



Greater Manchester Weekly Winter Stakeholder Briefing

21st December 2023 – Issue 4

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.

Contents

Media statement	2
Weekly narrative	2
Interview requests.....	2
Campaigns and shareable content	2
Case study.....	4
Primary care data	5
Urgent and emergency care data.....	5
Hospital discharge data	5
Industrial action	6
Useful information.....	6



Media statement

Mark Fisher, chief executive of NHS Greater Manchester:

“I want to share my profound thanks to our wonderful staff, partners and volunteers across health, social care, and the voluntary sector for their extraordinary efforts once again this year and wish everyone celebrating a Merry Christmas.

“I am truly grateful for all you do throughout the year and how you collectively rise to the challenges we face. Day-after-day, you all make such a positive difference to people’s lives. Your professionalism, commitment, and determination to ensure people living in Greater Manchester get the best possible health and care is nothing short of admirable.

“I ask the public to look after their health and wellbeing over the festive period. It can be a difficult time of year for some people, so celebrate if you can, and seek support from the NHS if you need it. NHS 111, including the online service, will be open around-the-clock during the Christmas and New Year period as will our mental health crisis helplines. By choosing the right healthcare option, such as NHS 111, people will be helping to keep our urgent and emergency care services free for anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in a life-threatening situation.

“To all those celebrating Christmas, enjoy and best wishes for 2024.”

Weekly narrative

It has and continues to be a busy week with typical urgent and emergency care pressures for this time of year being felt. There is also ongoing industrial action by junior doctors, which has meant some planned care being postponed. Staff sickness has risen too.

Interview requests

- ✚ Interview opportunities available on request.

Campaigns and shareable content

- ✚ **Protect & Prevent.** This new campaign aims to specifically target people with long-term health conditions and encourage them to have their flu and Covid-19 vaccines for the best protection this winter. It uses trusted voices from local health and care professionals including a nurse practitioner, GP, and hospital consultant.

The messaging highlights how this group are at higher risk of developing serious complications if they catch flu or Covid, combined with a clear call to action of ‘Get Vaccinated’. You can also find information, toolkits and assets for all our latest campaigns



on the [Campaigns page on the NHS Greater Manchester website](#).

- ✚ **Kooth and Quell mental health support.** Greater Manchester is the first UK region to provide digital mental health support to its residents - approximately two million people aged 10 to 99+. Children and young adults aged 10 to 25 can access the Kooth service, and Qwell, delivered by Kooth, is for adults aged 26 and over across all areas of Greater Manchester.

It means people have immediate access to a free, confidential, and safe digital mental health service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is no referral needed from a health professional, waiting lists or criteria to qualify for this invaluable support.

Kooth's live chat hours over the holiday period

24th December (Christmas Eve) - 4pm - 8pm
25th December (Christmas Day) - 4pm - 8pm
26th December (Boxing Day) - 4pm - 8pm
31st December (New Years Eve) - 4pm - 8pm
1st January (New Years Day) - 4pm - 8pm

Other days over the holiday period will follow our usual live chat hours of 12pm - 10pm on weekdays and 6pm - 10pm on weekends.

kooth.com

Qwell's live chat hours over the holiday period

24th December (Christmas Eve) - 4pm - 8pm
25th December (Christmas Day) - 4pm - 8pm
26th December (Boxing Day) - 4pm - 8pm
31st December (New Years Eve) - 4pm - 8pm
1st January (New Years Day) - 4pm - 8pm

Other days over the holiday period will follow our usual live chat hours of 12pm - 10pm on weekdays and 6pm - 10pm on weekends.

www.qwell.io

Please tag NHS GM in your social media posts – X @NHS_GM and Facebook @NHSGreaterManchester.



Case study

If you encountered someone in danger or experiencing a mental health crisis, would you know what to do?

Emma Nazurally, director of operations at Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, recently found herself in this exact situation outside of work when on her way home.

In the dark and torrential rain, Emma noticed an ambulance cordoning off the road where someone was standing on the wrong side of a bridge. Emma, a trained mental health nurse, was able to stop and offer support to the gentleman and paramedics.

The man was feeling low and had lots of stresses in his life, which led him to this point. Fortunately, Emma being there to listen, validate his feelings, and talk through options of support, ultimately helped him down from that vulnerable place - so he could receive further support.

But what if you saw someone at risk, without anyone else there to help? Emma has shared this advice:

“The first and most important thing is to immediately call 999 for professional help. Don’t assume someone else will have made that call.

“Once that help is on the way, then if you feel able, you might want to call out to the person to say hello and share your name – taking care not to frighten them.

“But only do so if you feel able, don’t ever put yourself in a position where you feel vulnerable.

“Once you’ve introduced yourself, you might want to ask permission to move closer and let them know you’re there if they want to talk.

“The important thing is just being kind and human, listening, validating things which sound difficult and offering reassurance.

“You could ask if they have any family around, make general conversation, and say you will stay with them until the professional help arrives.

“But calling that professional help is always the first step – and keeping yourself safe too.”

For anyone that’s struggling or needs more advice, there are 24/7 crisis mental health helplines available to support you.

If you live in Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, and Glossop, you can call Pennine Care’s for free on 0800 014 9995.



If you live in Bolton, Manchester, Salford, Trafford, and Wigan, you can call Greater Manchester Mental Health's on 0800 953 0285 for free.

Primary care data

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

- ✚ Dentistry – of 223 practices reporting, 31% of dental practices are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 21% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ General practice - of 270 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 78 practices reporting, 9% of optical sites are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 1% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ Pharmacy – of 99 pharmacies reporting, 27% of sites are feeling significantly challenged and 8% 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 \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/statistics/urgent-and-emergency-care-daily-situation-reports-2023-24).

- ✚ Hospital bed occupancy across Greater Manchester acute trusts has been over 90% for most of the week. High ward and bed occupancy in paediatrics beds continues, with significant pressures being reported across all sites.
- ✚ Mental health providers continue to experience challenges with bed capacity and high numbers of people who no longer meet the criteria to reside.
- ✚ Ambulance activity remains within normal parameters and handover times have improved this week, though there are some sporadic delays across Greater Manchester, and we continue to see pressures on occasion.
- ✚ 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 844 people medically fit for discharge from acute trusts as of 20th December.
- ✚ This week (13th December to 20th December) there were 719 admissions to hospital across Greater Manchester and 872 discharges.

Industrial action

Junior doctors are taking industrial action on these days:

- ✚ 7am on 20th December to 7am on 23rd December 2023.
- ✚ 7am on 3rd January 2024 to 7am on 9th January 2024.

The NHS in Greater Manchester has tried and tested plans in place to mitigate risks to patient safety and manage disruption due to industrial action. We have been managing the continued impact of strikes across the NHS for over a year now.

Our emergency, urgent care and maternity services will be available for patients who need them. We are prioritising resources to protect emergency treatment, critical care, neonatal care, maternity, and trauma, and ensure we prioritise patients who have waited the longest for urgent elective care and some cancer surgery.

It is important that the public do not hesitate to come forward to access care if they need it. NHS 111 online should be their first port of call if they need urgent health advice on days of strike action.

More information is available on our dedicated industrial action webpage: [Information for the public on industrial action \(strikes\) | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(gmintegratedcare.org.uk\)](https://www.gmintegratedcare.org.uk/information-for-the-public-on-industrial-action-strikes).

Patients with appointments at hospitals and GP practices are asked to attend these as planned unless they are told otherwise. People do not need to contact their NHS service or team in advance, the team will contact patients directly if an appointment needs to be rescheduled. If you are not contacted, please attend your appointment as planned. This includes at GP practices and dental surgeries.

Useful information

- ✚ **Greater Manchester Bank Holiday Pharmacy Opening Hours:** You can view the opening times for all pharmacies which have shared information with NHS Greater Manchester here: [Bank Holiday pharmacy opening hours | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(gmintegratedcare.org.uk\)](https://www.gmintegratedcare.org.uk/bank-holiday-pharmacy-opening-hours).
- ✚ **Urgent dental care:** The Greater Manchester Urgent Dental Care Service is available from 8am to 10pm every day including weekends and Bank Holidays for severe dental pain and infection. People can call **0333 332 3800** to be assessed by a healthcare professional, who can provide self-care advice or book a face-to-face appointment, if needed.



- ✚ **Urgent eye care:** Free urgent eyecare is available across all 10 areas of Greater Manchester. If you have a sudden and urgent problem with your eyes, you can contact a local practice to get an appointment: [NHS Greater Manchester Community Urgent Eye Care Service \(CUES\) - Primary Eyecare Services](#).
- ✚ **Safe a life by giving blood.** Demand for lifesaving blood doesn't stop for Christmas. Many patients will need transfusions over the festive period as treatment for a blood condition or cancer, or due to surgery, childbirth, or an accident. Find out more here: [Donate - NHS Blood and Transplant \(nhsbt.nhs.uk\)](#).