

Supplementary File 2 Further information on urgent treatment centres

'Urgent Treatment Centre' (UTC) is the label that, following the Urgent and Emergency Care Review, has been given to most English walk-in centres, minor injuries units and urgent care centres to reduce confusion.

UTCs are part of NHS England's vision to standardise urgent care and provide a consistent^[235] and understandable alternative to ED when it is clinically appropriate.

Those with the label are expected to have similar operating standards – namely, be open at least 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, be GP-led, staffed by nurses, GPs and other clinicians, have access to simple diagnostics (electrocardiogram, urinalysis, and in some cases X-ray.), have a full resuscitation trolley and equipment, and be able to issue prescriptions).^[64] Patients should be clinically assessed within 15 minutes of arrival and seen within 2 hours.

There is less restriction in terms of their necessary location and the symptoms and presentations they could manage. Only suggestions and recommendations were made,^[236] with responsibility for the commissioning of services having been devolved to commissioning groups.

For the present project, information was required on the extent to which UTCs were operating (i.e., their number) and their exact locations. This information was necessary to inform elements of the study (e.g., qualitative interviews and DCE design). This information was not publicly available. A Freedom of Information request was thus submitted to NHS England (Official case reference number: 060240; 28 May 2019). A response was not received. Following a ruling in favour of the applicants by the Information Commissioner's Office (Official case reference number: FS50858980; 15 August 2019), the required information was provided by NHS England (Official case reference number: 059338; 8 October 2019). It permitted the number of UTCs to be determined, their locations to be mapped (see Figure below) and their location relative to adult Type 1 hospital EDs to be determined. Note that this account of proceedings reflects that of the applicants. NHS England was not offered a right of reply.

As of 18th September 2019, NHS England confirmed there were 120 UTCs in England that met the operating standards described in paragraph three above (with further to follow). Of these, 55% were based on the same site as a Type 1 adult ED.

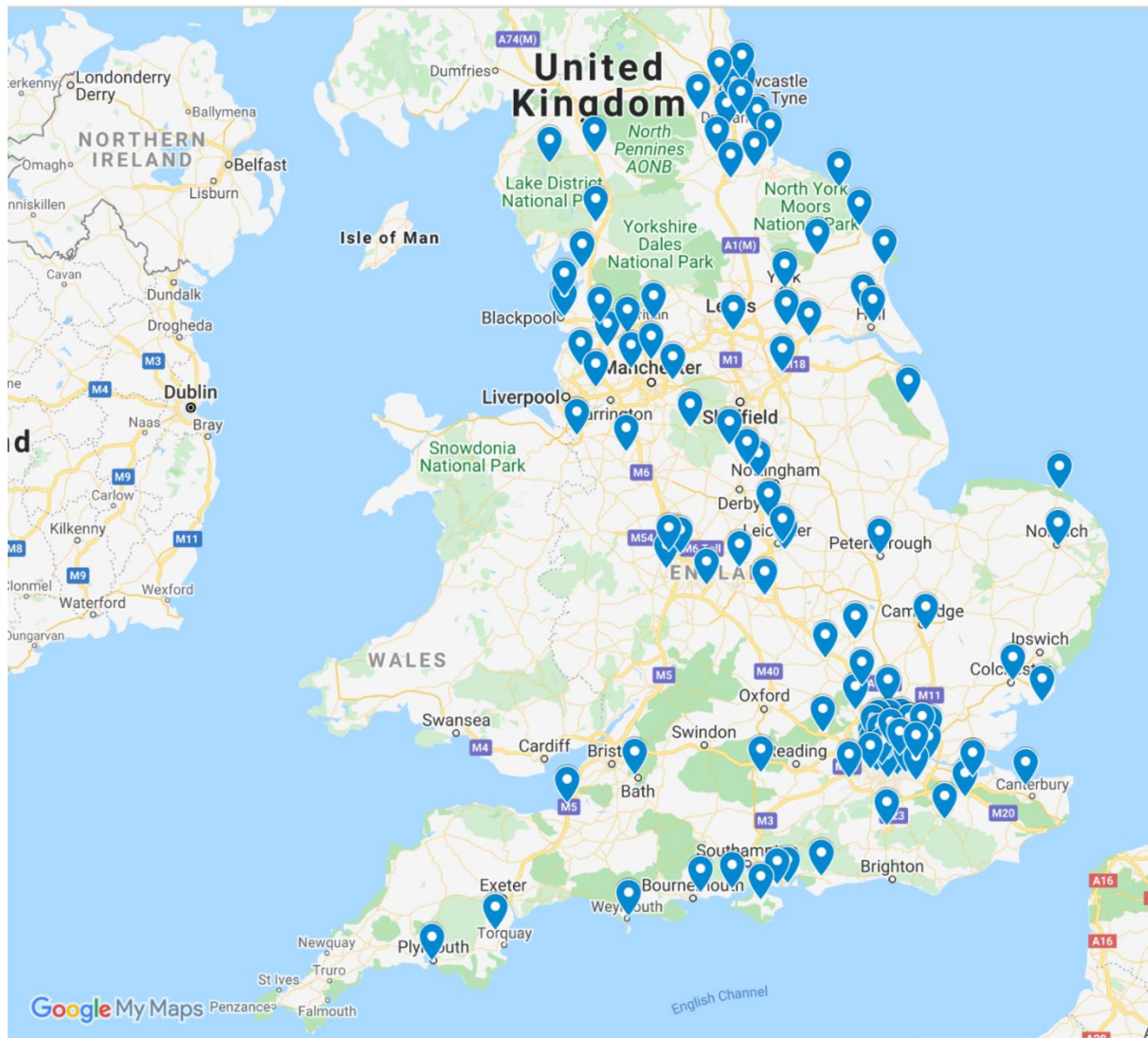


Figure Geographic location of Urgent Treatment Centres within England as of (18th September 2019) Map reproduced with permission https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB_ALL/permissions/geoguidelines/