



**Gateshead Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Ambulatory Emergency Care services in Gateshead

# Ambulatory Emergency Care at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead

This leaflet is to help provide information about our ambulatory care service at the hospital to GPs and primary care providers across Gateshead.

Ambulatory Care is a concept that offers patients access to urgent diagnostics and medical review without the need for being directly admitted into hospital.

Many of the people now using ambulatory care would have previously been treated as an inpatient, which often means an unnecessary overnight stay and more disruption for the patient.

This facility aids the flow of patients in a safe and efficient way to avoid disrupting their day to day life unnecessarily.

## Meet the team at QE Gateshead



## What is Ambulatory Emergency Care?

Ambulatory Emergency Care (AEC) is an approach which results in a significant proportion of emergency adult patients being managed safely and efficiently on the same day, avoiding admission to a hospital bed. This means that patients are assessed, diagnosed, treated and able to go home the same day, without being admitted to hospital overnight.

Ambulatory Emergency Care is specifically for patients with an Urgent need who would traditionally have been admitted. These patients may be unwell but will be stable enough that they do not need urgent treatment or close monitoring.

## **What kind of patients should come to Ambulatory Emergency Care?**

Current patients are usually relatively mobile and those who require extra help or a hoist are generally not suitable for ambulatory care, although we are looking at how we can better meet the needs of more frail patients in the future.

Suitable patients for AEC include those who may have specific conditions and a pathway approach can be taken. Examples could include: DVT, PE, Cellulitis, symptomatic anaemia, abdominal pain, abscesses, surgical wound problems, infected wounds, Multi resistant UTI's sensitive only to IV Antibiotics.

Our aim however, is to support any patients that are clinically appropriate to be seen and managed by the AEC in one day in order to prevent admission, rather than working to a pre-agreed list of conditions. If you think your patient might be appropriate, please contact the Clinical Bed Manager to discuss their individual needs.

The recommended approach is to think of everyone as being suitable for AEC until proven otherwise (those who need very close monitoring, are clinically very unwell, unstable or have concerning observations would not be suitable for Ambulatory Care.) Currently the majority of surgical referrals from GPs are being managed through Ambulatory Care.

## **How can you access Ambulatory Emergency care?**

If you are telephoning the hospital with a referral for admission the Clinical Bed Manager taking the call may ask you if you think the patient is suitable for AEC or ask you some further questions to help them decide if this is an alternative clinical route.

If you are unsure whether a patient would be suitable please discuss it with the Clinical Bed Manager or alternatively call the Ambulatory Care team direct on 0191 4453482.

The AEC Service is located on the Ground floor of the hospital in the Orange zone. This is close to the front of the hospital next to the Out- Patients' Department.

It is also relatively close to the Emergency Care Centre which houses the Emergency Department (ED – also known as A&E), the co-located and integrated Urgent Care Service and the Emergency Assessment Unit.

The service is open 7 days a week and will accept referrals between 8.15am and 7pm. The service closes at 9pm. The service accepts referrals from healthcare professionals across the Trust (including the Emergency Department) and Primary Care via the Clinical Bed Manager.

Please note that some patients may still require admission to hospital following their assessment in AEC.

### **The service is.....**

- An alternative route to an urgent medical or surgical opinion and access to same day diagnostic services for patients who would otherwise be admitted.
- A place where limited therapeutic interventions such as IV fluids or antibiotics, could be given to patients who may only require a brief period of treatment before discharge on the same day.

### **The service is not.....**

- A replacement for primary care. Most people with medical conditions that do not require emergency admission should be advised to consult their GP who may refer them to hospital if required.
- A replacement for specialty or general Out- Patient clinics. Specific conditions, including potential diagnoses of cancer are best dealt with in the relevant clinics. Access is via a referral from primary care.
- A reassurance service, providing routine follow up and safety netting..
- An avenue to resolve complex social problems.
- Suitable for patients with psychological needs (for example self poisoning).

### **Further information**

This animated film explains the principles behind AEC:

<http://www.ambulatoryemergencycare.org.uk/Directory/AEC-Directory-Links/AEC-Animated-Film>

You are more than welcome to visit our AEC Unit and the Emergency Care Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital- just speak to one of the contacts below.

#### **AEC Key Contacts:**

- Tamsin Long- Department Sister in Charge: 0191 4453482
- Dr Ruth Petch- Clinical Lead for AEC: 0191 4453482
- Pam Naylor- Service Line Manager for Emergency Care: 0191 4452177
- Clinical Bed Managers- for referring a patient for AEC: 0191 4820000