

Response to Questions posed by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. **Since 2008, broken down by quarter, what have the numbers of attendances been at your Accident and Emergency Departments?**

Period	Attendances
Q1 2008/09	21189
Q2 2008/09	20628
Q3 2008/09	20630
Q4 2008/09	20294
Q1 2009/10	21858
Q2 2009/10	21152
Q3 2009/10	21219
Q4 2009/10	20587
Q1 2010/11	22141
Q2 2010/11	22936
Q3 2010/11	21349
Q4 2010/11	21517
Q1 2011/12	22804
Q2 2011/12	22490

2. **What factors explain this change?**

The number of people attending the Emergency Department has increased gradually over recent years, very much in line with other increases seen in the other areas of the hospital.

3. **What has been the impact of the new Accident and Emergency provisional quality indicators?**

Five new indicators were introduced from the beginning of April 2011 to replace the 4 hour access target. The shift in emphasis has been to monitor the time taken before assessment and treatment is started, particularly for patients arriving by ambulance. The Department of Health has, however, now issued revised guidance for this year. Trusts are required to report performance against the 4 hour access target as well as the new indicators, but will only be held to account for the 4 hour access target.

The introduction of new indicators has taken some of the focus away from the achievement of the 4 hour access target and consequently there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of patients discharged within the 4 hour period.

4. **Specifically, has there been any impact due to the closure of Accident and Emergency Departments in neighbouring areas?**

Since the changes made in September in Maidstone, the Trust has seen increases in the number of patients arriving by ambulance (up 12% when compared to 2010 - an average of 10 extra per day) and those patients self presenting (up 8% when compared to 2010 - another 20 patients per day). Not all of this increase is from outside of Medway but the majority is from post codes that would traditionally have been taken or chosen to go to Maidstone.

5. **Why is it important to reduce attendances at Accident and Emergency Departments?**

Up to 300 patients a day attend the Emergency Department at Medway, of which 20% could have been appropriately seen in primary care locations. Medway Community Health operates a same day treatment centre adjacent to the Emergency Department and they will treat around 15% of the attendances.

Non urgent patients still take time to be seen and treated and this can have an impact on waiting times for other patients.

6. **What work is being undertaken currently, and planned for the future, aimed at reducing Accident and Emergency attendance?**

The PCT continues to promote the alternative services that are available as well as having invested in paramedic practitioners to reduce the numbers of patients being brought to hospital by ambulance.

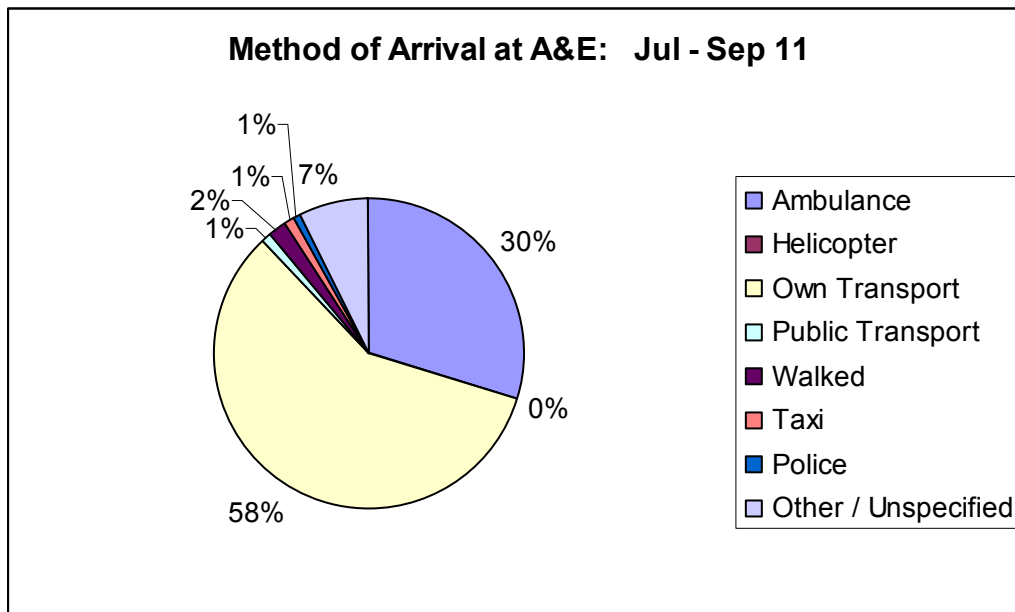
7. **What are the main challenges to reducing attendance at Accident and Emergency Departments?**

Despite the promotion of alternatives the ED is still chosen as it is convenient and with the introduction of the 4 hour access target, patients have some certainty on how long they may have to wait so it is perceived to be more convenient than making an appointment with a GP or visiting a walk in centre, which has a more limited service capability.

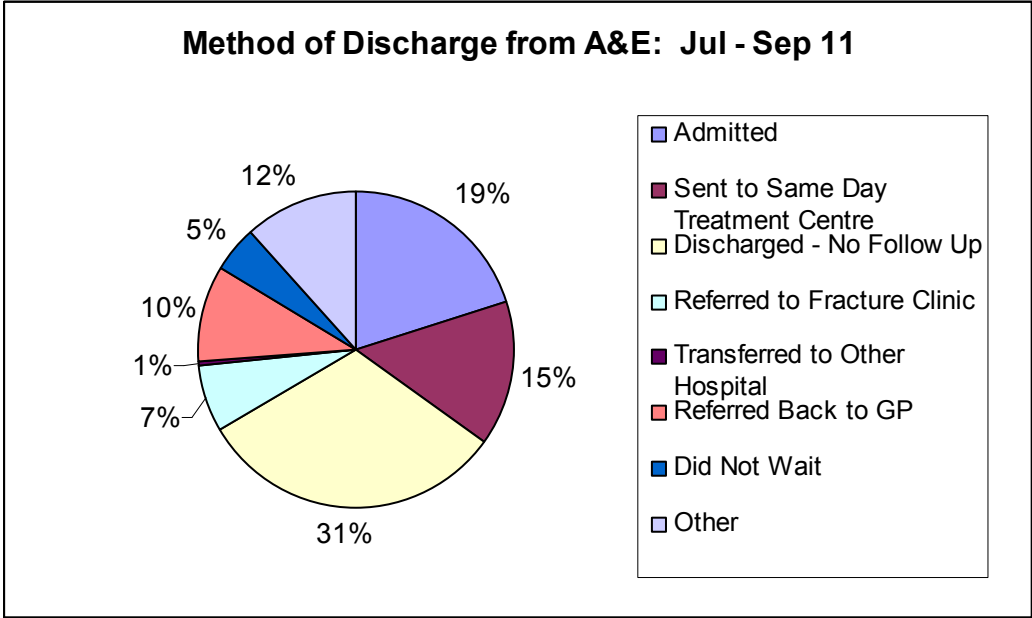
8. How many people arrive at your Accident and Emergency Department by ambulance/helicopter compared to other methods?

Period	Ambulance	Helicopter	Own Transport	Public Transport	Walked	Taxi	Police	Other/Unspecified
Q1 2008/09								
Q2 2008/09	5957	4	12700	262	722	346	125	1788
Q3 2008/09	6621	5	12057	214	613	321	158	1128
Q4 2008/09	6279	7	11956	182	576	288	132	2084
Q1 2009/10	6549	3	13043	195	629	292	146	2484
Q2 2009/10	6643	3	12590	150	514	266	142	2200
Q3 2009/10	7088	2	12234	139	457	313	150	1600
Q4 2009/10	6581	3	12238	142	483	260	149	726
Q1 2010/11	6787	4	13605	141	455	291	178	679
Q2 2010/11	6996	4	13742	164	474	298	175	1083
Q3 2010/11	7115	4	12594	77	422	230	174	733
Q4 2010/11	6794	0	13350	95	378	201	164	534
Q1 2011/12	6943	2	14136	110	374	236	177	826
Q2 2011/12	6707	1	13108	152	460	255	153	1654

* Note: Q1 2008/09 data is not available on Symphony; recorded on REMASS



9. **What information can you provide on the method of discharge from your accident and emergency department (i.e. admitted, referred and so on)?**



10. **What is the place of urgent and emergency care in your organisation's QIPP programme?**

The Trust is focused on reducing un-necessary admissions to the hospital by working closely with other providers in community and primary care.