

Ilford Exchange Consultation Response

Date: 28 February 2023

In September 2022, NHS North East London launched a consultation on plans to create a new health centre in Ilford town centre. The proposals for this new health centre would provide space for primary, community and social care services from two floors in the Ilford Exchange shopping centre in the heart of Ilford, close to main amenities and transport links.

The services proposed for the new health centre included:

- GP services
- Cranbrook and Loxford Health and Adult Social Care Team (HASS)
- 0-19 service – Health visiting and school nursing team
- Community blood testing
- Community podiatry
- Mental health support services
- Long term conditions services to support people living with heart failure, diabetes, and respiratory conditions.

As part of the proposals there may also be additional space with flexibility for other seasonal services and potentially some community space which residents were invited to share their views on.

This report sets out the key feedback from the consultation and how this has been carefully considered by the Ilford Exchange steering group. The steering group consists of NHS North East London, NELFT NHS Foundation Trust, and the London Borough of Redbridge, which all work together as part of the Redbridge Place-Based Partnership to deliver the plans.

Summary of key findings from the consultation report

Local people and stakeholders who responded to the consultation were overwhelmingly positive. Of those who took part in the online survey:

- **90%** (203) of respondents **supported** proposals for expanding existing GP services at the centre, with only 4% (10 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **93%** (210) of respondents **supported** proposals for community blood testing services at the centre, with only 2% (5 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **88%** (199) of respondents **supported** proposals for Health and Adult Social Care services at the centre, with only 3% (7 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **77%** (174) of respondents **supported** proposals for Universal Children's (0-19) services at the centre, with only 4% (8 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **84%** (190) of respondents **supported** proposals for community podiatry services at the centre, with only 2% (4 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **88%** (197) of respondents **supported** proposals for mental health talking therapies services at the centre, with only 4% (8 people) strongly opposing the plans
- **91%** (205) of respondents **supported** proposals for long-term conditions services at the centre, with only 3% (6 people) strongly opposing the plans

Participants were also able to share feedback on the overall proposals through the survey and engagement sessions on issues or services they felt should be considered as the project develops. The following is a summary of those findings:

Key concerns:

- Parking
- Safety around the shopping centre
- People with mobility problems getting from public transport to the centre

Suggestions of additional services included:

- Diagnostics
- Older people and youth services
- Secondary health care services
- Support for those who are isolated
- Working closely with voluntary and community organisations to run services

Suggestions on accessibility included:

- Support getting to and around the centre
- Ample space in rooms and wide doors for wheelchair users
- Low reception desks
- BSL and dementia-friendly design
- Working with people on the final design of the centre

Consultation response

The table below summarises the key points and themes raised through the consultation and the considered response from partners.

Feedback received through the consultation	Response from the steering group
General concerns about the centre	
Parking concerns including costs when at long appointments	There are a number of car parks in the area which patients can use when attending appointments. Patients are also encouraged to use public transport wherever possible when visiting the centre.
Provision of staff parking	We are working with NELFT and both GP practices to determine the number of parking spaces needed for staff in addition to those which have already been allocated to the health centre.
Safety and anti-social behaviour around the shopping centre	The feedback from the consultation will be fed into the Redbridge Community Safety Partnership and Violence Against Women and Girls groups which are both well established as there is already work underway to tackle these concerns.
Distance from public transport to centre may make it difficult for those with mobility issues	We appreciate that those with disabilities may struggle with navigating their way to the health centre within the Ilford Exchange. We will look at any potential solutions to assist with this such as the provision of wheelchairs etc.

<p>Concerns over capacity not meeting demand</p>	<p>Many of the services proposed such as podiatry, long-term conditions and blood testing would be providing extra capacity to support more patients in Redbridge.</p> <p>Both GP practices will also be expanding and opening new surgeries at the centre, which will provide support for between 5,000-10,000 additional patients.</p>
<p>Concerns about possible closure of existing GP sites</p>	<p>Both GP practices will be keeping their existing practices. They are simply expanding to open additional new surgeries at the Ilford Exchange health centre to support more patients in Redbridge.</p>
<p>Children's play area</p>	<p>Unfortunately, there will not be the space to provide a children's play area within the health centre.</p>
<p>Available services</p>	
<p>Diagnostic testing</p>	<p>We will take this feedback into consideration and explore whether it might be possible to offer diagnostic services on site.</p>
<p>Hospital services such as ear nose and throat clinics, sleep clinics, dental care, eye screening, hearing aid clinics, speech therapy, long COVID clinic, weight management support, support for people with neurodiversity, musculoskeletal conditions and fibromyalgia.</p>	<p>The health centre will only have the space to provide community health and care services. There are no plans to provide an A&E department or any inpatient services where patients would be required to stay overnight like you would in a hospital.</p> <p>However, we will be making local healthcare providers aware of this new facility and will work with our hospital trusts to explore whether it might be possible to run any same day outpatient services from the health centre that are usually located at a hospital site.</p> <p>A sleep study involves several healthcare professionals and are generally done at a specialist unit within a hospital setting. Therefore, this clinic may not be appropriate here. However, to improve patient experience and provide access to care closer to home, NHS North East London is exploring options around delivering healthcare assessments and treatments from local healthcare facilities for patients who can be appropriately assessed and managed outside a hospital environment.</p>
<p>Pre/post-natal support such as mother/baby checks and midwife sessions</p>	<p>We will take this feedback into consideration and will work with our hospital trusts to explore whether it might be possible to run additional services to support pregnant people from the health centre.</p>
<p>Sexual health clinic, family planning</p>	<p>Both GP practices will provide advice and support around sexual health and family planning including contraception advice.</p>

Services for older people such as dementia support/cafe	We will work with our voluntary sector partners to discuss which services they may be able to offer on-site based on some of the suggestions that came out of the consultation.
Out of hours appointments	Urgent and routine GP appointments are available in the evenings and weekends to all patients across Redbridge. However, these appointments do not always take place at your local practice. We are currently in discussions about whether out of hours appointments will be held at the new health centre, or whether they will continue to be provided at other practices and NHS sites nearby.
Minor surgery	Unfortunately, the centre will not have the facilities required to provide minor surgery on site.
Travel vaccinations	Both GP practices will be able to provide NHS travel vaccinations.
Social prescribers	All GP surgeries in Redbridge are part of a Primary Care Network, who work together with other practices to provide a wider range of services to their patients. This includes providing access to social prescribers.
Additional group activities including training, youth sessions, alternative therapy, SEN support, community space for faith groups	We will work with our voluntary sector partners to discuss which services they may be able to offer on-site based on some of the suggestions that came out of the consultation.
Accessibility	
Disabled/parents care parking spaces	There are a number of disabled and parent spaces already available in the Exchange car park.
Wide and accessible doors	The centre will comply with all building regulations to ensure rooms can be easily accessed by wheelchair users, people with walkers, and those with prams. The reception door will also be automatic.
Sufficient space in rooms for those with walkers or wheelchairs	The centre will comply with all building regulations to ensure rooms can be easily accessed by wheelchair users, people with walkers, and those with prams.
Low reception desk for wheelchair users	The reception area will have disabled access including the provision of a low reception desk.
Railings on steps/staircase	All patient services will be located on one level of the building, and patients will be able to use a lift to access this floor.
Space to park buggies/wheelchairs	The clinical rooms will be big enough to accommodate patients attending appointments who may be wheelchair users or who have children using a pram.
Accessible facilities such as changing table for older children.	The centre will have a changing places room.
Breastfeeding areas	There will be a parent/baby changing room available.

Free to dial taxi service	Unfortunately, this is not a service that we will be able to provide at the health centre.
Access to BSL and translation interpreters	This is provided by NELFT and GP services as standard practice and any services moving into the centre will ensure this is available to patients who need them.
Clear signage and routes to new centre including in BSL and languages	<p>We know that Ilford has a growing and vibrant multi-cultural population. We will work with our partners and community groups to ensure that signage within the building is as clear and accessible as possible to the people who use it.</p> <p>Directions to the health centre will be clearly marked within the Ilford Exchange shopping centre so that patients can easily find the new facility.</p>
Flashing fire alarms	We will explore whether this or other solutions are possible for the new health centre.
Indicator board to show order of patients	There are plans for a patient call system which will include a display board and announcements.
Dementia-friendly design	The centre will be built in line with NHS England Health Building Note (HBN) and Health technical Memorandum (HTM), which sets out the design guidance for creating dementia-friendly health and social care environments.
Quiet zones where people can't use their mobile phones	Unfortunately, the centre will not have designated quiet zones.
Good lighting	We will ensure there is sufficient lighting in the building in line with HBN (Health building notes) 00-03 standards.
Digital screen and face-to-face check in	There will be a digital patient in check system. Patients will also be able to check in at the reception desk.
Hearing loops	There will be a hearing loop at the centre.
Sensory room	Unfortunately, it will not be possible to provide a sensory room within the health centre.