

Informing the transformation of urgent and emergency care service delivery models

Public understanding of and access to services provision



In July 2015, NHS England and its national partners selected eight urgent and emergency care vanguards which will work to improve the coordination of urgent and emergency care services and reduce the pressure on A&E departments. Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) Clinical Commissioning Groups are one of these vanguards, aiming to create a simplified, streamlined urgent care system delivering intelligent, responsive urgent care for 750,000 residents in the most challenged health economy in the country.

In spring 2016 BHR CCGs commissioned BMG Research to undertake large scale, fast turnaround telephone research among residents locally to quantify the extent to which patients are confused by the many and various urgent and emergency care services available to them – A&E, walk-in centres, urgent care centres, GPs, pharmacists and out of hours services.

This survey was designed to explore awareness of existing care services and current levels of service usage. Alongside these measures, scenarios were also explored to determine the extent to which residents are likely to seek the appropriate care in response to specific health conditions. This provided evidence of how well residents differentiate between urgent and emergency care.

3,000 interviews were completed by the BMG interviewing team over two and a half weeks, with a summary report following one week after the end of fieldwork. BMG also contributed to a meeting of key stakeholders, presenting the emerging issues from an interim data set while fieldwork was completed.

The resulting data set and report has provided BHR CCGs with a robust evidence base that can be explored on a borough by borough basis and by groups of particular interest (residents with children under five, those with long term conditions and those with caring responsibilities). It has provided insight into spatial gaps in awareness of certain services; the extent to which signposting from NHS sources is used prior to presentation at providers of urgent and emergency care, and interest in more personalised IT solutions that might be developed in the future. All of this information will be used to inform the next stage of the vanguard project. Our mix of rapid turnaround and detailed insight produced very positive feedback from our client.

“Fantastic! Thank you and the team for such a superb effort in completing the project. I know everyone has really worked hard, and it’s hugely appreciated. This has been such a great project to work with you on.”

Melissa Hoskins

Communications and Engagement Manager

Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Groups