

Item 10: Elective waiting lists in Kent and Medway (written item)

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 11 May 2022

Subject: Elective waiting lists in Kent and Medway (written item)

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

It is a written briefing only and no guests will be present to speak on this item.

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## **1) Introduction**

- a) The Committee has received updates on the local response to Covid-19 since their July 2020 meeting. At its last meeting, it was agreed that these general updates would no longer be a standing item on the HOSC agenda but would be replaced by targeted papers on topics related to recovery from the pandemic.
- b) An area of concern to the Committee has been elective waiting lists – in December 2021 there were 172,207 people in Kent and Medway with an “incomplete pathway” and 33.3% waiting over 18 weeks for treatment. The three specialities with the highest 52+ week waits were: Trauma and Orthopaedic; General Surgery; and Ear, Nose and Throat.
- c) During the discussion on 2 March 2022, the K&M CCG provided detail around its “Delivery Plan for Tackling the Covid-19 Backlog of Elective Care”. Detail can be found in the “background documents” link below.
- d) The Committee asked to see a breakdown of waiting lists by Trust, along with detail around any duty to cooperate between those Trusts to ensure patients were treated equitably.
- e) The CCG has provided the attached briefing and Members are invited to ask questions through the Clerk.

## **2) Maximum waiting times for non-urgent referrals**

- a) In addition to the CCG briefing, attached as “Appendix A” is data from the NHS England website setting out “incomplete pathways” data as of February 2022. Incomplete pathways are waiting times for patients waiting to start treatment at the end of that month.
- b) The NHS Constitution states that the maximum waiting time for non-urgent, consultant-led treatments is 18 weeks from the day an appointment is booked through the NHS e-Referral Service, or when the hospital or service receives the referral letter.

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c) This right to an 18-week waiting time does not apply if:

- The patient chooses to wait longer
- delaying the start of a patient's treatment is in their best clinical interests, for example, when stopping smoking or losing weight first is likely to improve the outcome of their treatment
- it is clinically appropriate for the patient's condition to be actively monitored in secondary care without clinical intervention or diagnostic procedures at that stage
- the patient fails to attend appointments that had been chosen from a set of reasonable options
- the treatment is no longer necessary

### **3. Recommendation**

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the report.

### **Background Documents**

Kent County Council (2022) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (02/03/22)*', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8762&Ver=4>

NHS England and NHS Improvement (2022) Monthly RTT data collection (published 14 April 2022) <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/rtt-waiting-times/rtt-data-2021-22/>

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