

PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed: 09:00hrs

22nd February 2015

Total emergency admissions fall by a fifth at the weekend - 60 fewer patients on average with urgent care needs are admitted every weekend

The latest research from healthcare information specialists CHKS has found total emergency admissions are 20 per cent lower at the weekend than they are during the week (see chart 1). CHKS also found significant variation in the source of admission throughout the week with admissions from GPs 59 per cent lower at the weekend (see chart 2).

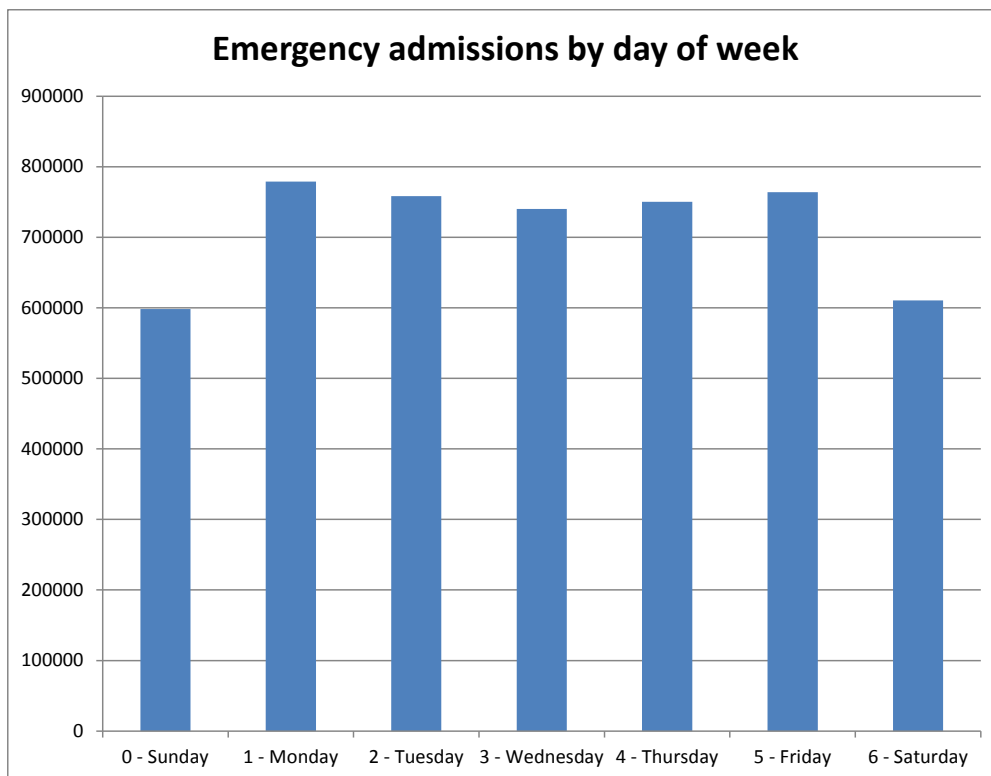
Additionally, researchers found this fall occurred even in the most urgent cases (heart attacks and strokes). In the year to July 2014, 3,000 fewer patients with these conditions were admitted at weekends than during the week – an average of 60 fewer patients every weekend.

The analysis of publicly available hospital data could not establish why there was a decrease in admissions from GPs at the weekend. This could be a result of a combination of factors:

- weekend out-of-hours GPs have a significantly higher referral threshold;
- fewer patients are detected as requiring urgent admission at the weekend;
- patients who should be admitted wait to see their own GP. They may not call 111 or may be more reluctant to take any referral advice offered by 111 staff during the weekend;
- other NHS services may be more limited at weekends, making it difficult to admit patients from home.

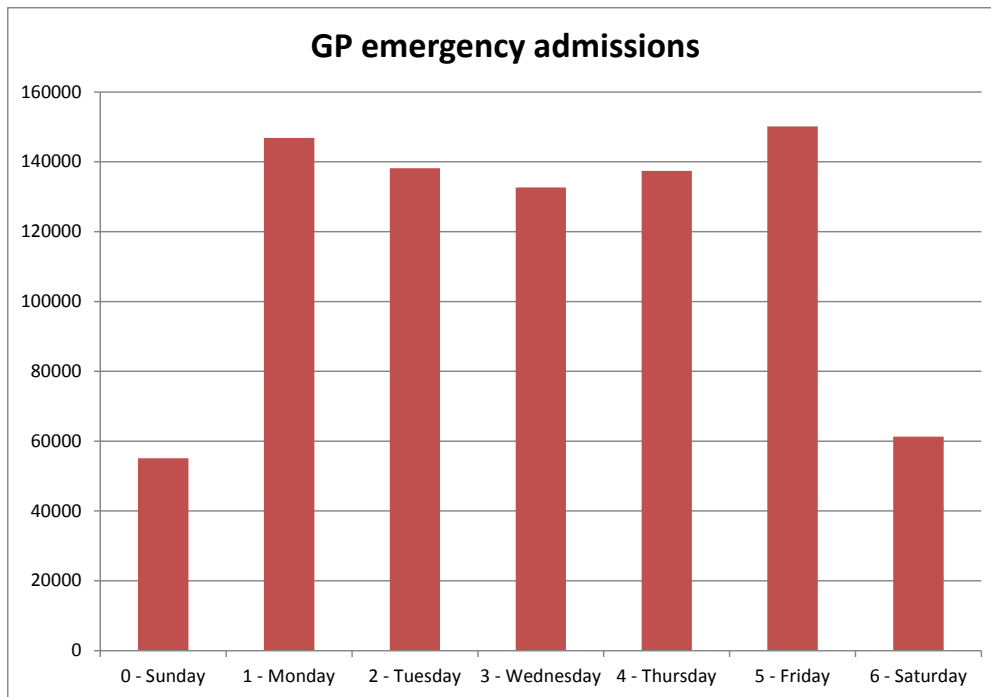
Jason Harries, managing director, CHKS said: “The issue of emergency admissions to hospital is complex. Our latest analysis looks at total emergency admissions which fall significantly at the weekend. This is to some extent counter-intuitive given the pressures faced by many trusts in accident and emergency, but hopefully this analysis will provoke hospitals and healthcare commissioners to ask questions about the way that patients with urgent care needs are admitted from primary care.”

Chart 1 – Total emergency admissions



Source: HES, English acute trusts, 12 months to July 2014

Chart 2 – Emergency admissions by source (from GPs)



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Notes to editors:

1. CHKS Ltd, part of Capita plc, is a provider of healthcare intelligence and quality improvement services to the NHS and independent healthcare sector. With over 25 years' experience and having worked with over 400 clients, CHKS has a portfolio of information products, internationally-recognised accreditation programmes and consultancy services which provide clinicians and managers with the information needed to drive improvements in patient care, financial efficiency, clinical effectiveness and quality.

2. The figures in detail:

- Emergency admissions are 20 per cent less likely at weekends. The average weekday figure is 14,582 per day and the average weekend figure is 11,623 per day

- GP emergency admissions are 59 per cent down at weekends. The average weekday figure is 2,712 per day and the average weekend figure is 1,119 per day

- The calculation of patients not admitted at the weekend is the difference between actual weekend numbers admitted and the number of admissions expected at weekend. The total number of patients suffering heart attack and stroke per annum who are not admitted at the weekend is 3,144 (1,630 stroke and 1,514 heart attack).

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