

SevernSide

Integrated Urgent Care

Covid Medicines Delivery Unit (CMDU) Service Overview and Escalation Plan

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Service overview

The Covid Medicine Delivery Unit (CMDU) provides COVID-19 treatments for Somerset-based patients in the community who are identified as being at high risk of an adverse outcome from Covid. The service will assess the patient and where appropriate prescribe Covid medication. Where the patient does not fit the criteria for oral medication but may be eligible for second line intravenous medication, the service makes a referral to Somerset NHS Foundation Trust via Somerset Primary Link for consideration and treatment if appropriate.

Patient flow

CMDU patients will flow from

- NHS111
- Referral via the CMDU Professional Line from a Healthcare Professional (GP surgery/community clinician/hospital specialist)
- Referral via email from a Healthcare Professional using the 'HCP CMDU Referral Form' to the somicb.cmdu@nhs.net email account

CMDU patients can be received 24 hours a day via NHS111 and from HCPs via email, HCPs can also call the CMDU Professional Line between 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday. However, the clinical team will operate Monday to Saturday 10:00-12:00 and 16:00-18:00 hours. The service will not operate on bank holidays, except in cases where adjustments are necessary to maintain a five-day service and ensure closure does not exceed three consecutive days. The DoS team will be made aware of any service closures over bank holiday periods at least four weeks in advance. The operating days will also align with pharmacy opening times.

Queue Management

All patients in the CMDU CAS will be reviewed by the BrisDoc clinician, to prioritise care based on clinical need. Referrals into CMDU will be triaged on the day that they are received when this falls on a standard core service day.

Cases arriving in the final hour of the CMDU working day

A clinical review will be conducted for patients received in the final hour of core service operation to assess whether they can safely wait until the following core working day if capacity does not allow all patients to be assessed before closing. Priority in the last hour of the day will be given to patients who cannot wait, such as those approaching the day-five threshold for antiviral treatment. These will also be easily identifiable by a 'Day 5 – to be actioned today' classification that the Shift Manager will identify when monitoring the CMDU CAS.

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Patient referrals/criteria

The service is for non-hospitalised patients that are registered with a Somerset GP practice or who are normally resident in Somerset.

Patients under the age of 18 cannot be treated directly by the CMDU service. Once on our queue, the clinicians will offer these patients the choice to contact their specialist or consultant themselves, or our team can facilitate a referral to a specialist, consultant, or the Somerset FT Paediatric Clinical Assessment Unit on their behalf.

For full information on referrals please refer to the CMDU Clinical Handbook.

NHS111 referrals

At risk patients self-referring into the service will do so by contacting NHS111 (by phone or online) who will determine

- If the patient is symptomatic or asymptomatic.
- Whether the patient is at high risk of adverse covid outcomes (It is expected that these patients will have been provided with a letter by NHSE or have been identified as high risk by their specialist/consultant)
- If the patient has a positive lateral flow test

These patients will then be electronically referred to the BrisDoc CMDU CAS queue with a 24 hour disposition.

Healthcare Professional Line referrals

Healthcare Professionals (GP surgery/community clinician/hospital specialist) can call the CMDU Professional Line to refer a patient who meet the following criteria

- Patient is identified as at high risk of adverse covid outcomes and
- Patient has a positive lateral flow test and symptoms started in less than 5 days

These patients will then be added to the BrisDoc CMDU CAS with a 24 hour disposition.

Healthcare Professional CMDU email referrals

Healthcare Professionals (GP surgery/community clinician/hospital specialist) can email an 'HCP CMDU Referral Form' to refer a patient who meet the following criteria

- Patient is identified as at high risk of adverse covid outcomes and
- Patient has a positive lateral flow test and symptoms started in less than 5 days

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The referral form is accessible 24/7 and will be sent to the CMDU email address. The patients will then be added to the BrisDoc CMDU CAS with a 24 hour disposition.

A list of Somerset surgeries can be found in the Severnside IUC Call Handler Handbook and their practice 'backdoor' telephone numbers can be found on radar.

Lateral Flow Tests

The CMDU clinician will be able to signpost patients to information on where LFT's can be obtained if necessary. This will be via resources such as the 'Find a Pharmacy' website: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-that-offers-free-covid-19-rapid-lateral-flow-tests/>

Patient Leaflets

Links to these can be found on the clinical Toolkit - <https://www.clinicaltoolkit.co.uk/knowledgebase/somerset-cmdu-crib-sheet/>

Pharmacy stockists of Covid19 antivirals

Prescribing will be via EPS. There are specific pharmacies that agree to hold stock of Covid19 antivirals and these can be found on the Clinical Toolkit page <https://www.clinicaltoolkit.co.uk/knowledgebase/somerset-cmdu-crib-sheet/>.

Patients can also obtain their medication from their usual pharmacy if it is not listed below. However, the medication is unlikely to be in stock immediately.

Patients should be advised to contact their preferred pharmacy in advance to arrange for the medication to be delivered to the pharmacy. In most cases, it will be available for collection on the same day or the following day.

If the patient does not call ahead, they may attend the pharmacy only to find that the medication is not yet available.

In the event that an EPS is not possible, an FP10 can be generated and the prescription scanned and emailed to the pharmacy. It may also then be necessary to post the prescription if required.

Leadership

Shift Manager

The Weekday Daytime Shift Manager (Monday to Friday) or the Co-ordinating Shift Manager (Saturdays and Bank Holidays, where required) will be supporting the CMDU clinician as part of Severnside in the usual way.

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As with current teams, the Shift Manager will provide leadership and be the first point of contact for queries. The Shift Report should have any relevant information recorded that needs sharing via this route.

There may be some new people in the CMDU team, some who have worked at Osprey or BrisDoc before and some who haven't. Please do introduce yourselves and explain your role and who each team is and what they do.

In addition to the operational accounts that the shift manager is asked to monitor throughout their shift, they will also need to have the CMDU email account open (somicb.cmdu@nhs.net). This is the account that HCP's could send CMDU referral forms to, which will need adding to the CMDU CAS.

Team Manager

As with any other aspect of the service the team managers and operational leads should be available to support all operational and clinical teams as needed and to share learning within the team and with Shift Managers.

Clinical Co-ordinator and case management

The Clinical Co-ordinator (CC) is responsible for providing clinical leadership on shift.

Monday to Friday, it is intended that the CMDU referrals will be managed by them in the first instance, with CMDU trained System CAS or F-ACE prescribing clinicians being the second point of contact if there is not a CC on shift. In a scenario where neither a CC nor a CMDU trained System CAS/ F-ACE prescriber is available during the key operating hours, we will request that a prescribing Weekday Professional Line clinician picks up any waiting CMDU cases.

On a Saturday (and Bank Holiday, where required), the CMDU referrals will be managed by a dedicated CMDU clinician. Where there are no CMDU referrals requiring attention, the CMDU clinician will work from the Out of Hours CAS.

Systems set-up

SIDeR

CMDU clinicians will not have access to EMIS but will instead be able to log onto an additional portal called SIDeR, which is the Somerset equivalent to Connecting Care.

Please refer to the CMDU Clinical handbook for more information.

CLEO set up

Computers should be logged on using the control.room username and the CMDU clinician logged into CLEO with a validated smartcard.

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The Clinical Tool Kit

A page on the clinical tool kit will be provided to support the CMDU team:
<https://www.clinicaltoolkit.co.uk/knowledgebase/somerset-cmdu-crib-sheet/>

CMDU Escalation Plan

As part of our commitment to providing timely and effective healthcare services, this escalation plan outlines the procedures to be followed in scenarios where the CMDU service experiences pressure. The primary goal is to ensure that patient care remains a priority, and resources are strategically allocated during demanding periods.

All efforts will be made to manage patient flow efficiently, maintaining the quality of care.

This escalation plan aims to provide a structured approach to managing pressure, ensuring that patient care remains a top priority.

Escalation

In situations where the service experiences heightened demand, an escalation decision will be implemented.

During periods of high demand, the CMDU clinician should review all CMDU referrals to determine which cases are time critical and must be managed that shift and whether there are any referrals that can be managed on the following shift, which may not be the same day.

Criteria for Pausing CMDU

If the situation arises where we are unable to staff the CMDU shifts (detailed in the 'Patient Flow' section above) by one of the prescribing clinicians (outlined in the Leadership section above), this should be escalated to the IUC Head of Service /Deputy Medical Director. A decision will then be made and communicated to Somerset ICB and GPSU that the service has been paused/closed.

Reopening the service

The decision to reopen the service will be made by the Head of IUC/DMD based on improved conditions and the resolution of any challenges that led to the closure.

Review and continuous improvement

Post-incident reviews will be conducted to analyse the effectiveness of the escalation plan and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Feedback from all stakeholders will be considered to enhance the resilience and efficiency of the service.

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Tables

Date	Version	Name	Comment
23.09.2025	DRAFT 0.1	Julie Marshall	Document creation
08.10.2025	DRAFT 0.2	Julie Marshall	LG comments added
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09.10.2025	1	Lucy Grinnell	Document published
29.12.2025	1.1	Julie Marshall	Addition of CMDU email address and location of patient information
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