

**HSCB Consultation on the Proposed Permanent
Relocation of GP Out of Hours from Moneymore
to Mid Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt**

Consultation commences: Monday 14 August 2017
Consultation closes: 5.00pm on Monday 11 December 2017

Introduction

The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) is consulting on the proposed permanent relocation of GP Out of Hours from Moneymore to Mid Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt.

Everyone in Northern Ireland has access to a GP Out of Hours service for those urgent conditions which cannot wait until their own Doctor's surgery is open. In the Northern Local Commissioning Group / Northern Health and Social Care Trust area, GP Out of Hours services are provided by Dalriada Urgent Care (DUC) from the following locations:

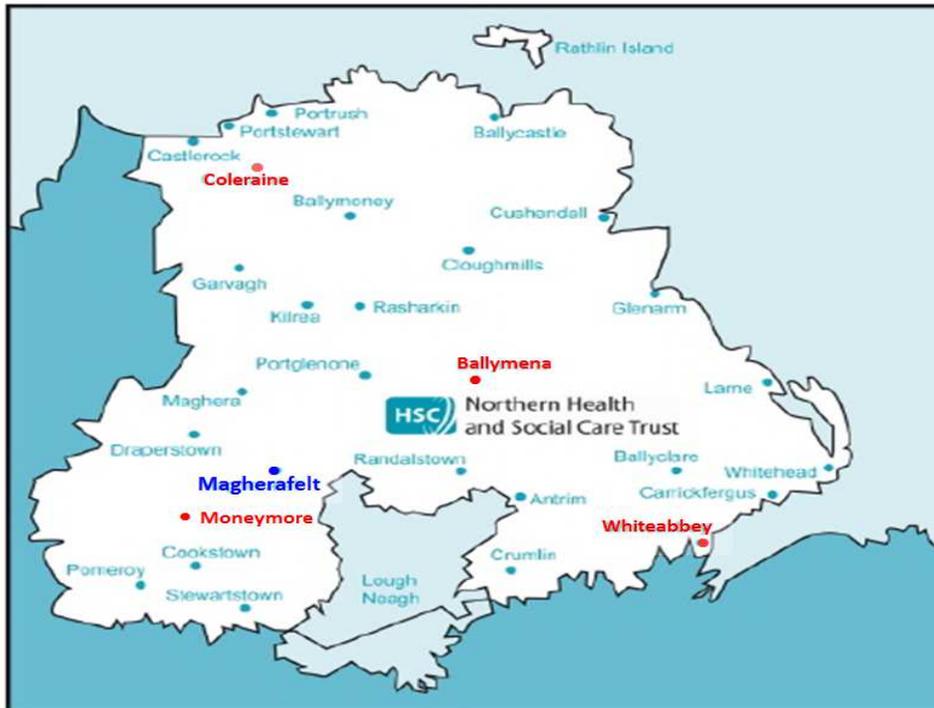
- Ballymena GP Out of Hours Centre
- Causeway Hospital, Coleraine
- Whiteabbey Hospital
- Moneymore GP Out of Hours Centre *

*It should be noted that patients are treated in Moneymore by the GP Out of Hours until midnight. After midnight, patients are routinely seen in the Mid Ulster Hospital, Magherafelt. This has been the case for some time now and has worked well for the smaller number of patients who are treated by a GP after midnight in the Mid Ulster area.

Accessing the GP Out of Hours Service

All patients have to telephone the GP Out of Hours service in the first instance. Typically, 50% of people are given advice over the telephone, 40% are invited to come and see the GP and 10% are offered a home visit. Patients do not present at an out of hours centre unless they have been invited to attend.

Map of the Northern LCG/Northern Trust area showing location of GP OOH services in red



Proposed Relocation from Moneymore to Mid Ulster Hospital

The Health and Social Care Board which contracts with DUC for GP Out of Hours services, is proposing that the GP Out of Hours service currently based at 13 Station Road, Moneymore until midnight each day permanently relocates to the Mid Ulster Hospital for all Mid Ulster consultations. Sited around 5 miles from Moneymore, the Mid Ulster Hospital is a well known and accessible facility with ample parking for patients out of hours.

The proposed relocation is considered necessary because the Moneymore premises are no longer fit for purpose as major works need to be carried out.

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) has agreed to accommodate the GP Out of Hours service on the Mid Ulster Hospital site (Outpatients' Department).

Annually, DUC receives around 162,000 calls and some 30,000 of these originate from Mid Ulster patients. As before, patients will be given advice over the telephone, invited to attend the Mid Ulster Hospital to be seen by a GP, or offered a home visit, where appropriate. Services from the other three GP Out of Hours locations will remain unchanged.

Benefits of the Permanent Relocation

There are a number of benefits to the proposed relocation:

- Dalriada Urgent Care could move directly into Mid Ulster Hospital with only minimal adaptations required and there would be no disruption to the GP out of hours service;
- The Mid Ulster Hospital site is accessible, well lit and offers ample parking for patients out of hours;
- Another service moving into the Mid Ulster Hospital site will help demonstrate the commitment to that site as a hub for local services;
- There would not be an issue with 'lone working' as is currently the case on the Moneymore site when the GP is not on site and other staff are on their own;
- The relocation of DUC to the Mid Ulster Hospital would be in keeping with the Mid Ulster Community Plan commitment to co-locate health and well-being services in each of the three main towns (which includes Magherafelt).
- Closer working between DUC and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust may open up other opportunities for joint projects and collaboration to benefit local communities.

Equality, Good Relations and Human Rights

The HSCB is required to consider the potential equality, good relations and human rights impact of its proposals for change. An equality screening of this proposal has been undertaken and can be viewed at www.hscboard.hscni.net/consultations. It indicates that some residents of the former Cookstown council area will be required to travel further if they are to access GP Out of Hours services before midnight. Consequently, some residents of the former Magherafelt Council area will not have to travel as far to access a GP out of hours. Anyone who requires to be seen by a GP out of hours and who cannot make the journey because of frailty or disability will continue to be offered a home visit.

If this proposal is agreed, there will be a communications strategy put in place to ensure that all those who need to know about the relocation are appropriately informed in a timely manner.

How to Respond

It is important that we engage with those who use GP Out of Hours services in the Mid Ulster area to find out their views on the proposed permanent relocation. There are a number of ways that you can respond to this proposal:

- Complete the questionnaire at www.hscboard.hscni.net/consultations;
- Write to us at:
Siobhan Millar
HSCB
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
Ballymena
BT42 1QB
- Email us at siobhan.millar@hscni.net

If you would like to meet with HSCB representatives to discuss the proposed relocation or if you require the details in an alternative format, please contact Siobhan Millar on (028) 9536 2843 or as above to arrange.

Consultation on this proposal will run from Monday 14 August 2017 to Monday 11 December 2017 at 5.00 pm.

Before you submit your responses please read the following information regarding the confidentiality of responses in the context of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Confidentiality

Freedom of Information Act (2000) – Confidentiality of Consultations

It is expected that we will publish a summary of responses following the completion of this engagement exercise. Your responses and all other responses may be disclosed on request. We can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances.

Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality as they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to this consultation. The HSCB cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to this consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to this consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

The HSCB should not agree to hold information received from third parties "in confidence" which is not confidential in nature. Acceptance by the HSCB of confidentiality provisions must be for

good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact
The Information Commissioner's Office, or see website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/information-commissioner-s-office>.