

KENT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH JUNE 2021

TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN KENT AND MEDWAY - ERADICATING DORMITORY WARDS

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Summary

The NHS in Kent and Medway is working in partnership to improve mental health services. This includes planning for a new facility for older adults with mental health issues, including dementia. Providing high-quality and safe accommodation for patients is an integral part of the therapeutic process and has a significant bearing on the experience of patients, their families and loved ones. Outdated and old-fashioned dormitory wards compromise safety, dignity, and privacy and have no place in a 21st century mental health system.

Following a successful bid for £12.65m of government funding as part of the national drive to eradicate outdated dormitory wards, it is proposed to build a new facility for older adults including single ensuite bedrooms for 16 patients (rising from 14) at Kent and Medway Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust's (KMPMT) Maidstone site. To access this government funding, work must begin in October 2021 to be scheduled for completion in November 2022, to meet the national deadline for eradicating dormitory wards.

The new, purpose-built facility will be available to anyone who needs it wherever they live in Kent and Medway and will replace the single last remaining mental health dormitory ward, Ruby Ward, which is currently operating at Medway Maritime Hospital. It will offer greater privacy, access to outside space and improved infection control measures, which is an increasingly important concern in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This proposal is part of local ambitions to provide high-quality and safe accommodation for patients who need it, within the context of a programme of wider mental health transformation and services delivered in the community as well as in a hospital setting.

KMPT provides inpatient beds on a Kent and Medway-wide basis, with different specialist facilities and different specialist teams caring for patients in different places. There is not a concept of 'local' specialist inpatient beds designated for particular communities – all inpatient services are provided for all Kent and Medway residents. This means that patients requiring admission may not be admitted to a unit closest to their home, but they will be admitted to the most appropriate facility to meet their needs.

Whilst Ruby Ward is located in the former Medway CCG catchment area, it takes patients from across Kent and Medway, approximately a third of patients are from Medway and two thirds from elsewhere in Kent.

A comprehensive review of potential site options for the redevelopment of Ruby Ward has been undertaken in Medway according to an agreed set of criteria.

This paper has been developed to:

1. give HOSC an overview of the national policy context and the local 'case for change' for this work;
2. update HOSC on our proposals for relocating Ruby Ward from Medway Maritime Hospital to a purpose-built facility in Maidstone including the size and scale of this new capital investment;
3. describe the timescales and dependencies attached to accessing capital funding for the project;
4. outline our discussions with Medway Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC) about the proposal;
5. outline our plans for a 6-week period of public consultation with Medway HASC and Medway residents including patients, families and carers who have used the Ruby ward service; and,
6. seek feedback from HOSC on how they would like to be involved as our work progresses, and specifically if HOSC view the proposed change of location of Ruby Ward services as substantial variation.

1. National policy context and local 'case for change'

Implementing national policy

We know that good quality buildings improve patient care and patient experience, as well as providing a better environment for staff to work in. There are also guidelines about how hospitals should be designed to support people with dementia and those with disabilities and to support effective infection control.

Outdated and old-fashioned dormitory wards in mental health facilities compromise the safety, dignity, and privacy of patients. It has been well documented – in the review of the Mental Health Act 2018, the NHS Long Term Plan and by the Care Quality Commission - that dormitory wards compromise mental health patients' privacy, dignity, and safety, and increase the risk of infection (particularly in COVID-19 times). NHS England and the Government have pledged £650million in national funding to replace out-of-date mental health dormitories with single ensuite rooms, to help improve care for mental health inpatients across the country.

Our local 'case for change'

Across Kent and Medway, we have been making good progress in improving the safety and quality of our mental health sites and facilities. We are delighted to have successfully secured Government capital funding to help us eradicate dormitory accommodation by 2022 and replace it with modern, purpose-built/converted accommodation with single ensuite rooms.

The investment in a new purpose-built building for these inpatient mental health services provides the opportunity to release Ruby ward, Kent and Medway Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust's (KPMT) only remaining dormitory ward (at

Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham) meaning that older adult patients would no longer need to be cared for in an outdated ward which compromises their privacy, dignity and safety and is not suitable for their needs.

Ruby Ward is the single remaining mental health dormitory ward in the area, catering for older people with acute mental health difficulties. The current ward is arranged in three bays of four beds, with two additional side-rooms with shared bathroom facilities.

The unit was not designed as a mental health ward and the environment has long been recognised as not fit for purpose. It does not deliver the safety, privacy, and dignity that our mental health patients have every right to expect. It has limited space for the additional therapeutic activities that can significantly contribute to the successful recovery and rehabilitation of patients. A small, shared lounge area also doubles up as a visitors' lounge.

Ruby ward is on the first floor and is harder to access (KMPT has a preference for ground floor facilities mainly for fire and safety reasons). There is no immediate access to outdoor space and access to fresh air and a garden area is some distance away through the main hospital. Developing a new, purpose-built facility for inpatient mental health services to the new agreed specification will improve patient care and experience.

Current challenges vs potential benefits

	Ruby Ward		Purpose built unit
	14 beds on an outdated dormitory style ward – lacking privacy and dignity		16 beds in modern, purpose-built accommodation for older adults, with single ensuite bedrooms, designed specially around care needs
	First floor location		Ground floor, single storey accommodation
	No easy access to outside space		Attractive, easily accessible garden areas designed to provide patients with places for relaxation, socialising and games.
	Ward not designed for providing care and support for mental health patients – no additional space to offer therapeutic activities and support		Light, airy, calm environment with rooms and areas for therapeutic and rehabilitation activities
	Shared bathroom		Ensuite bathrooms ensuring privacy and dignity as well as larger assisted bathroom areas for more complex patients and presentations

	Small lounge area doubles as a visitor space		Dedicated indoor and outdoor space for visitors, and lounge and outdoor space for patients
	Ward set up makes it difficult to ensure infection control for this cohort of patients		Designed to ensure infection control measures can be put in place with ease
	Discharges into the community/back home are slower because of limited opportunities for rehabilitative activities		Faster discharges as staff have the opportunity to work with patients on rehabilitation to get them ready to go home/back into the community
	Will not meet national guidelines for mental health facilities		Adheres to national policy to eradicate dormitory accommodation for mental health patients, and national guidelines on single, ensuite rooms to improve mental health care for patients

Releasing Ruby Ward would also allow Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) to work with commissioners to repatriate other NHS services to the Medway Maritime Hospital site. This includes plans to bring some general surgical and diagnostic activity currently provided by independent providers back to Medway, benefiting local residents. This has become increasingly important with the impact of COVID-19 on waiting times for people waiting for planned operations and other elective procedures. Currently Medway patients can access treatment in the independent sector, and whilst this option will still be available to support patient choice of provider, the release of Ruby ward will enable more acute activity to be delivered on the MFT site.

2. Relocating Ruby ward – our proposal

Size and scale of capital funding opportunity

Following the successful bid for £12.65m of government funding as part of the national drive to eradicate outdated dormitory wards, it is proposed to build a new facility including single ensuite bedrooms for 16 patients (rising from 14) at Kent and Medway KMPT's Maidstone site.

The new, purpose-built facility will be available to anyone who needs it wherever they live in Kent and Medway. The table below shows admissions to Ruby ward according to former CCG areas during 2019/20, demonstrating that while Ruby ward is located in the former Medway CCG catchment area, it takes patients from across Kent and Medway.

Admissions to Ruby ward

CCG area	2019/20	
	Inpatient numbers	Percent of inpatients
NHS ASHFORD CCG	1	1.9%
NHS CANTERBURY AND COASTAL CCG	2	3.8%
NHS DARTFORD, GRAVESEND AND SWANLEY CCG	9	17.3%
NHS MEDWAY CCG	16	30.8%
NHS SOUTH KENT COAST CCG	1	1.9%
NHS SWALE CCG	7	13.5%
NHS THANET CCG	2	3.8%
NHS WEST KENT CCG	13	25.0%
OUTSIDE KENT	1	1.9%
Total	52	99.9%*

*not 100% due to rounding

About the proposed new facility

Our proposals are for a modern, purpose-built, dedicated facility that will address the challenges currently experienced by patients and staff on Ruby ward and bring about significant benefits in the way that care and support are provided. The opportunity to design a facility from scratch, using the latest research, evidence, technological and architectural innovations will help fulfil local ambitions to provide high-quality and safe accommodation for patients.

The patient cohort affected by these proposals are older female adults with acute mental health difficulties who require admission to a hospital bed for a limited period. Older adults are more likely to have physical health conditions and requirements. A purpose-built unit will provide an environment that is supportive to their recovery, maintains their dignity and privacy and ensures that their physical needs (medical and nursing) are met. The new unit is being designed so that it may cater safely for either gender or as a mixed gender unit.

We are not proposing to change the clinical model of care, but to offer two additional beds and opportunities for more therapeutic activity in support of rehabilitation. Being able to access good outside space, the opportunity to work with staff and other patients on therapeutic activities, such as cooking and self-care skills, will support their recovery and rehabilitation and enable faster discharge back home or into the community.

These considerations are most closely reflected in three criteria that have been used to evaluate potential site options and are informing the design and development of the new purpose-built unit.

- Scale – to ensure there is sufficient scope to develop a unit with space for individual ensuite bedroom, dedicated therapeutic areas and facilities including a visitor lounge

- Location with other mental health services – easier access to other mental health staff and teams on the wider site will ensure sharing of expertise and support and enable cover during peak times.
- Location with general acute hospital services – reflecting the fact that older adults are more likely to have additional physical care needs and that these must be met.

Early design concepts and ideas for the new unit are in development and patients, carers and staff are already involved in the design of the proposed new purpose-built facility. We have commissioned Ryder Architecture to work with us on these concepts, recognising their work within the mental health sector to develop facilities that provide a holistic, caring environment for patients and staff. A selection of architects' images are set out below and additional images can be found in the slide deck attached as Appendix A.

Example bedroom in the new facility



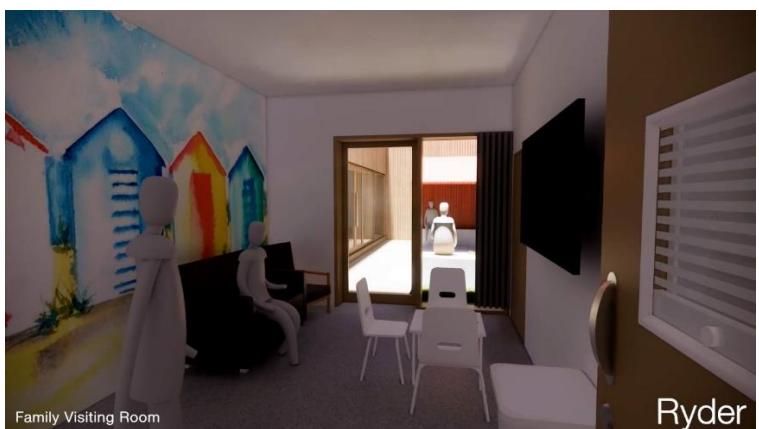
Example bedroom in the new facility



Example dining room



Example visitors lounge



Example garden area



Appendix A [slide deck] includes early architectural visuals of a proposed new purpose-built older adults facility contrasted with the current challenges of providing care on Ruby ward.

3. Accessing capital funding – timescales and dependencies

To access this government funding, work must begin in October 2021 to be scheduled for completion in November 2022, to meet the national deadline for eradicating dormitory wards.

Capital funding allocation – bid requirements and submission process

The process to access national funding required a bid to be submitted within five days of being notified of the available capital, not months as is usual for major programmes. The limited number of days available meant a desktop exercise was required to consider site options and register a bid. The challenging timescale meant that KMPT – as provider of the service - was only able to engage with stakeholders in a limited way, engaging with MFT and CCG commissioners in advance of submitting the bid to ensure their support and endorsement, and with senior local authority partners immediately after submission and indication of likely success.

It was made clear that capital funding would be allocated to provider trusts and the criteria also specified that any capital funding received by the Trust must be invested in their estate portfolio, owned by the Trust, and declared a Trust asset. In other words, any potential site for redevelopment with these monies either needs to be already owned or acquired by the Trust. Incidentally, there is no additional funding available from the national programme to support the acquisition of assets.

The criteria used for the initial search for a suitable location for a new capital build or redevelopment was for sufficiently sized KMPT owned or leased building space/land, available within the short-term, and ideally located with other mental health and general acute hospital support. The initial search was undertaken in Medway and was widened to other Trust sites across Kent and Medway when a suitable site in Medway could not be found.

Once awarded the funding, KMPT worked with health and care system partners to comprehensively re-assess the potential for local Medway site solutions. The following search criteria was used:

- **Scale:** Sufficient space, whether existing buildings for adaptation or for a new build including external space for a garden, parking etc. KMPT also prefers ground floor options for all inpatient services as it better suits patients' physical needs.
- **Availability:** Given the urgency of the national timetable, driven by both COVID-19-related concerns and the unacceptability of dormitory accommodation in terms of patient safety, privacy and dignity, the building or land must be available in the short term. The timescale set by regulators for awarding capital funds is for commencement of construction of a new-build or major conversion by October 2021 to meet a November 2022 deadline for eradicating dormitory mental health wards.
- **Location alongside other mental health services:** KMPT's strategy for locating new mental health inpatient units, in common with all other mental health trusts, is to ensure the support of other medical, psychological, therapeutic, and most importantly, nursing staff to the ward team. It is easier to ensure this access if a number of wards are located together which also provides economies of scale.

- **Location alongside general acute hospitals:** It is beneficial for mental health inpatient facilities to be located close to general hospitals so that medical emergencies are more easily managed. This is significantly more important for older people with mental health problems, whose physical health care needs are usually higher, as in the general population, but further exacerbated by their mental health problems, which can make diagnosis of serious physical health problems more difficult.
- **Site ownership:** The capital investment that the Trust will receive needs to be invested in KMPT estate, owned by the Trust and declared as an asset on the Trust's balance sheet. If the relocation is to be within Medway this would require the Trust having to acquire a site there. The Trust has had this position confirmed by its regulator. NHSEI also confirmed there is no additional funding available from the national programme to support acquisition of assets.

Initial assessment to meet timescales for the bid

The immediate challenge was to identify where a new-build or refurbished ward could be sited. Adaptation of the existing Ruby ward was ruled out as it is too small and did not support the strategic ambition to deliver more acute treatment on the MFT site. The only other inpatient facility owned or leased by KMPT in the Medway area, Newhaven Lodge, was also ruled out as inadequate in terms of space. The Trust's other service occupying a building on the Medway Hospital site is the Disablement Services Centre, which is fully operational, and in addition, standalone units are not considered good practice as they can be more difficult to staff and can lead to patient safety issues.

Having established that there were no KMPT estate options within Medway, the Trust reviewed whether it owned other sites on which to realistically base the bid.

The only available KMPT site meeting the criteria is the Maidstone site, which is also KMPT's closest nearby, and most easily accessible, site for Medway residents. Whilst acknowledging that people want as short a journey time as possible to access healthcare facilities, KMPT provides inpatient beds on a Kent and Medway-wide basis, with different specialist facilities and different specialist teams caring for patients in different places. There is not a concept of 'local' specialist inpatient beds designated for particular communities – all inpatient services are provided for all Kent and Medway residents. This means that patients requiring admission may not be admitted to a unit closest to their home, but they will be admitted to the most appropriate facility to meet their needs.

The bid which was therefore submitted is based on the proposed development of a new purpose-built facility on the Maidstone site.

Assessment undertaken following successful bid outcome

Delighted to have been awarded the funding, KMPT worked with health and care system partners to comprehensively assess the potential for local Medway site solutions which were not currently owned by the Trust, to try and retain immediate access in a Medway location. Details of this review are attached as Appendix B.

Conclusion

A comprehensive multi-agency review of accommodation options for a specialist mental health unit for older people has not identified a suitable location in Medway which meets the identified criteria, including - critically - the timescale requirements for eradication of dormitory wards and accessing capital funding. This means the option which formed the basis of the original bid to DHSC, development of a new purpose-built facility on the Maidstone site, meets all the identified criteria and remains the recommended way forward.

While the national and local strategic priority is to continue to enhance mental health community services, support people in their own homes and avoid hospital admission wherever possible, admission to an inpatient ward will be necessary for some people.

The release of Ruby ward will realise our goal to eradicate outdated dormitory style accommodation for mental health patients in Kent and Medway. The construction of a new, purpose-built facility for older adults with acute mental health difficulties will significantly improve the way that care and support are provided for this cohort of patients. The opportunity to design and construct a new unit will help fulfil local ambitions to provide the high-quality and safe accommodation that our patients, their families and loved ones have every right to expect.

4. Discussions with Medway HASC

The proposal to relocate services currently provided on Ruby ward and construct a new older adults unit in Maidstone was presented to Medway HASC at its meeting on Wednesday 17th March 2021. This included the information outlined within this report and a recommendation for public and stakeholder engagement. HASC members voiced concerns about the proposal and agreed the following:

- a) that the reprocision of services from Ruby ward at Medway Maritime Hospital to the Maidstone Hospital site is a substantial variation to services.
- b) recommended that a 6-week period of public consultation takes place with HASC and local people including patients, families and carers who have used the Ruby ward service, to urgently eradicate the Trust's remaining dormitory ward by 2022.
- c) requested that KMCCG and KMPT investigate further potential sites within Medway (Harmony House, Canada House, the Medway ambulance site and Elizabeth House) as possible alternative sites for the new facility and also explore further with the Medway NHS Foundation Trust whether a suitable site can be found at Medway Maritime Hospital.
- d) agreed that the outcomes of these investigations and discussions be discussed with a small Member Working Group.

We are in the process of planning for a six-week formal public consultation as requested by HASC and our current working timetable is that this would commence in late summer/early autumn 2021. This would enable commissioners to make a final decision on the future of the service that has to date been provided on Ruby ward and meet the deadlines for starting the construction of the new unit in October 2021.

The additional site recommendations from HASC members were reviewed against the agreed criteria and the results of this review were discussed with the HASC member

working group on Wednesday 19th May 2021. **The report is attached as Appendix C** and this includes the additional assurance that there is no available space for the unit at Medway Maritime Hospital.

5. Inviting feedback from HOSC/recommendations

The eradication of outdated dormitory wards must be a priority for the Kent and Medway health and care system. We are delighted that capital funding is available to enable us to achieve this goal in the best interest of patients. We are therefore **recommending** that a purpose-built facility for older people's mental health services is developed on the Maidstone hospital site to replace the current Ruby Ward on the Medway Maritime Hospital site.

In addition to planning for formal public consultation, we are working with our regulator to take our proposals through the national assurance process for service change. Aligned to that process, we are now seeking HOSC's views on the relocation of Ruby ward services to a proposed new facility in Maidstone and the subsequent increase in bed numbers from 14-16, taking into account:

- the clear rationale for repurposing Ruby Ward because of the poor physical environment and the risks to safety and unacceptably poor privacy and dignity it provides for mental health patients
- the short timescales to respond to the NHSE capital bid and start the build/refurbishment, alongside requirements for the capital investment that the Trust will receive to be invested in KMPT estate, owned by the Trust and declared as an asset on the Trust's balance sheet
- MFT's need for re-purposing Ruby ward back into acute service estate, in supporting the response to the current pandemic, and in repatriation of NHS acute activity in Medway.

HOSC members are asked to:

- **Note** the national policy and support the case for eradicating outdated dormitory accommodation for mental health inpatients in Kent and Medway
- **Note** that Ruby ward, on the Medway Maritime Hospital site, is the only remaining dormitory ward for mental health patients in Kent and Medway
- **Note** KMPT's successful bid for capital funding to support the eradication of such wards through redevelopment or new build of fit-for-purpose accommodation with a requirement to commence construction of a new-build or major conversion by October 2021
- **Note** the process and progress to date in working to identify an appropriate and suitable site for reprovision of services previously provided on Ruby ward
- **Note** the current number of beds for Ruby ward is 14 and the proposed reprovision would be for 16 beds in the proposed new location
- **Determine** whether they consider the reprovision/relocation of services from Ruby ward at Medway Maritime Hospital to the Maidstone Hospital site is a substantial variation to services for Kent residents
- **Consider and advise** on appropriate and proportionate engagement on the proposed change

- **Continue to work closely and engage** with commissioners and KMPT as they seek to successfully eradicate dormitory accommodation for mental health patients in Kent and Medway.

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Appendix A

Slide deck – images of Ruby ward and still from the architect's walkthrough

Appendix B

Review of potential sites in Medway

The following agencies were approached to provide information and suggestions on potential sites in the Medway area which might meet the criteria set out above:

- **Medway Foundation NHS Trust (MFT)** The site has some very old wards which are not fully fit for purpose, many having very cramped conditions which have become even more compromised by the impact of the pandemic and the need to socially distance, which has resulted in a reduction in bed numbers. Also, the ambition of the local health system is to repatriate Medway surgical and diagnostic activity which is currently outsourced to private providers which will require access to more estate. The opportunity to have Ruby ward back (which due to its location and comparatively modern build, compared to some of the MFT Victorian estate, is regarded as a prime asset for MFT) makes a significant contribution to tackling some of the issues above and will benefit patients using Medway Maritime Hospital.

MFT is clear that there are no facilities available or appropriate in the main building and have plans for the various buildings sited around the periphery, including the potential for an onsite GP or healthy living centre and/or step-down facility.

- **Medway Community Healthcare Trust (MCH)** KMPT has worked with MCH and has reviewed the properties it uses in Medway against the five criteria. Of these only three meet the scale criteria, but none are available as all are patient-facing

operational services with no plans to change them in the short-term. They are owned by NHS Property Services.

- **Independent nursing and care home sector** The CCG has considered whether there might be potential within the independent nursing and care home sector. Only one site emerged with potential, but in discussions with the provider concerned they confirmed that the land they did have available is already allocated for their own purposes.
- **Medway Council estates division** A list of five potential sites was provided by the Council. The Trust has undertaken a review of each of these sites against the five criteria set out in the background section above, but none met the criteria, most being too small or not available within the necessary timescale and none are located alongside a mental health unit or general hospital.

A full list of the sites considered is set out below.

- **NHS Property Services** provided a list showing the NHS land and property which fit the scale criteria. Unfortunately, with the exception of the Clover Street land, they have confirmed that they are all operational properties and would not be available in the short or medium term.

The Clover Street site is vacant and remains the preferred option for the Chatham Healthy Living Centre development. The site would not meet either of the co-location criteria nor the site ownership criteria. In addition, its location in a commercial part of the town is not ideal for an inpatient unit.

One property, **Darland House**, has been closely considered, given there is already a dementia care home service on site. However, to develop the new unit would result in loss of all garden/amenity space to the existing unit, as the site is not large enough. Ownership and co-location with general hospital services are two further criteria which Darland House does not meet. The Trust has also explored the land next to Darland, which is owned by the council and is part-occupied by football/hockey pitches. However, council officers confirmed this was not available.

Evaluation of potential sites from Medway Council estates division

Evaluation details of sites considered were as follows:

- a) **St Marks.** This site does not meet any of the criteria, although it is very close to the Britton House community mental health unit. However, the site is:
 - not located alongside a general hospital
 - too small
 - currently not available and unlikely to become so in the time available
 - not a KMPT asset.
- b) **57 Marlborough Road.** The site might meet scale criteria (further specialist review/survey would be required), and could potentially meet availability, but is:
 - not located alongside either a mental health unit or general hospital

- not a KMPT asset.

On inspection, work appears to have already started to redevelop the site.

- c) **Marlborough Road Annex.** The site is potentially available but:
 - does not meet the scale criteria
 - is not located alongside a mental health unit or a general hospital
 - is privately owned and, therefore, unlikely to be available for transfer within the successful funding allocation.
- d) **Kingsley House.** The site meets none of the criteria.
- e) **Tintagel Manor.** The site could meet the scale criteria (further specialist review/survey would be required) but:
 - is currently not available and unlikely to be in the time available
 - is not near a general hospital
 - is not a KMPT asset
 - it is across a busy road from Britton House, and would still take staff several minutes to respond from there. Britton House is not a 24/7 facility so there would be no additional staff support/response out-of-hours.

Appendix C

Discussion paper ‘Review of sites proposed by HASC members’ – May 2021