

Case Study

Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) during COVID-19 at Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

November 2020

Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) Hospitals Programme

Same-day emergency care (SDEC) aims to minimise and remove delays in the emergency patient pathway, allowing services to care for urgent/emergency patients within the same day of arrival as an alternative to hospital admission.

The national programme team for Same Day Emergency Care have produced several case studies to highlight best practice across England.

Same Day Emergency Care playing its part in the pandemic

Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, continued to keep their Same Day Emergency Care service open throughout the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, appreciating its vital part in supporting the emergency floor.

Despite constraints as a result of Covid-19 in workforce and their environment, the team continued to keep SDEC services running, knowing that in order to rapidly assess, treat and discharge home would help in reducing the risk of Covid-19 infection but also support patient flow.

In Urgent & Emergency Care we need to be clear, consistent & current.

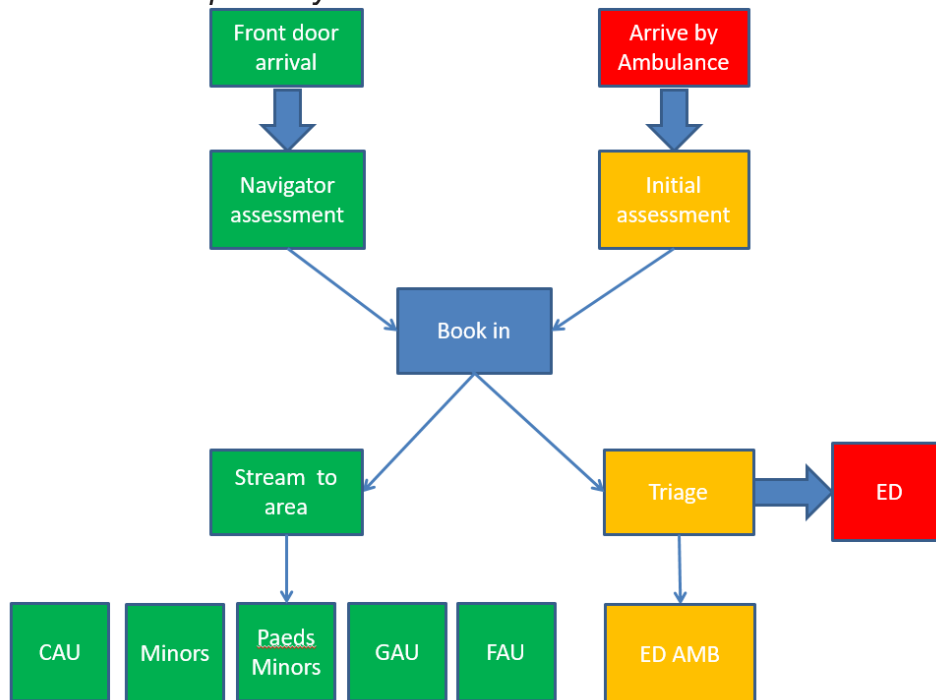
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The combined assessment unit (CAU), which supports both medical/ surgical, is adjacent to the Emergency Department (ED). The unit provides the ability for patients with an emergency/ urgent need to be seen within an SDEC service and allowing ED to concentrate on the critically

ill patients. Within ED itself, the team have separated their department into “hot” (Covid-19 positive/ query) and “cold” (Covid-19 negative) areas including a dedicated SDEC respiratory service.

Figure 1 highlights the initial front door pathway for both self-presenting “walk-in” patients (green line) and ambulance arrivals (red/ yellow line). Both pathways have the ability for the patient to be seen within an SDEC service.

Figure 1. – Initial front door pathway.



Abbreviation Key

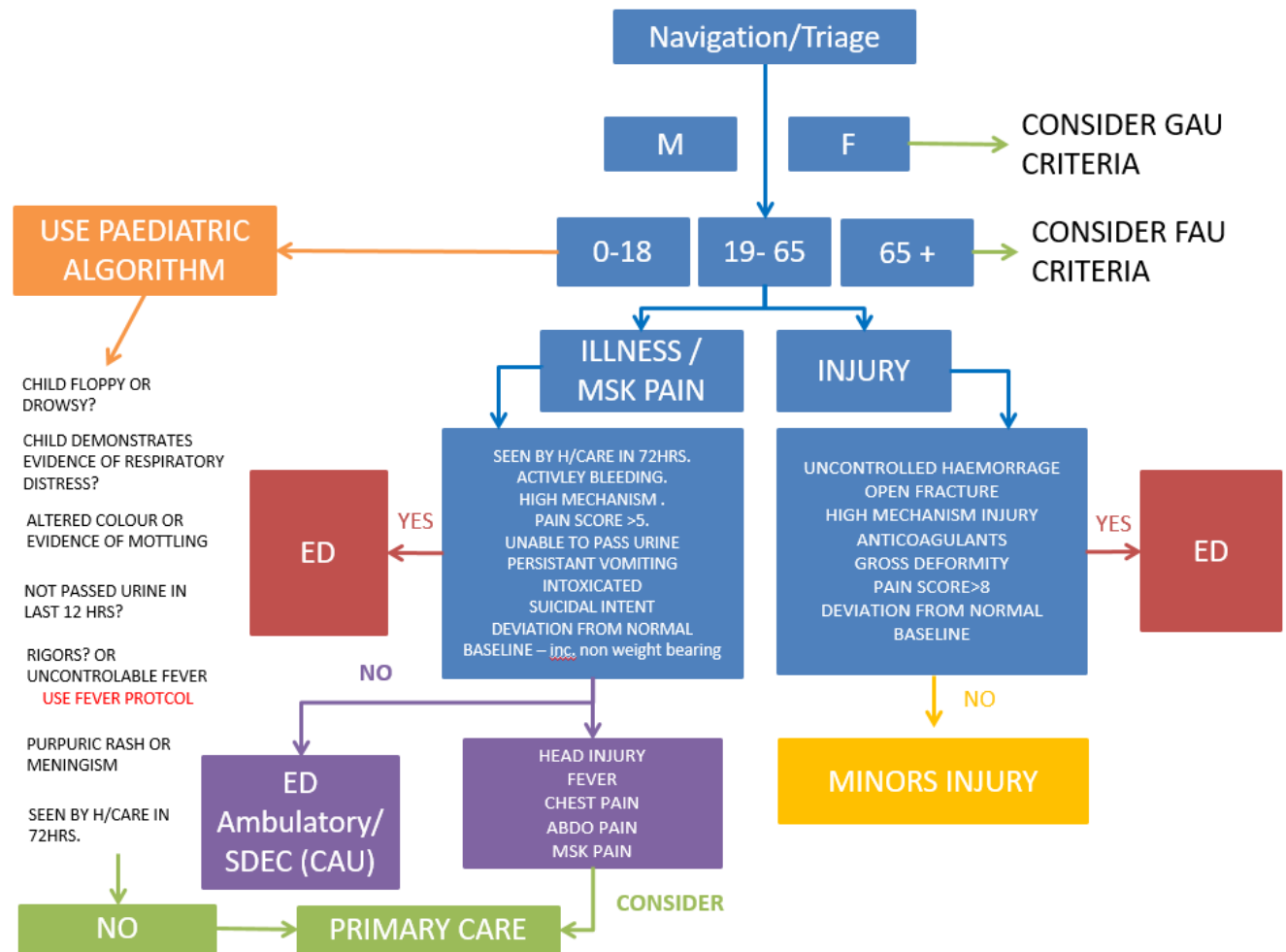
CAU – Combined Assessment Unit for Medical/ Surgical SDEC

GAU – Gynae Assessment Unit

FAU – Frailty Assessment Unit

Figure 2 highlights the streaming process undertaken to support in determining the patient pathway.

Figure 2. – ED Streaming Pathway Tool



What has helped Warrington & Halton to continue operating SDEC?

- The team have actively encouraged SDEC by default across the clinical and operational teams.
- There is a senior nurse at the front door, who undertakes the streaming to the right service (see figure 2).
- Using clinical systems better to enable clinical and operational staff to have an overview of the entire hospital, including ED, SDEC and inpatient beds to support in forecasting demand. At Warrington & Halton, this is achieved through Nerve Centre.
- ED, SDEC and patient flow all sits within one clinical division unit, meaning everyone has a part to play in the overall patient journey from the front door.

Trialling new ways of working with NHS 111

The team recently went live with direct referral from NHS 111 into their Emergency Department. Using the Emergency Care Data Set (ECDS) to support, the team were able to define the criteria for the Directory of Services in which patients would be suitable to attend the department following a call to NHS 111. Note, patients are booked into the department following a clinician conversation with the patient from the Clinical Assessment Service (CAS) within NHS 111.

Stats at a glance

431 appointments referred directly from NHS 111 during September & October 20.

- 83% had their treatment completed
- 8% were admitted to a hospital bed
- 2% were streamed to ED

For the initial phase, the team initially set the ability for NHS 111 to book into 2 slots each hour, providing 48 slots per day.

When the patient arrives, they are streamed to the most appropriate

area across the emergency floor for their treatment, including SDEC. As part of the national 111 First campaign, following a period of monitoring and evaluation the team will also be looking at the opportunity to develop direct booking into SDEC in the future.

The Future

Recognising the need to support SDEC, the team are designing a new purpose-built unit. The unit will continue to be a joint medical and surgical same day emergency care service and with it provides greater capacity for patients to be rapidly seen, treated, assessed and discharged.

Do you want to find out more information?

This case study was produced with Dr James Wallace, Emergency Medicine Consultant at Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

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Do you have a Same Day Emergency Care service that you want the national team to know more about?

Get in touch at: nhsi.sdec@nhs.net