

Blood testing services in BHR


Havering Health Scrutiny Committee

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Overview

- Set out current blood testing services across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge
 - Recent issues with local blood testing in Havering
 - Our partnership working – how BHR CCGs and key providers, BHRUT and NELFT are working together to improve blood testing services across the boroughs
 - Our plans – review underway looking at a new model for blood testing services across BHR
 - Questions
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Blood testing services in BHR

Local people currently access blood testing services in numerous locations across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.

- Blood testing services are provided by BHRUT, NELFT and local GPs.
 - Currently there are around **40** locations across the boroughs, this includes GP practices, health clinics and our hospitals (King George Hospital, Queen's Hospital and Barking Community Hospital).
 - Redbridge patient also access Whipp's Cross Hospital for blood tests.
 - On average, it is estimated around **255,000** people use blood testing services across BHR every year, and we expect this to increase over the coming years.
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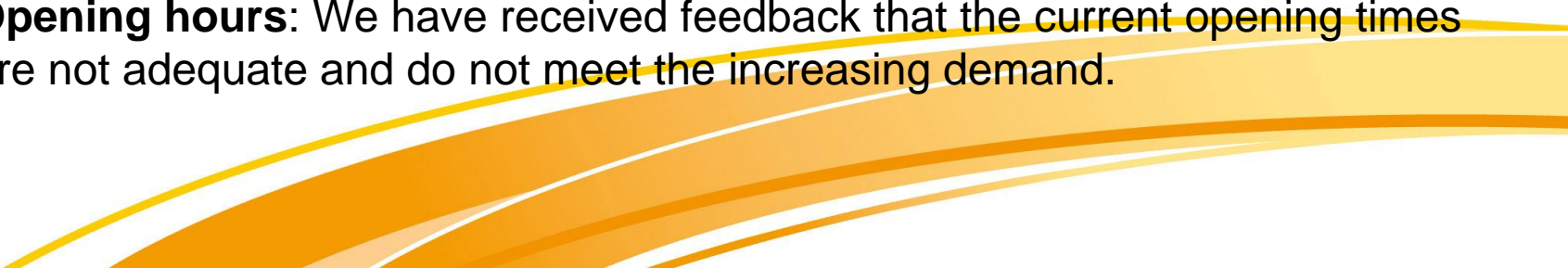
Recent issues

Some Havering clinics recently experienced a higher than usual demand for blood testing and this resulted in unexpected delays. Some of these issues and what we are doing to resolve are as follows:

1. Some Havering practices from where BHRUT provided the blood taking services were temporarily stopped.
 - ✓ **This was due to lack of receptionist cover available at the practice which compromised the safety of the service. Services that closed temporarily have now reopened.**
2. Temporary closure of BHRUT community clinics to prioritise blood testing at Queen's Hospital – causing pressure on NELFT services at Elm Park and Victoria Centre.
 - ✓ **BHR CCGs, BHRUT and NELFT are currently conducting a system wide strategic review to manage demand by location. This will ensure the right number of phlebotomists are available at each location/or for longer so they can see more patients.**

Our challenges

BHR CCGs recognise that the level of service in Havering is not as extensive as the service in the other two boroughs, this includes:

- **Community outreach clinics:** Havering is geographically larger than Redbridge and B&D, therefore having more phlebotomy outreach clinics at new locations or extending the hours of current provisions will improve patient experience. At present there is 6 outreach clinics. Due to limited capacity of the outreach clinics most people in Havering potentially visit Queen's Hospital for blood testing.
 - **Services in GP practices:** While some practices in B&D and Redbridge have in house Phlebotomists, no Havering practice provide this additional service. This is a historical issue due to shortage of GPs, lack of building space and shortage of practice nurses. More Havering GPs need to offer this service locally.
 - **Opening hours:** We have received feedback that the current opening times are not adequate and do not meet the increasing demand.
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Why can't more GP practices provide blood testing?

To provide blood testing services, the premises need to be large enough to accommodate additional patients waiting to be seen. This could be anything between 15-20 or more patients at one time.

The majority of GP practices in Havering are single-handed practices, and due to their small size are not able to accommodate large clinics.




At present practices that host outreach clinics for NELFT/BHRUT are the larger clinics/practice and would have been selected based on the size of practice and their ability to provide the clinic space/reception staff required to provide a ticketing system for phlebotomy tests.

Working with BHRUT and NEFLT to improve the service

BHR CCGs, along with BHRUT, NEFLT and Bart's are currently reviewing blood testing services across BHR. The aim of this strategic review is to:


- ✓ **Better manage the demand** - this will be through mapping the current locations, opening times, and looking at the number of people using the services.
- ✓ **Improve access** – look at how the service could be redesigned to make it easier to access blood testing services closer to home.
- ✓ **Improve equality** - identifying where changes are needed to increase the level of service to all BHR residents .

One suggestion made so far is to have as a priority one online page for BHR residents with details locations and opening times of all the blood testing services available in BHR - regardless of the provider. We will look into doing this following our review.



Working towards a new service

Next steps

- Scope current services – location mapping, outlining key issues and current demand for the service.
✓ **We have started this process, and will finish by December 2018.**
 - Strategic review that outlines options to improve current services (potential new sites, and extend opening hours at existing sites).
✓ **Review will begin from January 2019.**
 - We will engage with local people, partners, and providers on options for any new service model
✓ **We will do this from February 2019.**
 - Review feedback, continued engagement, work with providers, and launch new service.
✓ **Potentially launch new configured service from spring 2019.**
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Questions?

