

# Covid-19 update for Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – June 2021

Content of this report is accurate for the deadline of paper submissions. Verbal updates will be provided at the committee meeting.

The report is provided by the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (KMCCG) on behalf of the Integrated Care System. It is an overview to the NHS response to the pandemic and includes work being delivered by a wide range of NHS partners.

## Vaccination programme

The Covid-19 vaccination programme across Kent and Medway has progressed well since the last HOSC update in March 2021. More than one million people have now had their first dose and over half a million completed their second dose.

Figures on vaccine progress are published nationally each Thursday, as of 20 May, the position in Kent and Medway was:

### Total vaccinations given

- 1,593,304 vaccines in total
- 579,271 second doses completed

### Percentage uptake across the priority groups:

Cohorts	First dose uptake	Second dose uptake
1 (Care home residents and carers)	100%*	86%
2 (80 years and over and health and care frontline staff)	94%	92%
3 (75-79 year olds)	96%	97%
4 (70-74 year olds and clinically extremely vulnerable)	94%	94%
<b>Total 1 – 4</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>
5 (65-69 year olds)	93%	85%
6 (clinically vulnerable aged 16-64)	84%	51%
7 (60-74 year olds)	91%	41%
8 (55-59 year olds)	89%	21%
9 (50-54 year olds)	86%	19%
<b>Total 1 – 9</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>66%</b>
10 (40-49 year olds)	71%	16%
11 (30-39 year olds)	21%	38%
12 (18-29 year olds)	12%	50%
<b>Total 10 – 12</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>All cohorts</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>57%</b>

\* Data is from national reporting against an estimated denominator, with actual first dose vaccinations exceeding the denominator.

KMCCG publish a regular update on vaccine progress where you can see the latest figures <https://www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/your-health/coronavirus/covid19vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-updates>

The full data sets published by NHS England include details at CCG/Integrated Care System level (Kent and Medway) as well as council level information. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/>

## Vaccination services across Kent and Medway

The vaccine programme continues to be a partnership response with a broad range of frontline services involved. Vaccinations are currently being provided by GP-led services, large vaccination centres run by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trusts, and pharmacies. The four hospital trusts also ran vaccination hubs for health and care staff and some patients; these hospital hubs have now completed their work. Prison health services have also vaccinated eligible people detained in custody. The table below shows rounded figures for how the different services are contributing to the overall programme.

Vaccine services	First doses	Second doses	Total
Hospital hubs	78,000	72,500	150,500
Large vaccination Centres	234,100	55,600	289,700
Primary Care Networks	584,100	419,200	1,003,300
Pharmacies	106,800	28,400	135,200
Detained	1,200	170	1,370

## Vaccine equality

Within the high overall levels of vaccine uptake shown above we are analysing uptake within different communities and working to increase vaccination levels where it remains lowest. We have a dedicated vaccine equalities working group involving partners across NHS, public health and district councils; working closely with community groups and leaders.

Groups we are delivering dedicated support plans for are:

- Black African
- Eastern European
- Gypsy/Roma/Traveller
- Migrants
- Homeless

The vaccine equalities group is also producing data for individual General Practices with less than 85% uptake to support local actions to boost uptake.

## Future of the vaccination programme

We expect to have offered all eligible people a first dose of the vaccine by the end of July (subject to supply being maintained); which will mean second doses complete by mid-October assuming a 12 week gap between doses remains for cohorts 10-12.

We are awaiting further national detail on how the Covid-19 vaccine programme will continue into a booster dose and the potential of vaccinating children. Initial planning is underway to design a robust vaccination service which can operate along-side routine health services returning to normal activity. Although much of the detailed planning will need to wait until there is clarity on how further Covid-19 vaccinations will align with the annual flu vaccination programme.

We will provide more detail on this in a future update to HOSC.

## **Covid-19 cases and deaths**

Pressure on NHS hospitals due to treating Covid-19 positive patients is now greatly reduced; in line with the overall infection rates in the community and the vaccination programme.

In March, when the Governing Body last met, there were approximately 500 hospital beds occupied with Covid-19 positive patients. As of 20 May there were less than 10 Covid-19 positive patients in hospital beds of any type across all trusts; and no Covid-19 positive patients in Intensive Care Units.

Deaths from Covid-19 have also dropped significantly. There are unfortunately still a small number of deaths on a weekly basis however there are regularly days when no deaths are recorded in any Kent and Medway hospitals or community sites.

As of 20 May in Kent there have been:

- 3,997 deaths within 28 days of a positive test
- 4,566 deaths with Covid-19 recorded on the death certificate

In Medway there have been:

- 746 deaths within 28 days of a positive test
- 791 deaths with Covid-19 recorded on the death certificate

## **Post-Covid Assessment Services (Long Covid Services)**

On 14 May the Kent and Medway Post-Covid Assessment Service opened. The service is for patients who continue to experience effects of a Covid-19 infection for more than 12 weeks. Up to 12 weeks support would be provided through GP services and a national offer including a website with detailed information to help people self-manage their recovery from Covid-19.

Where symptoms persist for more than 12 weeks patients should contact their GP practice so any alternative diagnosis can be ruled out and to decide if the Post Covid Assessment Service would be suitable.

Following a GP referral the Post Covid Assessment Service will make contact with the patient and an expert team of professionals will assess their condition and then provide support in accessing services that can help with their recovery.

As this is a new condition, the NHS is also collecting the experiences of people with Long Covid to find out more about how it affects people and their families to make sure the patient voice shapes the development of the service. Almost 500 people either completed a survey or attended an online meeting with more interviews being arranged.

The service is provided by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust working in partnership with West Kent Primary Care GP Federation. It is for patients across Kent and Medway. As an assessment rather than treatment service the majority of appointments can happen through phone and video appointments to limit travel required.

## Hospital waiting lists

The NHS across Kent and Medway has worked hard to maintain as much planned/elective non-Covid treatment as possible through the two waves of the pandemic. Good progress was also made to reschedule routine treatments in the period after the first wave and before infections rose again in the second wave.

However, there is now a significant back-log of delayed treatments which will take time for the NHS to work through. Based on verified published data up to February 2021 there were a total of 133,670 people waiting for elective care across Kent and Medway. Of these, 8,055 patients had been waiting over 52 weeks.

The work on elective care recovery is being led by a system level Elective Care Board chaired by Miles Scott, Chief Executive of the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust.

All trusts have restarted elective care. Rescheduling treatment will prioritise those with the highest clinical need and those who have been waiting longest. The number of people waiting over 52 weeks is reducing on a weekly basis.

With the need to maintain Covid-secure environments both before, during and post-surgery the total capacity for elective care is lower than it was before the pandemic. We continue to use Independent Sector hospitals to add capacity and are maximising activity within our available theatre space and workforce. NHS England / NHS Improvement expectations are that the NHS recovers monthly elective care activity to 80% of pre pandemic levels by June and 85% in July to September. The Kent and Medway system is on track to exceed these expectations.

With new referrals adding to waiting lists it is recognised that this is a major challenge for the NHS. As a system Kent and Medway is working across hospitals, community, primary care services to maximise care that can be offered in community settings; this includes care that would prevent the need for elective treatment and identifying routine procedures that could be carried out in community settings.

As one example of the work to boost capacity, a new surgical centre will open at Kent and Canterbury Hospital this summer, with four operating theatres dedicated to patients needing planned inpatient orthopaedic surgery. This includes hip and knee replacements which are among many routine procedures significantly delayed by the Covid pandemic. The new surgical centre will enable the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust to treat approximately 3,500 orthopaedic patients a year in a brand new centre of excellence for orthopaedic surgery in east Kent, as well as freeing up theatres and beds at QEQM and William Harvey for trauma and cancer surgery.

The tables on the pages below are taken from the national published data on waiting times across NHS hospitals; reporting February data. It should be noted that the data includes patients from all areas, so includes non-Kent and Medway residents. For the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust in particular there are a significant number of patients from outside of Kent.

## Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

Select an acute hospital trust:

Select a treatment area:

Source: NHS England and NHS Improvement: monthly RTT data  
Published: 15th April  
Contact: england.rtt@nhs.net

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### Patients waiting to start treatment

#### At the end of February 2021...

What proportion of patients were waiting within 18 weeks?	<b>65.3%</b> (The NHS operational standard is 92%)
Half of patients were waiting less than	<b>14</b> weeks
92 out of 100 patients were waiting less than	<b>32</b> weeks
How many patients were waiting to start treatment?	<b>32,233</b> patients

### Patients who completed their pathway and started treatment

#### During February 2021...

**For treatment that involved admission to hospital, e.g. inpatient appointments**

How many patients started admitted treatment?	<b>575</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>13</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>52+</b> weeks

**For treatment that did not involve admission to hospital, e.g. outpatient appointments**

How many patients started non-admitted treatment?	<b>3,911</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>7</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>50</b> weeks

## East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

Select an acute hospital trust:

Select a treatment area:

Source: NHS England and NHS Improvement: monthly RTT data  
Published: 15th April  
Contact: england.rtt@nhs.net

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### Patients waiting to start treatment

#### At the end of February 2021...

What proportion of patients were waiting within 18 weeks?	<b>61.0%</b> (The NHS operational standard is 92%)
Half of patients were waiting less than	<b>14</b> weeks
92 out of 100 patients were waiting less than	<b>52+</b> weeks
How many patients were waiting to start treatment?	<b>49,888</b> patients

### Patients who completed their pathway and started treatment

#### During February 2021...

**For treatment that involved admission to hospital, e.g. inpatient appointments**

How many patients started admitted treatment?	<b>1,103</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>9</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>52+</b> weeks

**For treatment that did not involve admission to hospital, e.g. outpatient appointments**

How many patients started non-admitted treatment?	<b>7,744</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>8</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>34</b> weeks

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (our largest local trust with three main hospitals) has the most significant challenges. We are working as a system across Kent and Medway to plan how waiting lists can be managed in an equitable way so as to reduce health inequalities and limit the issue of how long people wait being linked to where they live in Kent and Medway.



## Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust

Select an acute hospital trust:	<input type="text" value="DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM NHS TRUST"/>	Source: NHS England and NHS Improvement: monthly RTT data
Select a treatment area:	<input type="text" value="TOTAL (ALL AREAS)"/>	Published: 15th April Contact: england.rtt@nhs.net

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**Patients waiting to start treatment**  
**At the end of February 2021...**

What proportion of patients were waiting within 18 weeks?	<b>68.5%</b> (The NHS operational standard is 92%)
Half of patients were waiting less than	<b>12</b> weeks
92 out of 100 patients were waiting less than	<b>42</b> weeks
How many patients were waiting to start treatment?	<b>15,835</b> patients

**Patients who completed their pathway and started treatment**  
**During February 2021...**

**For treatment that involved admission to hospital, e.g. inpatient appointments**

How many patients started admitted treatment?	<b>355</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>7</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>35</b> weeks

**For treatment that did not involve admission to hospital, e.g. outpatient appointments**

How many patients started non-admitted treatment?	<b>1,886</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>5</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>25</b> weeks

Approximately 10,300 Kent residents are on the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust's waiting list.

## Medway NHS Foundation Trust

Select an acute hospital trust:	<input type="text" value="MEDWAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST"/>	Source: NHS England and NHS Improvement: monthly RTT data
Select a treatment area:	<input type="text" value="TOTAL (ALL AREAS)"/>	Published: 15th April Contact: england.rtt@nhs.net

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**Patients waiting to start treatment**  
**At the end of February 2021...**

What proportion of patients were waiting within 18 weeks?	<b>61.5%</b> (The NHS operational standard is 92%)
Half of patients were waiting less than	<b>14</b> weeks
92 out of 100 patients were waiting less than	<b>36</b> weeks
How many patients were waiting to start treatment?	<b>21,627</b> patients

**Patients who completed their pathway and started treatment**  
**During February 2021...**

**For treatment that involved admission to hospital, e.g. inpatient appointments**

How many patients started admitted treatment?	<b>327</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>12</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>48</b> weeks

**For treatment that did not involve admission to hospital, e.g. outpatient appointments**

How many patients started non-admitted treatment?	<b>3,784</b> patients
Half of these patients started treatment within	<b>9</b> weeks
19 out of 20 patients started treatment within	<b>41</b> weeks

## Kent and Medway residents on other providers' waiting lists

Provider	Total	0-18 Weeks	18-26 Weeks	26-52 Weeks	52+ Weeks
KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	3,247	2,015	341	441	450
GUY'S AND ST THOMAS' NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	4,000	2,607	488	584	321
QUEEN VICTORIA HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	2,151	1,383	244	273	251
BENENDEN HOSPITAL	577	255	95	86	141
LEWISHAM AND GREENWICH NHS TRUST	643	405	68	99	71
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON HOSPITALS NHS TRUST	572	341	69	93	69
BARTS HEALTH NHS TRUST	242	117	31	48	46
SPIRE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL	1,328	983	213	97	35
ROYAL NATIONAL ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL NHS TRUST	303	184	50	38	31
ST GEORGE'S UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	237	139	34	37	27
PPG (WILL ADAMS) GILLINGHAM	1,452	1,193	78	155	26
MOORFIELDS EYE HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	492	333	83	56	20
BMI - THE CHAUCER HOSPITAL	521	430	47	32	12
BMI - CHELSFIELD PARK HOSPITAL	208	163	26	11	8
KENT COMMUNITY HEALTH NHS FOUNDATION TRUST	3,411	3,408	3	0	0
SUSSEX COMMUNITY DERMATOLOGY SERVICE	2,649	2,463	151	35	0
KIMS HOSPITAL (NEWNHAM COURT)	1,033	735	221	77	0
Other - under 200 incompletes	2,326	1,525	279	344	178

## Cancer care

Access to urgent cancer diagnostics and treatments continued throughout Wave 2 across all of our acute providers. Some of these services were running at a slightly reduced capacity due to wider system pressures. Cancer screening has also continued throughout Wave 2 for breast, bowel and cervical programmes. Figures for March 2021 show:

- 97.7% of urgent suspected cancers are seen within 2 weeks (*expected standard = 93%*)
- 93.1% of symptomatic breast referrals are seen within 2 weeks (*expected standard = 93%*)
- 94% of patients receive first treatment within 31 days (*expected standard = 96%*)
- 85.6% of patients receive subsequent surgery with 31 days (*expected standard = 94%*)
- 99.4% of patients receive subsequent drug therapy with 31 days (*expected standard = 98%*)
- 97.4% of patients receive subsequent radiotherapy with 31 days (*expected standard = 94%*)
- 80.9% of urgent GP referrals treated within 62 day (*expected standard = 85%*)
- 75.4% of urgent screening referrals treated within 62 days (*expected standard = 90%*)

## **Two week wait referrals**

K&M met the 93% standard for the first half of the year. Referrals dropped to 42% of expected levels in April 2020 (due to the national lockdown) but cancer services maintained a steady recovery following the initial dip. The number of referrals exceeded pre-pandemic levels from September through to December which led to the two week wait standard being just missed during this time. Kent and Medway have maintained relatively high levels of two week wait compliance with many trusts triaging patients in 3-7 days rather than the 14. The development of 'straight to test' pathways as well as patient navigators has also help to shorten the initial phase of investigation. From the latest published data Kent and Medway is the best performing Cancer Alliance in the country against this standard.

The number of referrals has not been evenly spread across tumour groups and Breast and Colorectal services have been particularly pressured with the volume of patients. An Endoscopy working group has been supporting colorectal recovery and the implementation of low and high risk FIT testing to reduce the burden on the number of Endoscopies required and therefore the speed to first seen status.

## **GP referral to treatment within 62 days (85% target)**

Nationally, we have been one of the top performing Alliances at this target for 2020/21. Kent and Medway last met 85% in October and much of the Alliance success is thanks to the continued target-beating performance of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells over the last year. East Kent last met the target in October, Dartford in July and Medway haven't met the target this year. A Cancer Improvement Group is in place and plans are being developed with all stakeholders to support recovery. Performance is overseen by the governance of the Cancer Alliance Delivery Board. For March 2021, Kent and Medway is the second best performing Cancer Alliance against this standard nationally.

Trusts have been successful securing green operating pathways to continue operating through the second wave, although at times High Dependency Units have been pressurise due to Covid-19 patients. The successful rollout of vaccinations to diagnosed cancer patients and a series of patient focussed messaging have contributed to reassuring patients it is safe to attend for treatment.

In terms of patients waiting more than 63 days for treatment, we are aiming to reduce from 500 current to 280 (Feb 2020 levels) in our recovery plans. The total number over 63 days is reducing at a greater rate than the number rolling over due to increased operating capacity, shorter pre-surgery isolation requirements, and improved patient engagement with their pathways. Mutual aid and support is available to support this within Kent and through our links to South London.

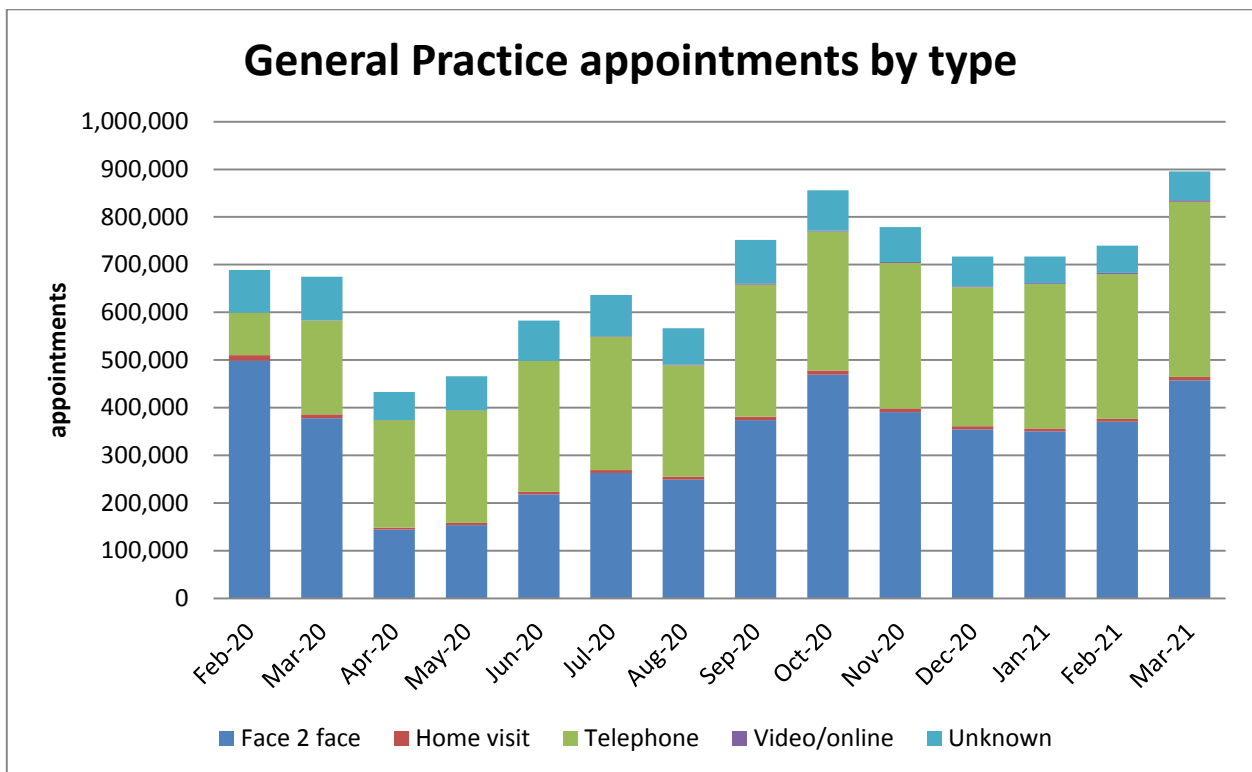


## General Practice appointments

The latest monthly appointment data for general practice has shown a major increase in the numbers of face-to-face appointments happening in GP surgeries across Kent and Medway. Over 86,500 more face to face appointments took place in March 2021 compared to February 2021, with the total extra appointments of all types exceeding 155,000.

The 198 General Practice teams across Kent and Medway have continued working throughout the pandemic; albeit in different ways to what patients have been used to. Total appointments have actually been higher than pre-pandemic levels in each month since September 2020. This shows general practice adapted well to the new ways of working required at the start of the pandemic and was able to sustain the recovery made after the first wave through the much larger second wave.

These figures exclude the Covid-19 vaccine clinics run by Primary Care Networks which now total over one million vaccinations since mid-December 2020.



The table below provides some specific data across the different appointment types for comparison at key points through the pandemic including:

- February 2020 as the pre-pandemic baseline
- April 2020 as the local peak of the first wave
- January 2020 as the local peak of the second wave

Month	Total appointments	Face to face	Home visit	Telephone	Video/online	Unknown
Feb 2020 (pre-pandemic)	<b>689,019</b>	498,719	11,361	89,687	0	89,252
April 2020 (Wave 1 peak)	<b>432,985</b>	144,410	4,031	225,525	45	58,974
Jan 2021 (Wave 2 peak)	<b>717,175</b>	350,101	6,471	302,543	2,485	55,575
Feb 2021	<b>739,623</b>	370,458	6,184	303,650	2,605	56,726
Mar 2021	<b>895,505</b>	457,025	7,365	367,496	3,419	60,200

We recognise that access to general practice from the patient's perspective is not just about the actual appointments. It also covers the wider ability to drop in to a surgery for a range of queries, and the experience of getting through to the surgery on the phone for booking appointment, getting test results and other queries.

The open door access has undoubtedly been restricted through the pandemic, and for the right reasons of keeping patients and staff safe. Going forward, we will see access to surgeries increase again as the wider restrictions on social distancing are eased. Like other small businesses the physical limitations of some smaller surgeries will present continued challenges in adapting to covid-secure requirements. With increased demand, as shown in the figures above, practices will remain busy and pressure on appointment slots and phone lines will remain high. The CCG continues to work with General Practice and NHS England to address the wider workforce challenges within primary care which are needed to meet demand.

Information campaigns to support public understanding are being developed by the CCG in discussion with clinical leads and the Kent Local Medical Committee and we will be supporting local practices to make sure they have clear positive messages about how people can access different types of appointments with the whole clinical team - so that people are seen by the most appropriate person through the most effective channel for their needs.

Caroline Selkirk  
Director of Health Improvement and Chief Operating Officer  
Kent and Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group