



Accessible Information Statement

Introduction

The NHS England Accessible Information Standard (AIS) has been produced to ensure the provision of accessible, inclusive information and communication for all. At Herts Urgent Care (HUC), respect for all our patients and their individual needs is embedded in our company values. This statement covers all of HUC's corporate communications, which should be followed by all of HUC's staff. We attempt to make every appropriate and reasonable adjustment to help patients access our services.

Staff training and auditing

A range of arrangements, processes and staff training are in place to ensure that disadvantaged groups are handled and treated sympathetically. These include, but are not restricted to:

- a. Elderly and those with dementia
- b. Patients whose first language is not English
- c. Patients with impaired hearing
- d. Patients with learning disabilities
- e. Patients with impaired sight

HUC carry out Equality Impact Assessments for all services.

Training

Equality and Diversity training is part of HUC's induction programme, with 100% of our staff compliant. All members of staff are asked to complete regular annual e-learning modules on our e-learning platform.

All members of staff working in the contact centre who are talking to patients cover disadvantaged groups as part of their Pathways training when they first start their roles. The scenario-based training we provide trains staff to identify callers who may require further support.

HUC will engage with practitioners to deliver training based on their experience.

Auditing

HUC audit application of competencies including skilled questioning, active listening and effective communication, so that we know staff are communicating in a way that reassures patients and leads to the most appropriate clinical outcome.

Specific patient groups

Elderly and those with Dementia

Many of our patients are categorised as 'frail elderly' and often present with multiple symptoms and conditions. Contact Centre staff are trained to identify those conditions and refer patients appropriately.

HUC train staff to act within the five principles of the Mental Capacity Act, presuming that people have capacity to make their own decisions, but if we suspect people lack capacity then we work closely with other agencies to act in the person's best interest.

HUC has links with a number of 'Dementia Friends', who provide training about the impact of living with dementia. This supplements e-learning modules about the role of healthcare teams in dementia care.

Ethnic minorities or patients whose first language is not English

We acknowledge that a large number of patients we cater for are BME (Black and minority ethnic groups). We offer interpretation services, using LanguageLine to ensure patients can give a true account of symptoms, not only when a patient calls NHS111 but for our consultations at GP bases.

We proactively recruit staff to reflect local communities and demographics of the population, including staff with appropriate language skills.

Sensory impairments

All staff in our contact centre know how to access Sensory Impairment Services.

We provide Next Generation Text Service for people who are unable to use a standard telephone, allow staff extra time to complete assessments and interventions fully, and to ensure the patient understands and is able to carry out the next step of their care. We also provide induction loops in our bases.

Learning Disabilities

All staff have access to learning disability awareness training on our e-learning platform which covers current government policy, recognising learning disabilities, differences in abilities and how to meet needs. We provide information in easy read formats.

HUC participate in the purple folder scheme across Hertfordshire. The Purple Folder is there to help people with learning disabilities get the best care and treatment from health professionals. The Purple Folder provides health information about the person with learning disabilities.

Communication materials

Leaflets and posters

Patient leaflets about our services and infection control are available at all our bases as well as our website. On demand, these are also available in large print. An easy read NHS111 leaflet can also be supplied upon demand.



Website

Accessibility information is available on our website www.hucweb.co.uk, including advice on how to use the Narrator (Windows) and VoiceOver (Mac) service that reads content aloud.

Translation functionality is enabled via Google Translate on the website, which translates the site into a multitude of languages.

All Integrated Urgent Care Service leaflets are also available on our website.

Other formats

Where other formats are required, staff are advised to refer the patient to the Quality & Patient Experience Manager. Patients can call 0808 260 9934 to speak or email huc.feedback@nhs.net.

Patient Experience

HUC sees feedback as a vitally important part of ongoing service improvement and encourages an open and honest two-way communication process with all stakeholders. In order to facilitate this, we are proactive about capturing feedback, and clearly publish the different routes for Service Users, Health Professionals and staff to feedback their experience of the service.

Routes include:

- A formal complaints process, which is operated in line with current NHS Guidelines
- NHS Friends and Family Test
- Surveys gathering both qualitative and quantitative feedback – quarterly for patients and annually for staff
- Ongoing collection of Health Professional feedback forms
- Comments on social media via our Twitter feed, HUC Facebook page, our website (which has electronic feedback links),
- Future development of the NHS111 App will include a patient feedback component
- Online sources such as NHS Choices
- Patients can also contact us directly by telephone / writing.

CFEP, an independent patient survey organisation, undertakes surveys, including a 'Friends and Family' section on our behalf, using a number of different feedback questionnaires, generating a return rate of 30% (around 580 per month). CFEP patient feedback comments are received monthly, however if a patient states something that is considered serious on a survey form, then CFEP contact us immediately.