

WINTER PLANNING POLICY

Overview of Operational Approach for Severnside Integrated Urgent Care Out of Hours To Winter Planning

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Winter Planning Policy

Contents

Contents	2
Introduction and Purpose	3
Data Analysis and Activity Forecast	3
Operational Readiness	3
<i>Staffing resilience</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Christmas and New Year Period</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Adverse weather planning</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Treatment Centre Capacity</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Senior management support and escalation</i>	<i>5</i>
Partnership working	5
<i>Ambulance service</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Community</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>In-hours GP</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>System working</i>	<i>6</i>
Preventative measures	6
Communications	6
<i>Patient information</i>	<i>6</i>
Contact List of Key People	7
Change Register	8

Winter Planning Policy

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To document the BrisDoc approach to forward planning for service delivery of Severnside Integrated Urgent Care service over the Winter months.
- To ensure that early warning systems are in place to identify risks to service delivery.
- To ensure that a robust action plan is in place to manage risk pro-actively and provide service resilience.
- To ensure that business continuity plans are in place to provide a swift and commensurate response to capacity pressures, severe weather conditions and epidemic disease.
- To ensure that system relationships are established with other healthcare providers in BNSSG to allow effective escalation and partnership working.

Data Analysis and Activity Forecast

BrisDoc takes a proactive approach to capacity planning throughout the year:

- Activity data is reported on a weekly basis and measured against plan.
- Delivery of KPIs is monitored monthly to determine if resourcing is sufficient to meet patient demand in an effective, efficient and resilient manner.
- Clinical resource is changed dynamically as required using established algorithms to match available appointment numbers to demand profiles.

Operational Readiness

Staffing resilience

Clinical staffing at BrisDoc is provided through a combination of employed staff and regular and ad hoc self-employed locum staff, with approximately 270 GPs, Nurses Advanced Paramedic Practitioners and Pharmacists providing a regular contribution to the Out of Hours rota. Nurses are all Nurse Practitioners and most are qualified to prescribe.

This large pool of clinicians provides an ability to flex the service capacity up and down to meet demand, reacting within days, or even hours if necessary. Additional capacity could be provided by agency, if necessary, although this is not currently in place

To ensure resource resilience and flexibility we have a range of shifts that include triage-only from Osprey Court, face to face and triage across five treatment centres, as well as remote working options from home.

Winter Planning Policy

All clinicians are subject to rigorous recruitment and induction procedures, as well as ongoing clinical audit utilising our Clinical Guardian system.

Operational staffing is provided from a pool of approximately 140 staff. In addition to those who work regular hours, we also have a small “bank” of casual staff who can be called upon to provide cover for sickness or annual leave.

Wherever possible, these members of staff are also multi-skilled and can be deployed as drivers, call handlers, shift managers, WaCCs or hosts as the need arises.

Christmas and New Year Period

Annual leave is restricted for a two-week period over the Christmas and New Year period. Exception leave requests from staff for the Christmas period are not considered until all rotas are filled for the Bank Holiday period, to ensure that approval is co-ordinated with the needs of the service and the ability to provide resilient cover.

The staff bank of casual staff and overtime will be used to provide cover for additional bank holiday shifts and annual leave during this period.

Adverse weather planning

Business Continuity plans are in place for the sustainability of the service during severe weather conditions. Contingency plans include:

- Staff information collated and filed regarding ability to walk to a service base in adverse weather.
- Staff briefing distributed detailing action in adverse weather conditions.
- Four-wheel drive vehicles strategically located at bases across BNSSG and used to collect essential staff unable to drive to work, as well as carry out home visits.
- Remote working arrangements scoped to allow clinical advice telephone calls to be made without travel to base.
- Special arrangements to be made to cope with increased patient demand due to cold weather, e.g. respiratory infections.

Treatment Centre Capacity

In the event of additional capacity being required for clinics and consultations, BrisDoc has the flexibility to provide this across five BNSSG locations. This enhances capacity, flexibility and choice for patients, and will provide sufficient resilience in the event of a base being unavailable for use due to staffing or other constraints. Bases currently used for service delivery are:

- Greenway Community Practice
- Christchurch Surgery

Winter Planning Policy

- Clevedon Hospital
- 168 Locking Road, Weston Super Mare
- Marksbury Road Surgery

In addition, Osprey Court Head Office is used for call handling, remote assessment and as a control room for the Shift manager, W&CCs and senior clinicians. This provides additional capacity and contingency locations, should one of the bases not be available.

Senior management support and escalation

Severnside IUC has an established on-call procedure for the provision of senior management and executive support at all times. Clear criteria for escalation are in place and at times of additional pressure, further senior support can be provided during the out of hours period.

At all times, first and second line managers on-call are experienced operational members of staff with extensive knowledge of the service and the urgent care systems.

An additional flexi clinician rota is also in place for weekends where needed to respond to key clinical gaps.

Partnership working

Severnside is committed to building strong partnerships and joint working arrangements with other providers. BNSSG urgent care meetings will be the vehicle for ensuring that key risks have been evaluated and for co-ordinating robust contingency strategies.

Ambulance service

Calls from SWAST paramedics represent the largest percentage usage of BrisDoc's healthcare professional line service. This service provides a valuable advice and safety net function, and facilitates effective risk management when exploring alternatives to hospital admission. Paramedics calls are prioritised to ensure a timely response and reduce wait times.

Community

Calls from District Nurse and Rapid Response teams are also supported by BrisDoc's healthcare professional line. As with paramedics, this service supports colleagues with decision making and risk management, with a particular emphasis on palliative/EOL patients.

In-hours GP

BrisDoc has a robust process for ensuring that there is clear communication of special notes and other important information to and from patients' own GP practices. We have

Winter Planning Policy

a dedicated e mail address for practices to communicate with the IUC Service. The Practice Liaison system ensures that appropriate patients who have accessed the service are flagged by telephone to the practice early the following morning when the patient needs urgent review or follow up by the practice.

System working

Severnside takes part in the both the system escalation calls and the Seasonal Planning meetings, to ensure we working as part of the local system and providing patients with the appropriate access to the right care, first time.

BrisDoc's Clinical Toolkit enables IUC clinicians to access relevant local guidance, policies and all community services and pathways to inform decision making by clinicians.

Preventative measures

BrisDoc encourages all staff to be vaccinated against flu. If they are not able to access this from their own GP, we will make internal arrangements for staff to be vaccinated. We will make sure that the option is available to all employees, and will actively promote the importance of front-line staff receiving the vaccination.

Staff members who choose to be vaccinated at high street pharmacy outlets can be reimbursed for the cost of the vaccination.

BrisDoc's Infection Control policy outlines best practice with regard to managing outbreaks of infectious disease, eg Norovirus, and is embedded below.

Communications

Patient information

Patients who bypass 111 or other healthcare providers to access the Out of Hours service will be redirected if appropriate. Appointments will only be provided for "walk in" patients if an assessment is considered immediate and necessary.

Information stands are located at all IUC treatment centres with patient information leaflets to advise on seasonal risks and prevention measures.

Winter Planning Policy

Contact List of Key People

TITLE	NAME	NUMBER
CEO	Lewis Scandle	07345750364
Medical Director	Dr Kathy Ryan	07833 507628
Urgent Care Deputy Medical Director	Dr Rebecca Cooke	rebecca.cooke3@nhs.net
Director of Nursing, AHPs and Governance	Rhys Hancock	07503655911
Head of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals - IUC	Renuka Suriyaarachchi	07557 823615
Head of Integrated Urgent Care	Lucy Grinnell	07717 360438
Severnside Shift Manager Phone (out of hours only)	Shift Manager On Duty	0117 3459083
Director of People	Mike Duncan	0117 9370900

Winter Planning Policy

Change Register

Date	Version	Author	Change Details
August 2011	2	Sonia Brown	Change to content
August 2011	3	Traci Clutterbuck	Change to content
August 2011	4	Becky Brown	Change to format
October 2011	5	Becky Brown	Updated Key People and Duty Manager task list
August 2012	5.1	Traci Clutterbuck	Demand profiling updated, remote working updated, PCC capacity updated, pandemics or extreme demand updated, duty manager intervention updated, call management updated, contact list updated
September 2012	5.2	Helen England	Review and revisions following BNSSG Winter Simulation Event and feedback from PCT urgent care lead.
August 2013	5.3	Gillian White	Revised for new BNSSG service model
November 2014	5.4	Gillian White	Updated to reflect recent changes
November 2015	5.4	Gillian White	Updated
November 2016	5.6	Gillian White	Updated
October 2019	5.7	Lucy Grinnell	Updated
03.05.2023	6	Lucy Grinnell	Review and update
19.07.2026	6.1	Lucy Grinnell	Review and update