

# NHS 111 Integrated Urgent Care resident experience survey

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## Introduction

The North Central London Integrated Care Board is undertaking a procurement exercise to award a new contract for the NHS 111 Integrated Urgent Care (IUC) service starting in October 2023.

Planning for this has started with the aim that the future service will be developed based on the latest national guidance and the identified needs of our local population.

As part of the engagement process, between 12 May 2022 and 19 June 2022, we ran a survey to understand our residents' experiences of using the NHS 111 Integrated Urgent Care service. We also want to find out about the barriers that may prevent people from easily accessing the IUC service and why people may choose to attend emergency departments rather than contacting NHS 111.

The survey feedback will be taken into consideration when the new service is developed to ensure improvements are made if needed.

## How was the survey promoted?

- Online version hosted on our public and GP websites
- Shared with our key stakeholder database, which included Healthwatches, Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) groups, local authorities and local patient/membership groups.
- Distributed to the North Central London Residents Panel – a group of nearly 1,000 local residents with an interest in health and care services
- Promoted via CCG public channels, notably social media, newsletters (to the wider NCL system and also our residents newsletter), news articles on our public-facing website and our intranet (recognising that our staff may wish to share their views).
- Shared with local general practice teams (both GPs and via Practice Managers and PPG Groups) across our boroughs via NCL CCG GP website and newsletter.

## Survey findings

### 1: How many times have you used the NHS 111 service in the past year?

Option	Total	Percent
Once	59	52.21%
2-5 times	50	44.25%
6-10 times	4	3.54%
More than 11 times	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### 2: Did you do this online or via the telephone?

Option	Total	Percent
Online	10	8.85%
Telephone	90	79.65%
Both	13	11.50%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### 3: If you contacted the service by telephone did you think the call menu was easy to use?

There were 101 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Very easy	36	31.86%
Somewhat easy	57	50.44%
Not at all easy	8	7.08%
Not Answered	12	10.62%

#### If you found the call menu difficult to use, please let us know why

There were 24 responses to this part of the question. The key theme was the messages were too long and complicated, particularly when you are unwell. It made the process too long to get through to the call handler and some people got confused about which option to select as it went through the information fast. A lot of comments about the amount of generic Covid information that was included, which delayed them getting through. Some felt it made them feel as though they didn't want you to call.

#### Example quotes:

'It's a lengthy confused menu aimed to dissuade callers from continuing their calls. It keeps repeating the same Covid info over and over. It takes no notice of the needs of patients who have disabilities, neurodevelopmental conditions, hearing/auditory processing issues... for whom making calls is already difficult and having to spend much longer than necessary makes it very painful.'

'Confusing - repeated message. Very long time to get through. And message spoken too fast to be able to take down what one should do instead www: etc.'

### 4: Do you have any comments to make about the call menu that you heard?

There were 37 responses to this part of the question. The theme was the same as in the response to question three in terms of it being too lengthy, fast in message delivery and difficult to navigate, particularly when unwell and worried. However for those people that found the call menu relatively easy to use they repeated that they found it straightforward to use.

#### Example quotes:

'perhaps a lot of info to take in when you are ill/panicked/stressed'

'We have had 2.5 years of Covid. Why do you need to repeat the same info at every step. It's confusing and irritating.'

'Pretty easy to follow'

### 5: If your call was not answered quickly would you have?

There were 97 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Held on until the call was answered	55	48.67%
Abandoned the call	8	7.08%
Gone to A&E	10	8.85%
Tried to contact your GP	3	2.65%
Tried to call 111 at a different time	5	4.42%
Visited a walk-in centre or urgent treatment centre	13	11.50%

<b>Visited a pharmacy</b>	3	2.65%
<b>Not Answered</b>	16	14.16%

### Other

There were 20 responses to this part of the question. The key theme was that it would depend on the nature of the problem and the level of urgency. Most said they would hold on or call back later, but, in some cases if urgent and too long a wait, they would abandon the call and choose another option, such as go to UTC or A&E.

### Example quotes:

'No point contacting your GP do not respond - tell you go to A&E!

You should review Barnet A&E they do a wonderful job but the demand has outstripped the size of the department. Maybe spend a day in A&E following the patient journey. It's terrible till you see the nurses.'

'I think that there was no other option available but to hold on.'

'Daft question. Would depend on how long you are talking about and the degree of concern about the issue for you were ringing 111.'

## 6: From your experience of the 111 service, please tick the boxes that seem closest to your views

<b>The staff were helpful</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	48	42.48%
<b>Agree</b>	33	29.20%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	11.50%
<b>Disagree</b>	5	4.42%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	3	2.65%
<b>Don't know/can't say</b>	2	1.77%
<b>Not Answered</b>	9	7.96%

<b>The questions asked were relevant</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	27	23.89%
<b>Agree</b>	39	34.51%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	16	14.16%
<b>Disagree</b>	10	8.85%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	7	6.19%
<b>Don't know/can't say</b>	2	1.77%
<b>Not Answered</b>	12	10.62%

<b>The service dealt with my problem quickly</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	38	33.63%
<b>Agree</b>	28	24.78%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	11.50%
<b>Disagree</b>	9	7.96%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	11	9.73%
<b>Don't know/can't say</b>	3	2.65%

<b>Not Answered</b>	11	9.73%
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<b>The service helped me to make contact with the right health service</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Strongly agree</b>	41	36.28%
<b>Agree</b>	28	24.78%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	12	10.62%
<b>Disagree</b>	7	6.19%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9	7.96%
<b>Don't know/can't say</b>	3	2.65%
<b>Not Answered</b>	13	11.50%

### **Do you have any other comments about these statements?**

There were 47 responses to this part of the question. The majority of comments in response to this question were unfortunately quite negative. Many of the respondents said that they were asked a lot of questions and that many seemed irrelevant. People reported being given incorrect or unhelpful advice, being sent to the wrong place and not receiving timely call backs. One person raised the issue of poor mental health service provision, which has also cropped up in focus group work. There were also some reported positive experiences with people finding the call handlers polite and getting a good service.

### **Example quotes:**

'I phoned up during the night in a mental health crisis. The call handler was obliged to ask me lots of irrelevant questions - had I been abroad recently, might I have malaria? I actually hung up the phone at one point and he called me back. He was kind but I repeatedly asked to speak to a mental health worker. He contacted the BEH Crisis team and told me they would phone me. Six hours later they had not phoned. A nurse from 111 phoned me and was able to cancel the request for Crisis Team and make a same day GP appointment for me. I later discovered that 111 in this area does not have mental health workers. I think that is absolutely disgraceful.'

'Despite severe asthma and promises of a call back: either this still didn't happen after over 6 hours of waiting instead of the "within the hour" I was promised or when I did eventually get a call back, it'd be from someone not qualified to issue a prescription, or the GP in question (after waiting for days for that call back) would simply interrogate me as if I were lying - I have had asthma for 40 years. NHS 111 is an absolute joke and a dehumanising, not-fit-for purpose service.'

'I find it good to maintain 111 service as I have experienced it myself, the service is good once those recording is finished to listen on the beginning of my call .everything were done for me. I can say on my personal experience I love 111 minus recording on the beginning of the call.'

'I recommend 111 to all my friends on the basis of my experiences.'

### **7: If the service advised you that you needed to speak to a clinician (e.g. GP or Nurse) were you given a timeframe for a call back?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	63	55.75%
<b>No</b>	14	12.39%
<b>Don't remember</b>	16	14.16%
<b>Not applicable</b>	20	17.70%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

**8: If you were told to expect a call back how satisfied were you that that the clinician called within the timeframe given to you?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	43	38.05%
Fairly satisfied	27	23.89%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7	6.19%
Fairly dissatisfied	5	4.42%
Very dissatisfied	7	6.19%
Not applicable	24	21.24%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

**9: At the end of the phone call, where, if anywhere, did 111 advise you to attend?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Accident and Emergency (A&E)	27	23.89%
Urgent treatment/walk-in centre	9	7.96%
Out of hours GP	6	5.31%
Own GP practice	13	11.50%
Given self-care advice	4	3.54%
Pharmacy	5	4.42%
Other (Please state)	30	26.55%
Not applicable	19	16.81%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

**If you selected "Other", please state where you were signposted to**

There were 33 responses to this part of the question. A variety of locations and actions were identified: 12 were sent ambulances or told to call one; GP home visit, GP call back and OOH GP; OOH dentist; OPAU; X Ray clinic; Moorfields; Ambulatory Care; A&E; Prescription sent to pharmacy; Put in touch with MH Crisis Team.

**10: Was an appointment booked for you?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	35	30.97%
No	40	35.40%
Don't remember	8	7.08%
Not applicable	30	26.55%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

**11: Did this resolve your problem?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	67	59.29%

<b>No</b>	30	26.55%
<b>Don't remember</b>	1	0.88%
<b>Not applicable</b>	15	13.27%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

### If your answer is no why not?

There were 35 responses to this part of the question. Clear themes were difficult to identify on this question as there was a lot of variation. However some people reported not receiving a timely call back, if at all, and ending up waiting a long time before giving up and taking their own course of action. There did seem to be some communication issues between services. Some people were advised to contact their GP, which some criticised, as difficult to get a GP appointment. Some instances where people didn't like the advice they were given and didn't follow it. A variety of ambulance issues, in one case an ambulance was booked, it didn't turn up and the ambulance service had no record of the booking. Some people answered no to this question but actually it was because they needed further treatment, so this one 111 instance did not resolve their problem. Finally there were two criticisms, one in respect of how an individual with a mental health crisis was supported and one wider criticism of how the NHS generally treats someone with a disability.

### Example quotes:

'My deciding to attend A&E and UTC resolved issue; not clinician's call back'

'mental health crisis for member of family left with them alone for several hours not receiving a call back in the end had to get police before ambulance called and taken to a and e'

'Waste of time. I am a Carer and needed medical advice concerning my 100 year old lady. I got nowhere with 111. I called an Ambulance and explained my 111 experience to the wonderful crew. They said they hear this all the time, and in future, don't waste my time, just call 999.'

'NHS 111 advised that a time slot had been given to us to attend the A&E dept. When we arrived the A&E staff had no idea what I was talking about because they had no booked time slots. Therefore I would have been better off taking an elderly 92 year old with a head injury to my nearest A&E instead of waiting 6 hours for an X-Ray in an appalling A&E.'

### 12: If you contacted NHS111 online how easy was it for you to get the help you needed?

There were 45 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
<b>Very easy</b>	11	9.73%
<b>Fairly easy</b>	15	13.27%
<b>Not very easy</b>	9	7.96%
<b>Not at all easy</b>	10	8.85%
<b>Not Answered</b>	68	60.18%

### 13: How satisfied were you with the advice given to you?

There were 42 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
<b>Very satisfied</b>	13	11.50%
<b>Fairly satisfied</b>	12	10.62%
<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	6	5.31%
<b>Fairly dissatisfied</b>	5	4.42%

<b>Very dissatisfied</b>	6	5.31%
<b>Not Answered</b>	71	62.83%

**14: How important is it to you that 111 can provide you with the right advice and treatment in one call/contact without the need to direct you to another service?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Very important</b>	88	77.88%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	17	15.04%
<b>Don't know/can't say</b>	4	3.54%
<b>Not important</b>	4	3.54%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

**15: Would you prefer to be offered the choice of a face-to-face appointment or a video consultation to resolve your health problem?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Face-to-face</b>	56	49.56%
<b>Video consultation</b>	7	6.19%
<b>Either</b>	50	44.25%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

**16: Out-of-hours GP services run from 6.30pm to 8am on weekdays and all day at weekends and on bank holidays. If you have been advised to attend an out-of-hours GP by NHS 111 has the location been convenient to travel to?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	29	25.66%
<b>No</b>	7	6.19%
<b>I was not sent to an out-of-hours GP</b>	77	68.14%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%

**17: At busy times if appointments are limited would you be willing to travel to be seen more promptly?**

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	54	47.79%
<b>No</b>	17	15.04%
<b>Unsure</b>	42	37.17%
<b>Not Answered</b>	0	0.00%



## 18: If you were advised to attend a GP out-of-hours appointment, how satisfied were you with the service?

There were 113 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Very satisfied	15	13.27%
Fairly satisfied	8	7.08%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	4	3.54%
Fairly dissatisfied	1	0.88%
Very dissatisfied	1	0.88%
I was not sent to the GP out-of-hours service	84	74.34%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

### Do you have any other comments about the out of hours GP service?

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. There were some very positive experiences reported for those who had been referred. Criticism lay in not being aware of the service, not being offered an appointment and a general comment about the ability to get a GP appointment at all. Also mentioned were prescriptions and only being able to get an emergency supply of medication and potential distance to travel when you are unwell, although some people reported being willing to travel to be seen.

'I was very satisfied, as I was away from home, but returning home that evening, and the GP (in Essex) was able to see me, diagnose the issue, and send a prescription to a late night pharmacy in London for me to pick up when I got back. Excellent service.'

'It was wonderful! Such a surprise to see someone late at night.'

'Never been offered it, sent to A&E instead, would have preferred GP appt, he could have prescribed the meds I needed'

## 19: How well do you think the NHS 111 service (online or phone) is adapted to any special needs you may have, for example providing help in your language, British Sign Language and so on?

There were 61 responses to this part of the question. Those people who were hard of hearing found using the service more difficult due to the complex call menu and also couldn't always hear the call handler. People with a range of disabilities and chronic conditions also found it hard to use. Language difficulties were also cited for consideration. For people with dementia remembering the call options etc. is challenging. An interesting issue raised was whether people with mobility issues could gain access to transport to get them to an appointment. One example, which has also been raised in other question responses, was being referred by 111 to a service who then didn't think they should have been sent there. This cropped up here with Moorfields, but has also been mentioned for A&E and the ambulance service.

### Example quotes:

'I have an auditory processing problems which can make it incredibly hard to make out what someone is saying - particularly if there is a background noise as is the case with NHS 111 operators - I also have severe asthma and many other health issues which make it very difficult to sustain a phone conversation. Having to repeat the same info over and over - particularly when my asthma has flared up and I have a chest infection - is near impossible. Yet no provision or even understanding because the NHS doesn't understand disabilities and needs.'

'Not very- I am a carer for an elderly lady who is very hard of hearing. she cannot always hear the service handlers. They need to speak slowly and clearly'

'I think it is improving - maybe the staff have been trained and work as a team; they don't seem to be afraid to get advice so they must all be working together - either the management is good and there is no bullying or there is good leadership'

## 20: Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?

There were 67 responses to this part of the question. There was a mixture of positive and negative comments, with many reporting a good service that they value. Comments mainly focused on the complication of getting through to a clinician and then how their call was handled. Training and communication were raised in terms of better communication between services and training for call handlers, some of whom came across as not knowledgeable in local services and their location. Mental health problems were also cited as an issue with people suggesting the need for better qualified staff to handle this type of illness. Some comments as to more investment being needed and better staff numbers with appropriate training, more awareness raising of what the service is and what it can offer, and the ability to book actual appointments to relieve the pressure on other services, such as A&E.

### Example quotes:

'Access to 111 and a quick response to the call ie answering the call quickly, especially important now that it's more difficult to get through to your GP on the phone.

Only issue is that 111 would have sent me to ED/UTC rather than the WIC that has X-Ray facilities.

Would have been great if a pre-bookable appointment could have been made by 111.

Travelling to a call centre for Out of Hours is ok if it's easy to travel to the Centre, but NCL is a large borough and transport links are not good if for example you have to travel East to West (vice-versa) or even into other NCL boroughs where the Centre is not on a convenient train line. Preference would be to keep services local and within borough.'

'I have been happy with the service I have received, both times for recurrent cystitis which has occurred over a bank holiday or weekend. A prescription for antibiotics was sent through to a local pharmacy.'

'As I was unable to see a doctor prior to my 111 call I was in a terrible state. The doctor who rang me back could access my results and supply me with antibiotic which actually worked, the previous antibiotics had not been correct leaving me awake most of the night not knowing where to turn. This problem had been ongoing for about six months and I was extremely grateful to the lovely doctor who not only supplied me with the right antibiotics but gave me advice as to how to help my problem. I am very happy with my experience with the NHS 111 service.'

'I would not advise anyone to phone 111 about mental health. I had to wait 6 hours for a call from Crisis Team that never came. If I had wanted to speak to Crisis Team I would have phoned them myself. Please put in specification for new 111 contract that they need to have mh nurses as well as general nurses. How was this ever allowed to happen?'

## Which of the following best describes you?

Option	Total	Percent
Female	73	64.60%
Male	34	30.09%
Non-binary	3	2.65%
Prefer to self-describe	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	3	2.65%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

## What is your ethnic group?

### White background - White

Option	Total	Percent
English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	74	65.49%
Irish	4	3.54%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0	0.00%
Roma	0	0.00%
Any other White background	10	8.85%
Not Answered	25	22.12%

### Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

Option	Total	Percent
White and Black Caribbean	2	1.77%
White and Black African	0	0.00%
White and Asian	2	1.77%
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic Background	1	0.88%
Not Answered	108	95.58%

### Asian or Asian British - Asian or Asian British

Option	Total	Percent
Indian	8	7.08%
Pakistani	0	0.00%
Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Chinese	1	0.88%
Any other Asian background	4	3.54%
Not Answered	100	88.50%

## Black, Black British, Caribbean or African - Black, Black British, Caribbean or African

Option	Total	Percent
Caribbean	4	3.54%
African	1	0.88%
Any other Black, Black British, Caribbean or African background	0	0.00%
Not Answered	108	95.58%

## Any other ethnic group - Other ethnic group

Option	Total	Percent
Arab	0	0.00%
Any other ethnic group	4	3.54%
Not Answered	109	96.46%

## How old are you?

Option	Total	Percent
Under 16	0	0.00%
16 to 17	0	0.00%
18 to 24	0	0.00%
25 to 34	6	5.31%
35 to 44	10	8.85%
45 to 54	15	13.27%
55 to 64	21	18.58%
65 to 74	39	34.51%
75 to 84	16	14.16%
85 or over	5	4.42%
Not Answered	1	0.88%

## Are you a deaf person who uses sign language?

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	2	1.77%
No	107	94.69%
Not Answered	4	3.54%

## Do you have any long-term physical or mental health conditions, disabilities or illnesses?

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	54	47.79%
No	53	46.90%
Don't know/Can't say	1	0.88%
I would prefer not to say	3	2.65%

<b>Not Answered</b>	2	1.77%
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### Which borough is your GP practice in?

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Barnet</b>	36	31.86%
<b>Camden</b>	12	10.62%
<b>Enfield</b>	46	40.71%
<b>Haringey</b>	13	11.50%
<b>Islington</b>	5	4.42%
<b>Not Answered</b>	1	0.88%

### When you use NHS 111, do you need translation services?

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	0	0.00%
<b>No</b>	111	98.23%
<b>Not Answered</b>	2	1.77%

### When you use NHS 111, do you need access to BSL interpreters?

<b>Option</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	0	0.00%
<b>No</b>	112	99.12%
<b>Not Answered</b>	1	0.88%