



Ely Minor Treatment Centre

Aims

The Ely Minor Treatment Centre aims to provide a seven-day-a-week urgent minor treatment service for the residents of Ely and surrounding areas. The Centre is located in the Princess of Wales Hospital, Ely and is funded by Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS).

Rationale

Local access to a service of this type is particularly important in an area such as this, which is geographically isolated from acute hospitals providing emergency care. The nearest Accident and Emergency unit is 20 miles away. Public transport links are poor and this causes problems particularly for the increasing elderly population in the area.

Description

The service is led by Nurse Practitioners – senior nurses who have had advance training in history taking, clinical examination and investigation, diagnosis and treatment. Patients are seen in order of clinical priority.

The Centre sees a diverse range of clinical needs including, wounds, bites, burns and scalds, fractures, sports, muscle and joint injuries, emergency contraception, minor illnesses for those over 2 years old, cystitis, minor head injuries, eye conditions and dental problems. Patients who can't be treated are signposted to other more appropriate services such as accident and emergency services, 999 transfers, community pharmacies, GPs, health visitors, dentists or social workers etc.

Facilities include a digital X-ray service and staff are able to request and interpret X-rays. There is also a slit lamp enabling eye examinations to be carried out. The Centre prescribes and supplies medicines under Patient Group Directions, and is able to suture wounds and apply plaster of paris casts.

Partnership working

Staff at the Centre work closely with acute hospital consultants in the development of Patient Group Directions. The Centre also provides training placements for Nurse Practitioners in emergency care, paramedics, emergency care practitioners and student nurses. The Centre refers directly to all acute hospitals in the wider rural area, including Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust in Cambridge, Hinchingsbrooke Health Care NHS Trust in Huntingdon, Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust in King's Lynn and the West Suffolk Hospital NHS Trust in Bury St Edmunds. This includes referrals to paediatrics, Accident and Emergency services, orthopaedics, surgery, ophthalmics, plastic surgery (CUHFT only), ENT, surgery and maxillary facial.



Costs and Sustainability

The Ely Minor Treatment Centre saw over 12,000 patients in 2006/07. If the Centre were not open this would result in a huge increase of those patients who would need to attend Accident and Emergency services or see a GP in or out of hours.

Challenges

- To develop the services and be able to widen treatment parameters
- To train more nurse practitioners
- To ensure services reflect the optimum treatment in acute settings

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