

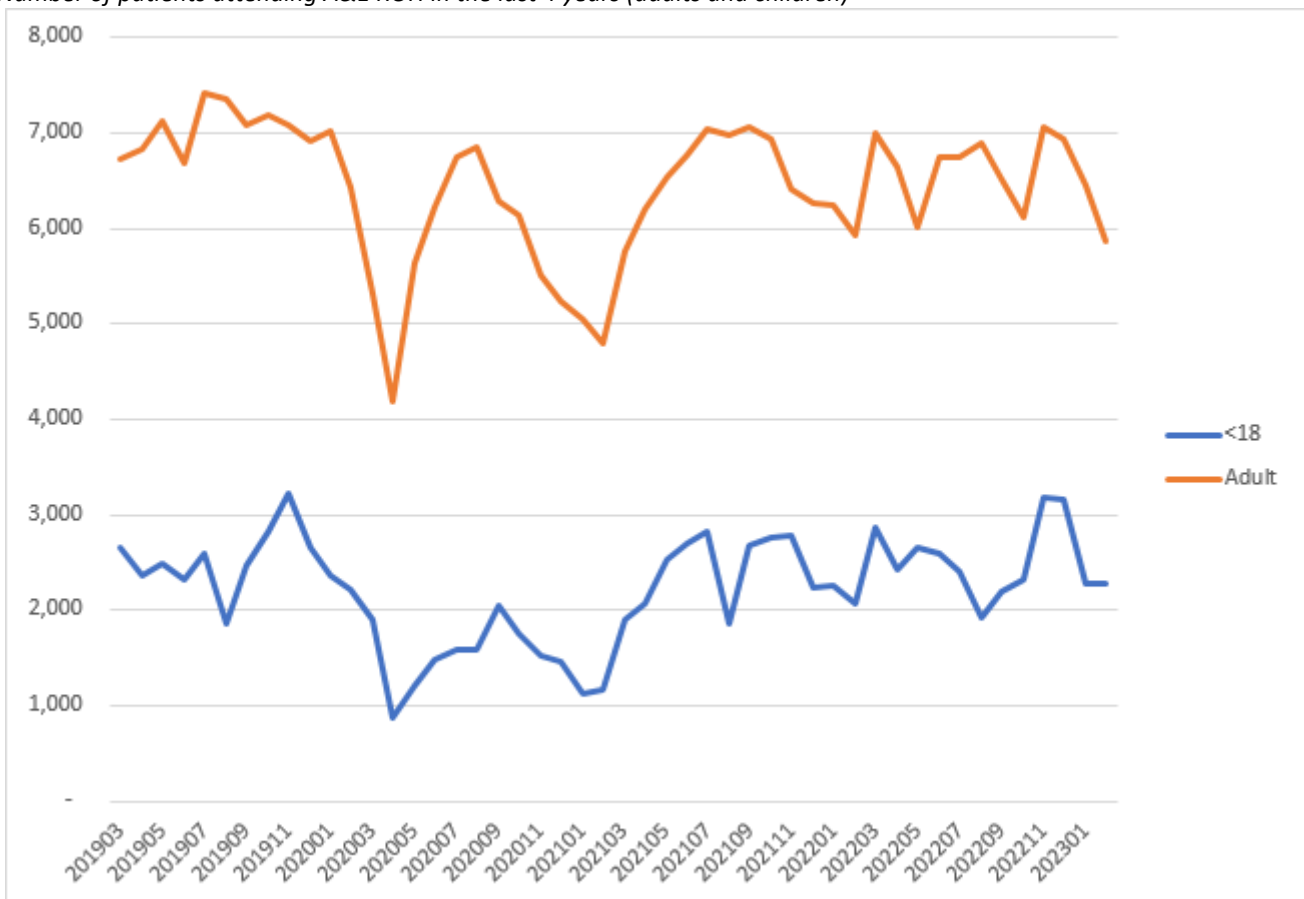
**Urgent and Emergency Care for Oldham Paediatrics – update**

**1. Background**

The UEC system, both locally and nationally has been under severe pressure throughout winter and during this time we have seen surges of paediatric demand. This is the case in both Oldham and across Greater Manchester. In the last 9 months, Oldham paediatric A&E has managed the usual September (return to school) respiratory illnesses, then the outbreak of the Strep A virus (also known as ‘scarlet fever’) and following that, the typical seasonal winter pressures.

The graph below shows the activity for both adults and paediatrics A&E attendances from March 2019 to Jan 2023. Activity for children under 18 is roughly at a similar level to Pre-Covid times, with a peak in Nov/Dec last year due to the Strep A outbreak. As of March 2023, activity is reducing in line with usual seasonal variation, and the Oldham system is well placed to continue to provide high quality care for Oldham’s children.

*Number of patients attending A&E ROH in the last 4 years (adults and children)*



## 2. What has been put in place to manage demand

Children make up approximately 37% of all attends at Royal Oldham Hospital. Of these 37%, on average 22% are admitted and 78% are discharged from A&E and/or referred on to other services. A number of services have been put in place both recently and since Covid to manage demand at A&E and ensure a high quality service is maintained:

### 2.1 A&E & Secondary Care

The Pre-ED Rapid Assessment & Streaming service is at the front door of A&E and children who are not flagged as requiring emergency care are seen initially through this service within 15 mins of arrival. The service has direct pathways to ensure children receive the right care, in the right place and quickly as possible, pathways such as

- o Direct booking to the Urgent Care Hub at the ICC
- o Direct referral to Children's Community Nursing Team
- o Direct referral to the Paediatric Observation & Assessment Unit
- o Referral to the Rapid Access Clinics
- o Referral to the HMR Paediatric Nurse Practitioner service for patients who attend Oldham from our neighbouring localities of Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

Our Children's A&E department has recently been extended and now offers 10 cubicles, including a sensory cubicle and a mental health cubicle, and 2 high care rooms.

The Paediatric Observation & Assessment unit offers same day emergency care and accepts patients direct from A&E, Pre-ED, CCNT and Primary Care allowing children to bypass the A&E department where appropriate. This is integrated with our children's in-patients ward so that where children require further care and treatment it can be accessed without delay.

Staffing levels are at the highest they have been for years, and an extra bedded escalation area has been made possible to be opened and run for the last 6 months.

Rapid Access Clinics 3 x per week - these provide a rapid referral for children who have been seen by their GP, ED or other referrer who require an urgent opinion from a paediatrician but not necessarily an admission.

Paediatric Virtual Wards operate in Oldham and continue to be developed in order to treat children in their own homes.

### 2.2 Primary and community care for paediatrics

#### Primary Care

- GP practices aim to provide same day appointments to children under 5years old and to other children who require urgent assessment where they have capacity to do so.
- GP practices also offer extended opening hours, providing extra appointments either early morning, evening or over the weekend through the PCN's

#### NHS111

- Same day care can also be accessed via 111 who, if appropriate, can directly book children into our Urgent Care Hub to be assessed both virtually and face to face by a GP or ACP.
- 111 can also refer children to the GM CAS for a virtual consultation with a GP or ACP
- They can direct book them into our Minor Injuries Unit at the Royal Oldham Hospital or offer them a time slot to attend A&E if they need emergency care.

#### Children's Community Nursing Team (CCNT)

- Our community children's nursing team accepts same day urgent referrals from other health

professionals providing both clinic appointments and where needed home visits.

- They have recently developed a Nurse Practitioner clinic which operates every afternoon
- A winter funded Oxygen SATS monitoring scheme for respiratory illnesses is in place until Easter 2023

#### **Urgent Care Hub (UCH)**

- Our UCH provides same day urgent care for all age groups. The service is provided by GP's and ACP's and offers virtual consultations with face to face appointments available either in clinic or at home depending on the needs of the patient.
- In January 2023 they managed 1148 children aged 0-19years

### **3.0 Assurance**

Activity levels are reducing from the peak we have seen recently due to winter illness and the Strep A outbreak and are expected to remain lower for the next few months. High staffing levels and extra beds are available, and a number of services and schemes have been developed and are operating successfully which will contribute to improved performance and high level of patient care for the paediatric urgent and emergency care system.

A number of children and young people's governance, performance and assurance processes are in place both locally and at a GM level in order to ensure that ROH continues to provide a safe and high quality service.