Response to Survey by
Healthwatch Devon - Exeter Walk in Centres
November 2014

Northern, Eastern and Western Clinical Commissioning Group (NEW Devon CCG) would like to thank Healthwatch Devon for producing the Exeter Walk-in Centre survey and reporting their findings back to us. The CCG is still reviewing the current network of urgent care services across the Eastern Locality to ensure consistent and sustainable delivery of urgent care.

This survey focuses on the Exeter Walk in Centres (WICs). This document is very valuable and provides further information about the way patients view and use the two WICs.

The key findings in this report show that the majority of patients attend the WIC in the morning and that patients value it as an alternative service to accessing health care via their GP. Interestingly, of those patients sampled, 72% of patients are not trying to contact their GP before attending and 85% are not contacting NHS 111 beforehand.

This is surprising as NHS 111 is the national information service that is aimed at providing information for patients when they think they need help urgently but when the problem is not an emergency. Although 86% of those questioned had their care needs resolved, 14% did not and these patients would need to attend an alternative health provider, likely their GP or A&E.

The CCG has proposed to commission an Urgent Care Centre (UCC) in Exeter, consolidating the services for Sidwell Street and the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, and this is supported by the survey findings. The UCC will have GP medical cover and will provide a centre for the provision of urgent care in Exeter, when patients need an alternative service to their GP.

The report also highlights that patients are aware of the services that the WIC offers and reinforces the CCGs belief that most patients are not trying to contact their GP.
or NHS 111 before attending. The CCG plan to use the information held in this report to try and establish alternative ways of optimising the role of GPs in managing urgent care. The report will also be used in the proposed procurement assessment process.

The findings of the Exeter Walk in Centres report by Healthwatch Devon and the feedback from the public is instrumental within the current review of the urgent care system across the Eastern Locality of Devon.

The review being undertaken is to ensure that in the future there are consistent and sustainable services both within the emergency and urgent care systems. This is an opportunity to create an urgent care structure that is clearly designed around patients, transparent in what it provides and is integrated and aligned with the NHS 111 telephone service. The findings of this review will be influential to commissioning future services and will feed into the Transforming Community Services consultation that is running until the 15 February 2015, as well as the Emergency Department Working Group who oversee the pressures facing urgent care.

12 January 2015