North East Essex Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Hub

North East Essex Health and Wellbeing Alliance and Practice Plus Group

The Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) hub was launched in January 2025 to address health inequalities for the population of Clacton; an area of high prevalence for respiratory conditions, with some of the highest attendances at urgent and emergency care. The integrated care mode used in the ARI hub model was developed by a group consisting of representatives from partner organisations in North East Essex, and it aligns primary, community and urgent care services. The team consists of experienced urgent care GPs and Advanced Nurse Practitioners supported by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) including social prescribers.

Patients are offered either a remote or face-to-face consultation, depending on their care needs. Alongside the hub, local Respiratory consultants have been leading weekly MDT meetings, where practice clinicians bring complex patients for discussion. The ARI hub accepts patients in Clacton, identified using PHM data, from five GP practices for where the service would have the greatest impact. Patients are supported to be treated in the community, and by offering same day appointments, acute respiratory conditions are managed promptly, resulting in a reduction in the number of ambulances and ED/UTC attendances for patients with acute respiratory exacerbations. In its first three months, the ARI Hub received over 1300 referrals from the participating GP practices. Early data has already shown significant impact and improved management within primary care. Outpatient referrals decreased by 62% in February 2025 and 74% in March compared to 2024. Emergency department activity across North East Essex, including Clacton hospital, showed a 7% reduction in February 2025 and an 18% reduction in March 2025 compared to 2024.