

Emergency and acute medical care in over 16s: service delivery and organisation

Information for the public
Published: 28 March 2018

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Making services better for people who need emergency care

Pressure on hospitals keeps rising as people are living longer and many have long-term or serious health conditions. A shortage of care and support in people's homes and communities means that people make more emergency visits to hospital and often stay longer than they need to, or become unwell again after they go home. NICE has written advice to help staff and services give better care to people with serious illnesses, both in and out of hospital, so that everyone gets the right care when, and where, they need it.

We want this guideline to improve services by making sure:

- more care is given close to home – for example by training ambulance staff to give more treatments to people at home and providing more specialist nurses in the community to support people with health conditions
- people get the right level of care from community staff to spot problems early, like a flare-up of a health problem or difficulties taking medicines, that could otherwise lead to an emergency hospital visit
- people who do need hospital care see a senior doctor quickly when they arrive and then regularly if they are admitted, including over weekends and bank holidays
- people leave hospital as soon as they can – hospital staff should start planning early the support people will need when they get home, and work with health and social care staff in the community to make sure this is in place.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your health professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

If you can't understand the information you are given, tell your health professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have used emergency and urgent care services and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-1259-9