

Factsheet: travel times

Further detail on the public consultation proposals

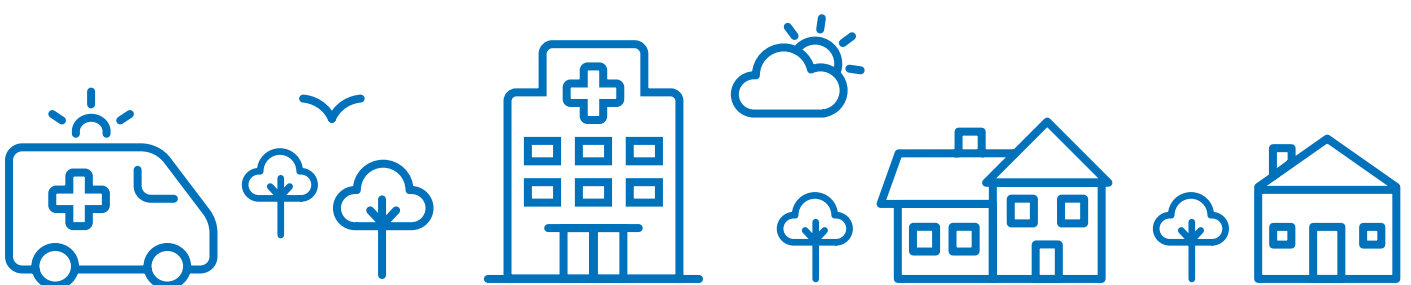


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We recognise that additional travel is a real concern for many people in relation to the Healthy Weston proposals, and this factsheet sets out the latest information.

What happens now?

- The Accident and Emergency (A&E) department at Weston Hospital is currently open between 8am and 10pm every day.
- Patients experiencing major trauma, complex cancer, some stroke, heart attacks, a very unwell child, or people needing complex surgery are already taken straight to nearby specialist hospitals (i.e. in Bristol or Taunton) by ambulance, rather than being taken to Weston. This has been the case for many years.
- When it is safe and clinically appropriate to do so, these patients are transferred back to Weston to continue their recovery.
- If a patient recovers within 48 hours and doesn't need ongoing care and treatment, they are discharged from the hospital they were admitted to.
- 3,657 people per year (approximately 13 per day) are already travelling to neighbouring hospitals as a result of the temporary overnight closure of A&E at Weston Hospital. This takes on average between 13 and 19 additional minutes of travel time by blue light ambulance.



What would the Healthy Weston proposals mean for you and your travel?

- The Healthy Weston proposals would mean between nine and 13 additional patients per night would attend A&E in other hospitals, would need to travel to neighbouring hospitals for treatment rather than Weston.
- Around 2,500 more patients a year with the most serious or life threatening conditions will require additional travel by ambulance to Bristol or Taunton.
- Travel time analysis has been carried out for people travelling to the next nearest acute hospital by ambulance, private car and public transport.
- Travel by public transport is most likely to affect visitors and relatives as a patient requiring emergency treatment would usually be transported to hospital via an ambulance.

Method of travel	Average travel time to Weston Hospital	Average travel time to neighbouring hospital	Additional travel time to neighbouring hospital
Blue light ambulance	18 minutes	31 minutes	13 - 19 minutes
Private car (peak)	24 minutes	41 minutes	17 minutes
Private car (off peak)	21 minutes	35 minutes	14 minutes
Public transport (peak)	1 hour 4 minutes	1 hour 45 minutes	41 minutes
Public transport (off peak)	1 hour 4 minutes	1 hour 31 minutes	27 minutes

What would the impact on the ambulance service be?

More ambulance journeys to and from neighbouring hospitals would be needed if the proposals are implemented. Increased ambulance services would need to be funded by the local NHS. This has been recognised in the financial planning which has taken place as the proposals have developed.

South Western Ambulance Service Trust has been fully involved in the development of the Healthy Weston proposals and is supportive of the changes proposed.



What further work is being done to address your travel concerns

We have established a Travel Working Group, which involves members of the public, patient council, local council, community transport, hospital transport and representatives from the voluntary sector including carers, to consider how we could address travel concerns for visitors if our proposals are implemented.

This includes identifying opportunities to work with transport organisations to improve patient transport across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

The group has identified a number of possible solutions, including better access to information and additional transport services to help alleviate some of the travel challenges that people experience when visiting friends and relatives.

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