

Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs): Frequently Asked Questions

1. Overview

The formation of UTCs is mandated by NHSE which supersede all Minor Injuries Units (MIU's), Walk in Centres (WiC) and Urgent Care Centres (UCCs). There will be 9 UTC's across east Kent (2 co-located with A&E) and remain community based. The table below details the locations and providers at each UTC:

Location	Provider	Co-located with A&E
WHH, Ashford	*UTC Alliance – Primary care Lead provider : Ashford Clinical providers	Yes
RVH, Folkstone	KCHFT and Channel Health Alliance	No
Buckland, Dover	UTC Alliance – Primary care Lead provider : Invicta Health	No
Deal Hospital, Deal	KCHFT and Channel Health Alliance	No
QEQMH, Thanet	UTC Alliance – Primary care Lead provider : Thanet Health CIC	Yes
QVH, Herne Bay	Herne Bay	No
Estuary View, Whitstable	Estuary View	No
Faversham Cottage Hospital, Faversham	Faversham	No
Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury	UTC Alliance – Primary care Lead provider : Invicta Health	No

**UTC alliance is a formal alliance between 5 providers (East Kent Hospitals, IC24, Ashford Clinical providers, Thanet Health CIC and Invicta Health CIC) collectively providing UTCs across all EKHUFT sites.*

How will urgent treatment centres (UTCs) link with the rest of the urgent and emergency care system?

UTCs provide an opportunity for commissioning a genuine integrated urgent care service, aligning NHS 111, UTC and routine and urgent GP appointments with face to face urgent care.

Benefits for Thanet Health CIC joining the UTC alliance?

The commissioners formally tendered all acute hospital site UTCs as one tender bid and further requesting local providers to work in collaboration to build greater resilience, strengthen governance and consistency. Thanet Health will be responsible for the delivery at QEQMH with clinical leadership from Stephanie de Giorgio however supported by all members of the alliance as required.

2. Primary Care Interface

How do UTCs fit into the vision for general practice?

The vision is to invest in and sustain general practice and transform it to deliver more “at scale” services with view to redesign out of hospital care, strengthen good practice, that will be part of a wider set of integrated services including out of hours and urgent care services.

The benefits include:

- delivery of a more standardised service

- offer value for money
- make it easier for patients to see the right professional at the right time in the right place

What does “GP-led” mean?

GP led means that GPs should have a clinical leadership role within the UTC . This clearly positions UTCs as a primary and community service and brings consistency throughout the country. This will be supported by a multi-disciplinary workforce. provides clinical advice to NHS 111 and 999 ambulance services.

What are the expectations of the clinical leadership role played by the GP in a UTC?

This is twofold.

1. To provide clinical oversight in terms of decision making around patient care throughout the full opening hours of the UTC, firmly positioning the UTC as primary and community service.
2. All UTCs should have a named GP as a core member of the senior team taking responsibility for general oversight, governance, audit, training and the strategic development of the service to ensure that the primary care ethos and culture of the UTC is created and maintained. It is entirely acceptable for a single GP to be involved in the leadership of more than one UTC.

Within the Alliance there are four GP clinical leads (one from each GP federation and IC24) who work together to ensure the above responsibilities are met.

3. Service Logistics / Offer

What specific services are on offer at the UTC?

The UTC is a 24/7 facility co-located with A&E. The UTC will accept all minor illness / injury patients who walk in or are triaged from 111 bookings or A&E.

What sort of patients would be suitable for referral to a UTC?

Examples of the types of conditions suitable for a UTC include (not an exhaustive list):

- Ear and throat infections
- Skin infections and rashes
- Eye problems
- Coughs and colds
- Feverish illness in adults
- Feverish illness in children
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Emergency contraception
- Strains and sprains
- Suspected broken limbs
- Minor head injuries
- Cuts and grazes
- Bites and stings
- Minor scalds and burns

The UTC works closely with the ED the patient benefit from the most appropriate clinician at time of presentation.

Please note, the UTC is not equipped for routine GMS work.

As a GP, what information can I provide to my patients?

UTCs should be described to patients and the public in a nationally consistent way to avoid any public confusion about the services available and how they should access them. In summary communications should:

- Encourage the public to use the NHS 111 service when they have an urgent unexpected health care need.
- NHS 111 - directs patients to the most appropriate service, which may be an urgent appointment or same day appointment at a GP access hub or at a UTC.
- Where applicable, all health care professionals should promote UTCs as an increasingly common alternative to A&E and providing a high standard offer of care to support minor illness and injury.

How will the UTC communicate with the Practice?

The UTC uses EMIS (just like E-ART) and therefore practices will receive EDN's in the same way as they currently do and you should see no difference.

If any urgent need has been identified the UTC will contact the practice directly as soon as possible.

Assessment, Streaming and Referral

Patients who "walk-in" to an UTC will be booked in and triaged within 15 minutes of arrival and streamed to the team member / service.

What ongoing referral pathways could you expect to see from UTCs?

Referrals from UTCs will be dependent on the condition of the patient. Patients will be referred to secondary and community services as appropriate.

When the patient is discharged back to the GP surgery there may be some actions recommended for the practice to follow up.

Workforce

What sort of health practitioners would you expect to see working in a UTC?

The UTC will have a multi-disciplinary primary care model team according to local need. This may include GPs, nurse practitioners, paramedic practitioners, emergency care technicians etc.