MEDIA RELEASE

Immediate release: Thursday 03 March 2016

GRAYS WALK IN CENTRE TO CLOSE BY END OF MARCH

Nine months after the decision was made to close the service, the Grays walk in centre will finally cease operating on 31 March 2016. Patients registered at the GP practice based on the same site at Thurrock Health Centre can be reassured that the practice will remain open, albeit under a new provider called Herts Urgent Care.

The decision to close the WiC was not taken lightly. It followed nearly a year of engagement with patients, local communities and stakeholders which culminated in a public consultation that ran from 2 February to 24 March 2015.

NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group’s (CCG) Head of Primary Care, Rahul Chaudhari, said: “The consultation report showed that being able to access a GP was the greatest concern for people including the difficulty of getting routine and urgent GP appointments and a desire to see GP opening hours extended to evenings and weekends. The CCG listened and we are pleased that we are already providing weekend GP and nurse appointments in Thurrock.”

Since September last year, four health hubs have been operating every weekend across four localities in Thurrock, Corringham, South Ockendon, Grays and Tilbury, offering up to 70 GP and nurse on Saturdays and Sundays from 9.30am to 12.30pm at each hub; that’s more than 280 GP and nurse appointments available every weekend.

People can book appointments at the health hubs through the receptionist at their regular GP practice; it is important to note that the hubs are not a ‘drop-in’ service.

Rahul continued: “Following an assessment of the data on how the health hubs are being used by patients, there are plans, over the coming months, to enhance the opening hours and days of the health hubs. We piloted some evening appointments during the Christmas period and the recent Junior Doctor’s strike and they proved to be very popular. The health hubs were launched in direct response to what patients told us they wanted - better access to local GP services. We are proud that we are able to deliver this through the health hub structure.”
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