

Item 5: Dermatology Services Update

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 January 2021

Subject: Dermatology Services Update

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the information provided by the Kent and Medway CCG.

It provides background information which may prove useful to Members.

1. Introduction and Background

- (a) Dermatologists are specialist physicians who diagnose and treat diseases of the skin, hair, and nails.¹
- (b) DMC Healthcare was awarded the contract to deliver this service to residents of Medway, Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley and Swale from 1st April 2019. The previous service had been failing and there was a significant backlog of patients waiting for treatment.
- (c) On 23 June 2020, HOSC were notified that the Kent and Medway CCG had suspended its dermatology contract with DMC Healthcare, following CCG concerns about the provider's ability to meet NHS standard contract requirements.
- (d) Sussex Community Dermatology Services (SCDS) were appointed to temporarily provide the service from 13 July. SCDS have provided dermatology services across Sussex, Surrey, and Kent for more than ten years.

2. Previous Scrutiny

- (a) HOSC scrutinised the suspension of the dermatology contract at its meeting on 22 July 2020. In addition, it was highlighted that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had intervened in two Medway based general practices that were provided by DMC Healthcare.
- (b) Medway's Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC) also scrutinised the decision. As the dermatology service is accessed by both Kent and Medway residents, the Medway HASC requested that the

¹ British Association of Dermatologists, What is a dermatologist? www.bad.org.uk

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matter be brought to a Kent and Medway Joint NHS Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) and this took place on 28 September 2020.

- (c) At the JHOSC meeting, the following was noted:
- i. The backlog of patients from DMC Healthcare had reduced from 7,500 in August to 800 at the time of the meeting.
 - ii. All patients in the inherited backlog had either been seen or had an appointment scheduled.
 - iii. New patients to the Service were being seen within 8 weeks.
 - iv. A deed of termination for the DMC healthcare contract was to be signed that week.
 - v. An independent harm review had been commissioned – the outcome would not be fully known until all patients from the backlog had received treatment.

- (d) At the culmination of the discussion, the following was agreed:

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the CCG provide an update once the service had commissioned a new provider.

- (e) The Kent and Medway CCG have been asked to provide an update at this meeting.

3. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the report.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2020) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (22/07/20)', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8496&Ver=4>

Kent County Council and Medway Council (2020) 'Kent and Medway NHS Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (28/09/20)', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=757&MId=8675&Ver=4>

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