporting, 29% of GP practices are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 2% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ Optometry - of 83 practices reporting, 7% of optical sites are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 2% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ Pharmacy – of 112 pharmacies reporting, 27% of sites are feeling significantly challenged and 11% are feeling challenged but coping.

Note, work is underway to encourage more practices to use the pulse check so that support can be provided where appropriate.

Urgent and emergency care data

NHS England publish a weekly online report each Thursday showing verified data across provider organisations including all hospital trusts. You can access the latest urgent and emergency care 'sit rep' here: [Statistics » Urgent and Emergency Care Daily Situation Reports 2023-24 \(england.nhs.uk\)](#).

- ✚ For the week 1st to 7th January 2024, there were 22,402 attendances at emergency departments across Greater Manchester, which is around 7% lower than the previous week. Of these attendances, 18,135 were Type 1 attendances, which is around 5% higher than the previous week.
- ✚ Hospital bed occupancy across Greater Manchester during this period was on average around 90%, with a peak of 91.8% on 2nd January 2024.
- ✚ Paediatric services remain challenged, but bed occupancy has seen a recent reduction from the previous 90% position, with high-dependency unit capacity continuing to see an improved position.
- ✚ Attendances at emergency departments for mental health conditions have remained stable however the system is significantly constrained by a lack of mental health bed capacity in Greater Manchester, as well as nationally.
- ✚ Ambulance activity has been high with on average 675 ambulances attending Greater Manchester hospitals per day.
- ✚ Definitions on types of attendance can be found using this [link](#).

Hospital discharge data

The discharge figures are a snapshot in time provided for the weekly brief to illustrate both demand and pressure. These figures will be shared weekly.

- ✚ There were 848 people medically fit for discharge from acute trusts as of 10th January.
- ✚ This week (3rd January to 10th January) there were 698 admissions to hospital across Greater Manchester and 803 discharges.



Figures may be affected by industrial action.

Industrial action

Data on the recent industrial action by junior doctors can be found on the NHS England website here: [NHS England » Industrial action in the NHS](#).

Useful information

NHS Greater Manchester is reminding anyone struggling to heat their homes to ensure they get all the help they are entitled to. Grants, benefits, and advice are available to make homes more energy efficient, improve heating or help with bills.

- ✚ Find out more from Gov.UK about benefits and financial support: [Benefits and financial support if you're on a low income - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). You can use the Government's benefit checker here: <https://www.gov.uk/check-benefits-financial-support>.
- ✚ More information on how to save energy in your home is available here: [Find ways to save energy in your home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), or call the Government helpline on 0800 444 202.
- ✚ Organisations across Greater Manchester are here to give a helping hand. More information on this webpage: [Helping Hand - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#) or if you prefer to text, you can text 07860 022876 and you will be directed to the right place.

NHS Blood and Transplant launched its New Year campaign last week which runs until 16th February 2024. It calls for new donors particularly younger donors to come forward to give both blood and plasma. See more info [here](#).

NHS England North West patient survey

The North West Virtual Ward Programme Board have created a survey to understand how the public in the region feel about virtual wards. Research is helping identify that health outcomes are at least as good, if not better in some cases, when patients recover at home. The survey attempts to understand concerns people may have about being on a virtual ward. The survey can be found here: [Virtual wards - what are your views? \(office.com\)](#) and can be shared.