

# NHS Vale of York CCG GP Practice OPEL Reporting System

## 1. Background

The NHS England [Operational Pressures Escalation Levels \(OPEL\) Framework](#) has been developed to bring consistency to local approaches; improve management of system-wide escalation; encourage wider cooperation and make regional and national oversight more effective and less burdensome.

As part of this framework, the CCG are required to monitor pressures in their patch and report to NHS England and NHS Improvement via the local A&E Delivery Board any pressures which impact on service delivery. By sharing this information more widely, system partners are made aware of pressures in individual organisations and where possible can support by informing patients, or providing temporary support.

## 2. Approved Model

Following discussions with a variety of practices and York LMC representative, and a commitment from NHS Vale of York CCG to develop a sustainable primary care system, the CCG have approved the adoption of an OPEL **exception reporting** escalation system from **3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019** based on these broad definitions of OPEL levels 1-4:

OPEL Level	Definition	Level of CCG Support
<b>Level 1</b> Low pressure (Green)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business as usual</li> <li>Relevant mitigating actions taken if deemed necessary</li> </ul>	No CCG support required
<b>Level 2</b> Moderate pressure (Amber)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busier than usual but coping</li> <li>Managing within available resources</li> <li>Performance deterioration, mitigating actions taken</li> </ul>	No CCG support required
<b>Level 3</b> Severe pressure (Red)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busier than usual and struggling to cope</li> <li>Increased significant deterioration in performance and quality, majority of mitigating actions taken</li> </ul>	Some CCG support required
<b>Level 4</b> Extreme pressure (Purple)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to cope, with a need to cancel some booked appointments</li> <li>Risk of service failure, all available mitigating actions taken and potentially exhausted</li> </ul>	Extensive CCG support required

## 3. Process for Reporting OPEL Level

From **3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**, GP practices are asked to:

- Self-assess themselves against the broad definitions above and utilise the example escalation template provided at Appendix A to determine their OPEL level
- Undertake the following actions:

**OPEL Level 1**  
GP practice to take appropriate mitigating actions if deemed necessary

**OPEL Level 2**  
GP practice to take appropriate mitigating actions according to practice business continuity plan

**OPEL Level 3**  
GP practice notify CCG:  
**Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm**  
01904 555870  
**Out of hours**  
CCG Director on Call  
0844 5895915

**OPEL Level 4**  
GP practice notify CCG:  
**Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm**  
01904 555870  
**Out of hours**  
CCG Director on Call  
0844 5895915

*We do not expect GP practices to contact the CCG if at OPEL level 1 or 2.*

Should OPEL level 3 or 4 be declared, this should be reported to the CCG **ideally before 10am on 01904 555870** or the CCG Director on Call if out of hours. The CCG will then work with practices to see if any alternative support can be offered (see below).

OPEL reporting will be recorded on a tracking spreadsheet and the CCG will use this data to report back to practices on a regular basis. This data will also enable the CCG to gather intelligence over the next couple of months and analyse any trends/patterns of continued pressure that need to be investigated – this will help to inform the CCG and may be used to develop business cases to commission future services.

#### **4. Offer of Support from the CCG**

The CCG recognises that GP practices will have well established business continuity/resilience plans, escalation procedures and mitigating actions and that these will vary from practice to practice depending on resources available.

Whilst the CCG cannot guarantee that capacity will be available elsewhere in the system, should GP practices report OPEL level 3 or 4, the CCG will discuss with practices **on a case by case basis** what options/alternative services might be available in their locality. Alternative services to be approached to consider whether flexible solutions can be offered may include:

- Mutual support from other practices within your locality
- Utilisation of improving access slots
- Pharmacies
- ED Front door
- Direct booking from NHS111 to ED Front Door
- UTC/UCCs/UCPs
- MIU (Selby/Malton)

Should any changes to service access be necessary, the CCG will advise NHS 111 to temporarily update the Directory of Services accordingly and communications will be cascaded to system partners to advise them via the local A&E Delivery Board SitRep.

#### **5. Example Escalation Template**

In order for GP practices to determine their own individual thresholds an example escalation template is provided at Appendix A. Whilst the OPEL levels remain the same, we recognise that individual practices will have different triggers at each of these levels e.g. multi-site GP practices typically have more capacity/capability to provide support for each other across sites versus smaller practices with fewer resources. This template should be adapted to suit your own practice in line with your business continuity plan.

#### **6. Next Steps**

GP Practices are asked to start to report levels 3 or 4 to the CCG from **3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**. This reporting system has been approved as a trial for 3 months and will be reviewed to reflect any amendments needed. Please contact [sarah.kocinski@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.kocinski@nhs.net) if you have any feedback on the reporting system.

## Appendix A – GP Practice OPEL Reporting System – Example Template

Escalation Level	OPEL 1	OPEL 2	OPEL 3	OPEL 4
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Low Pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business as usual</li> <li>Relevant mitigating actions taken if deemed necessary</li> </ul>	<b>Moderate Pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busier than usual but coping</li> <li>Managing within available resources</li> <li>Performance deterioration, mitigating actions taken</li> </ul>	<b>Severe Pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busier than usual and struggling to cope</li> <li>Increased significant deterioration in performance and quality, majority of mitigating actions available taken</li> </ul>	<b>Extreme Pressure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to cope, need to cancel some booked appointments</li> <li>Risk of service failure, all available mitigating actions taken and potentially exhausted</li> </ul>
<b>Level of CCG support</b>	No CCG support required	No CCG support required	Some CCG support required	Extensive CCG support required
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>INSERT PRACTICE NAME HERE</b>			
<b>Practice Range</b>	All practice sites reporting Level 1 No more than 1 site at Level 2	2 practice sites reporting Level 2 No more than 1 site at Level 3	2 practice sites reporting Level 3 No more than 1 site at Level 4	2 practice sites or more reporting Level 4
	<b>Triggers</b>	<b>Triggers</b>	<b>Triggers</b>	<b>Triggers</b>
Staffing levels: GPs, Nurses, Admin, Reception, Call Centre, Urgent Care (UC), Primary Access Centre (PAC)	All UC sites fully staffed. No Clinician Absences. Call handler team all present.	1 clinician absent from PAC or UC site. No other clinician absences. 1 call handler absent.	2 clinicians absent from PAC or UC site. +1-4 clinicians absent. +2 call handlers absent.	2+ clinicians absent from PAC or UC site. 5+ clinicians absent. 2+ call handlers absent.
No of Calls / Appointment requests (particularly urgent): Baseline Levels	UC volumes/ session <80 patient contacts at PAC. <40 contacts at UC sites.	UC volumes 80-100 pt contacts at PAC. 40-60 contacts at UC sites.	UC volumes 100-120 pt contacts at PAC. 60-80 contacts at UC sites.	UC volumes >120 pt contacts at PAC. >80 contacts at UC sites.
Waiting times: Baseline Levels	UC waiting times in PAC: average 15 minutes	UC waiting times in PAC: average 30 minutes	UC waiting times in PAC: average 60 minutes	UC waiting times in PAC: over 90 minutes

<p>Patients cannot make an urgent appointment Baseline Levels</p> <p>Unexpected events: Examples: Extreme weather; Flood; Fire; Severity: Anticipated, Final moment, Emergency</p> <p>Implementing business continuity plans: Levels: For a sustained period i.e. &gt; 72 hours.</p> <p>Infection control Anecdotal reports (tel calls) GP reports Care Homes</p> <p>Home Visits: Times Number</p> <p>Call centre - time to answer calls</p>	<p>&gt;10 Routine appointments available within 10 days.</p> <p>No unexpected events</p> <p>No infection trends</p> <p>Under 30 secs</p>	<p>1-10 Routine appointments available within 14days.</p> <p>Extreme events affecting one site- staff/ work diverted to another site.</p> <p>Outbreak of infection- eg. Norovirus at NH.</p> <p>Between 30-60 secs</p>	<p>Next routine appointment 14-21 days</p> <p>Extreme events causing 2 sites to close.</p> <p>Outbreak of infection across multiple community sites.</p> <p>Between 1-3 minutes</p>	<p>No routine appointments available within 21 days.</p> <p>Several sites closed due to extreme events.</p> <p>PH pandemic declared.</p> <p>Over 3 minutes</p>
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<p>Regular updates – how often?</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Alert relevant site and specific team/s</p>	<p>Alert whole practice - at start of day and end of each session. Staff to be diverted to support UC system. <b>Notify CCG by telephone on 01904 555870 (in hours) or 0844 5895915 (out of hours)</b></p>	<p>Escalate to whole practice - critical. Call for additional support from off duty clinicians. <b>Notify CCG by telephone on 01904 555870 (in hours) or 0844 5895915 (out of hours)</b></p>