

Review of Minor Injuries and Illness Units in Gloucestershire



Overview

Gloucestershire's Minor Injuries and Illness Units (MIIUs) offer timely support to people with urgent, but not life-threatening, healthcare needs.

MIIUs provide care and treatment for sprains, cuts and wounds, skin problems such as rashes, bites, stings and infections, minor eye injuries, minor fractures, minor head injuries etc. MIIUs therefore offer a real alternative to the Emergency Departments in Gloucestershire Royal and Cheltenham General Hospitals, and indeed, provide a more suitable setting for the care and treatment of less serious ailments.

In 2015-16, performance of the county's seven MIIUs was largely positive as demonstrated below:

Performance indicator	National target	Performance 2015-16
Percentage of people seen, treated and discharged by an MIIU within 4 hours	95%	99.8%
Average length of time spent by someone in an MIIU from arrival to departure	Less than 4 hours	2 hours 20 minutes
Average time before the initial assessment for someone arriving at an MIIU by ambulance	Less than 15 minutes	17 minutes
Average time to treatment in an MIIU	Less than 60 minutes	21 minutes
Percentage of people who left an MIIU without being seen	Less than 5%	0.7%

In Gloucestershire, MIIUs are located in each of the seven community hospitals i.e.:

- **Cirencester Hospital**
(MIIU open 24 hours)
- **Dilke Memorial Hospital**
(MIIU open 8am-11pm)
- **Lydney and District Hospital**
(MIIU open 8am-11pm)
- **North Cotswolds Hospital**
(MIIU open 8am-8pm)
- **Stroud General Hospital**
(MIIU open 24 hours)
- **Tewkesbury Community Hospital**
(MIIU open 8am-8pm)
- **Vale Community Hospital**
(MIIU open 8am-8pm)

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

In June 2015, the CQC undertook an independent assessment of the county's MIIUs, and concluded that they required improvement. This was due to the need to ensure that:

- MIIUs are consistently staffed by sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, experienced and skilled staff;
- people arriving at MIIUs receive prompt assessment ("triage") by a registered nurse;
- MIIU staff receive regular training;
- MIIU equipment, medical devices and medicines are regularly checked;
- organisational systems are in place to assure high quality, effective and safe care and treatment.

Since this report, Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust - the organisation which runs the MIIUs - has successfully addressed most of these issues. For example, clinical leadership has been significantly strengthened in the MIIUs which has further enhanced quality and safety. Also, new staffing arrangements have been introduced so that initial triage is now always undertaken by a fully qualified professional.

However, on-going challenges to fulfilling the current MIIU opening hours, are impacting upon the Trust's ability to consistently deliver high quality, safe services (for more details, see pages 4-6).

These challenges mean that the current levels of MIIU service can no longer be provided.

The Trust has therefore chosen to launch a review. This will seek public feedback on three options for the immediate future of MIIUs, summarised below.

Option	Impact		
	N. Cotswolds, Tewkesbury & Vale MIIUs	Stroud & Cirencester MIIUs	Lydney & Dilke MIIUs
Option 1	None	Close at 8pm	Close at 8pm
Option 2	None	Close at 11pm	None
Option 3	None	Close at 11pm	One MIIU to close at 8pm

In undertaking this review, the Trust acknowledges a number of other strategic reviews across the county (see page 6), and that longer-term, these may prompt further change. However, it is critical for the Trust to take action now in order to maintain the safety and quality of its MIIU services.

Discussions regarding this review's options have already been held with the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group which is liaising with local GPs on this matter.

Discussions with the public will continue until 31 August 2016. A final decision will be made by the Trust Board at its meeting on 20 September 2016.

This review is not about cost-cutting, as each option requires additional investment of between £210,000 and £460,000. Rather, it is intended to ensure the best quality, consistent MIIU service for the people of Gloucestershire.

Reasons for change

There are four key reasons why this review is needed:

a) Nurse recruitment

Prior to the CQC inspection in June 2015, the county's MIUUs were staffed by a combination of Emergency Nurse Practitioners (ENPs), qualified nurses and Healthcare Assistants (HCAs), often with only an ENP and HCA per shift for the smaller sites. However, the CQC raised concerns not only about there being insufficient numbers of qualified staff on hand, but also about the competency of HCAs to potentially triage people on arrival. As a result, the MIUUs now have at least two qualified nurses on duty at all times, one of whom is always an ENP.

However, these new staffing arrangements have created additional challenges. As with most other NHS organisations across the UK, the Trust is currently finding it difficult to recruit nurses and particularly those with specialist skills such as ENPs: also, many nurses are now looking towards retirement. Although the Trust is taking every step possible to attract new staff, qualified nurses and especially ENPs are in short supply nationwide.

It is due to this lack of available staff that the Trust has needed to temporarily close the MIUUs 142 times in the period December 2015 - May 2016 (on all occasions, the Trust sought to secure agency staff before making the decision to close). 94% of these closures have been at the Stroud and Cirencester MIUUs, which are both currently open 24 hours, with the majority of closures being overnight.

Additionally within this six month period, a minimum of 44 shifts in Stroud and Cirencester alone were covered by agency staff, which creates additional risk to quality and service user safety.

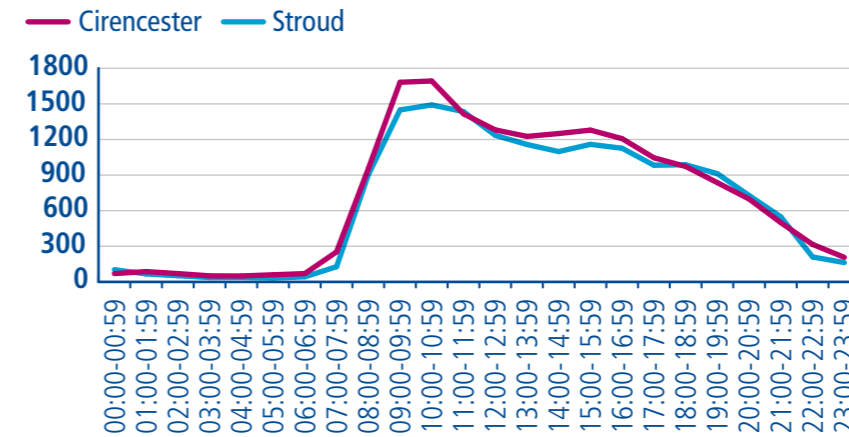
It is proposed that by changing the opening hours of the MIUUs, the Trust could alleviate these staffing difficulties. This would result in the ENPs and other colleagues being reallocated from overnight cover where very few people are seen (see Chart 1 opposite) to daytime shifts where their skills can be better deployed.



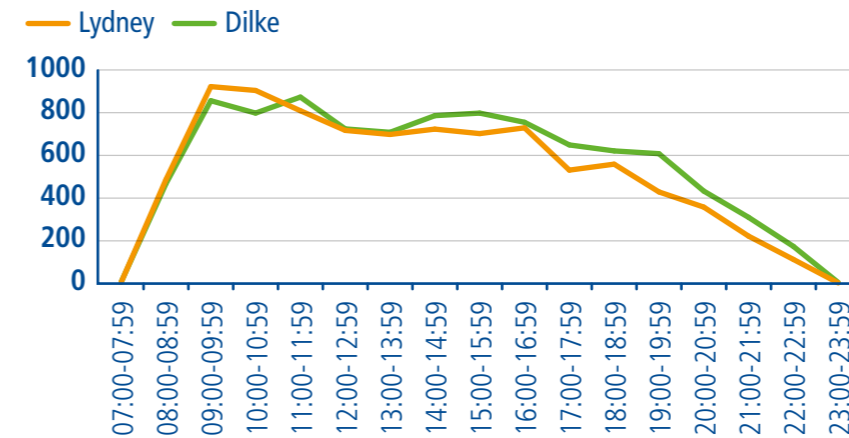
b) Value for money

Although there continues to be an overall increase in the use of MIUUs (i.e. attendances increased by 7% in 2015-16 compared to 2014-15), the numbers of people attending from 8pm onwards remains relatively small. This is illustrated in Charts 1 and 2 below:

**CHART 1:
Full year attendances at Cirencester and Stroud**



**CHART 2:
Full year attendances at Lydney and the Dilke**



As can be seen in Chart 1, attendances between 11pm and 8am are comparatively few i.e. in 2015-16, there were an average 4.49 attendances per night between 11pm and 8am at Stroud and Cirencester combined (or 0.25 people per hour per site), compared to 87.06 attendances at both sites combined 8am-11pm (or 2.90 people per hour per site). Nevertheless despite the low numbers, the overnight service still requires a full staffing complement which does not offer best value for money.

In the Forest of Dean (see Chart 2), there were an average 4.43 attendances per night between 8pm and 11pm at Lydney and the Dilke combined (or 0.74 people per hour per site), compared to 50.64 attendances at both sites combined 8am-8pm (or 2.11 people per hour per site). This would suggest that there is sufficient capacity to handle demand in just one of the MIUUs after 8pm, and that to keep both open until 11pm does not provide good use of resources, especially as the two sites are less than 9 miles apart.



c) Right place for care

Whilst there is no doubt that MIUUs offer a clear option for people with urgent healthcare needs, it is also important to ensure that those people who do attend the Units are in the best place to receive care.

Therefore before launching this review, the Trust's Medical Director looked at the details of people who attended the MIUUs in 2015-16, with particular focus upon those attending outside 8am-8pm. This analysis was then further supported by a series of clinical audits.

Together, these assessments concluded that 90% people attending MIUUs between 11pm and 8am, were either sufficiently well and could have seen their GP the following day, or were seriously ill and should have gone immediately to an acute hospital. Therefore, it would seem that the overnight service is not always the best option for local people. Equally however, this review does recognise that by reducing access to MIUUs, there may be some additional minor pressure upon other parts of the urgent care system: this impact has already been discussed with the Trust's partners.

d) Recognisable opening times

There are currently three different operating hours for MIUUs in Gloucestershire, which can create difficulties for recognition and understanding of what services are available at what times. This is of course, impacted further when there are temporary closures as described on page 4.

It is therefore suggested that greater consistency in operating times countywide would hugely benefit public awareness of service availability.

Other local strategic reviews

In undertaking this review, the Trust is mindful that other initiatives are currently being explored within Gloucestershire, and that any proposed solution to MIU challenges, should align to these additional strategies. These include:

- a review of all urgent care services, including Emergency Departments, out-of-hours services as well as MIUUs, which is being led by the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group;
- a review of the future of health and social care services in the Forest of Dean, being led jointly by the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and the Trust.

Option 1: to change the opening hours of all seven MIUUs to 8am-8pm

This would mean changing the hours of operation at the following MIUUs:

- Cirencester and Stroud MIU from 24 hours to 8am-8pm
- Lydney and the Dilke MIU from 8am-11pm to 8am-8pm

The MIUUs at North Cotswolds, Tewkesbury and Vale would be unaffected as they are already open 8am-8pm

Reason for change (see pages 4-6)	Option analysis
Nurse recruitment	Would significantly reduce the challenge of recruitment by having fewer shifts to cover: would also address the problem of recruiting nurses to work an overnight shift which is very unrewarding, given the low numbers of people seen
Value for money	Would provide better value for money by focusing service delivery upon those hours of day when demand is highest. Would ensure availability of the most skilled and experienced nurses during the day, making the most effective and efficient use of the ENPs
Right place for care	Could create additional minor pressures upon partner organisations (such as South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust and Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust which runs Gloucestershire Royal and Cheltenham General Hospitals): however, would support people to be seen in the right setting especially during the period 11pm-8am
Recognisable opening times	Would provide absolute consistency of opening hours across Gloucestershire, resulting in MIU availability being fully equitable to all people within the county
Other	May not fully align to other countywide plans, in particular those for urgent care and the Forest of Dean

Option 2: to change the opening hours of the MIUUs in Cirencester and Stroud to 8am-11pm

This would mean changing the hours of operation at the following MIUUs:

- Cirencester MIUU from 24 hours to 8am-11pm
- Stroud MIUU from 24 hours to 8am-11pm

The MIUUs at North Cotswolds, Tewkesbury, Vale, Lydney and the Dilke would be unaffected

Reason for change (see pages 4-6)	Option analysis
Nurse recruitment	Would reduce the challenge of recruitment by having fewer shifts to cover: would also address the problem of recruiting nurses to work an overnight shift which is very unrewarding, given the low numbers of people seen
Value for money	Would provide improved value for money by removing overnight cover in the two 24 hour sites, which is extremely expensive to operate, but which sees few service users: would also ensure availability of the most skilled and experienced nurses during the day, making more effective and efficient use of the ENPs
Right place for care	Would support people to be seen in the right setting, given that only 10% attendances after 11pm are appropriate, equating to 165 people per year across both sites or approximately 3 people per week
Recognisable opening times	Would provide improved consistency of opening times across Gloucestershire
Other	May not fully align to other countywide plans, in particular those for urgent care

Option 3: to change the opening hours of the MIUUs in Cirencester and Stroud to 8am-11pm, and also the opening hours of either Lydney or the Dilke to 8am-8pm

This would mean changing the hours of operation at the following MIUUs:

- Cirencester and Stroud MIUU from 24 hours to 8am-11pm
- Lydney or the Dilke MIUU from 8am-11pm to 8am-8pm

The MIUUs at North Cotswolds, Tewkesbury, Vale, and Lydney or the Dilke would be unaffected

Reason for change (see pages 4-6)	Option analysis
Nurse recruitment	Would reduce the challenge of recruitment by having fewer shifts to cover: would also address the problem of recruiting nurses to work an overnight shift which is very unrewarding, given the low numbers of people seen
Value for money	Would provide improved value for money by removing overnight cover in the two 24 hour sites, which is extremely expensive to operate, but which sees few service users: would also address the concern that there is insufficient activity at Lydney and Dilke to justify both remaining open until 11pm. Would also ensure availability of the most skilled and experienced nurses during the day, making more effective and efficient use of the ENPs
Right place for care	Would support people to be seen in the right setting, given that only 10% attendances after 11pm are appropriate, equating to 165 people per year across both sites or approximately 3 people per week
Recognisable opening times	Would provide improved consistency of opening times across Gloucestershire
Other	May not fully align to other countywide plans, in particular those for the Forest of Dean

How to find out more

To find out more about the options for MIUUs, Trust representatives will be visiting the following venues between 13 July and 31 August 2016*:

Locality	Venue	Form	Date	Time
Forest of Dean	Cinderford Triangle, High Street, Cinderford GL14 2SH	Information bus	Wednesday 13 July	10:00-11:30
	Lydney and District Hospital, Lydney GL15 5JE	Information bus at the Friends of Lydney Hospital fete	Saturday 16 July	From 14:00
	The Main Place, Old Station Way, Coleford GL16 8RH	Drop-in	Monday 1 August	15:00-16:00
	Coleford Market Place, Coleford GL16 8AA	Information bus at the Clock Tower Roundabout	Thursday 18 August	13:30-15:00
Stroud	Stroud Holy Trinity Church, Trinity Road, Stroud GL5 2HX	Drop-in	Thursday 28 July	15.15-16.30
	Stroud Holy Trinity Church, Trinity Road, Stroud GL5 2HX	Drop-in	Tuesday 2 August	15:00-16.30
	11 King Street, Stroud GL5 3BX	Information bus	Monday 22 August	10:00-11:30

*The Trust will also be undertaking some targeted engagement with key stakeholder groups throughout the review period.

Locality	Venue	Form	Date	Time
Cirencester	Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester GL7 2BX	Drop-in	Wednesday 27 July	11.15-12.30
	Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester GL7 2BX	Drop-in	Tuesday 9 August	11.00-12.30
	Cirencester Hospital, Tetbury Road, Cirencester GL7 1UY	Information bus	Friday 26 August	13:30-15:00
Gloucester	Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2DH	Information bus	Monday 18 July	10:00-11.30
	Friendship Café, Gloucester GL4 6PR	Drop-in	Thursday 18 August	10:00-11.30
Cheltenham	173 High Street, Cheltenham GL50 1DF	Information bus	Friday 19 August	10:00-11:30
North Cotswolds	The Square, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1AB	Information bus	Monday 8 August	10:00-11:30
Tewkesbury	Spring Gardens, Oldbury Road, Tewkesbury GL20 5DN	Information bus	Friday 5 August	10:00-11:30
Dursley	Outside Post Office, Silver Street, Dursley GL11 4BN	Information bus	Thursday 4 August	10:00-11:30

Additionally, you can visit our website at www.glos-care.nhs.uk

Also look out for discussions on social media (Facebook, Twitter) including a Twitter Chat on 8 August and 24 August, both at 13:00-15:00 [#MIIUreview](https://twitter.com/MIIUreview)

How to register your preference

Reply-paid cards have been distributed alongside this information booklet, which you can use to register your preference for option 1, 2 or 3 as described. You can leave the card either at the site from where you collected it, or else you can return it to the Trust using the pre-paid address.

Alternatively, you can register your choice via the Trust website (www.glos-care.nhs.uk)

All responses must be received by the Trust by midnight on 31 August 2016.

Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust
Edward Jenner Court
1010 Pioneer Avenue
Gloucestershire Business Park
Brockworth, Gloucester GL3 4AW

Call: 0300 421 8100

Email: miiureview@glos-care.nhs.uk

Visit: www.glos-care.nhs.uk