

Item 7: Vascular Services

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 31 January 2023

Subject: Vascular Services (East Kent and Medway)

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the recommendation from the Kent and Medway Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) in relation to Vascular Services.

NHS England are establishing an inpatient vascular services centre at Kent & Canterbury Hospital, with outpatient services delivered at other hospital sites. The JHOSC are supportive of the decision.

The Committee is being asked, in light of the recommendation from the JHOSC, to respond to the NHS decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Vascular disease affects veins and arteries. The services under consideration are specialised and therefore commissioned by NHS England closely supported by the Kent and Medway ICB.
- 1.2. In East Kent and Medway, vascular inpatient services are currently provided by two NHS Trusts: Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) and East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) at their Kent and Canterbury Hospital site. Medway Hospital has experienced a number of challenges around staffing and service sustainability, and since January 2020 their Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) elective and emergency services have been taking place at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital.
- 1.3. The national recommendation is that vascular services are organised into a “hub and spoke” model, allowing patients access to a wide range of services locally but with arterial and emergency work centralised at a centre of excellence. Dedicated vascular centres allow for higher volumes of activity and are evidenced to deliver better patient outcomes.
- 1.4. The current solution is an interim one. The permanent location of the main hub will be determined through the East Kent Transformation Programme. However, this major programme, which is designing changes to a wide range of acute NHS services in east Kent, is unlikely to be completed within the next 8 to 10 years.
- 1.5. The new model of care will see a single hub for specialised inpatient vascular surgery on the Kent and Canterbury Hospital site. Outpatient services will continue to be delivered at QEQM, William Harvey, Buckland Hospital and

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Medway Hospital. EKHUFT's Vascular network team will also provide outpatient vascular services and some vascular diagnostic services at Maidstone Hospital, Maidstone, and Sheppey Hospital.

2. Scrutiny

- 2.1. In 2015 Kent County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Medway Council's Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee determined that changes being proposed by NHS England to Vascular Services in East Kent and Medway amounted to a proposal for a substantial variation to the health service across both areas.
- 2.2. In line with regulations, formal scrutiny passed to the Kent and Medway NHS Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee who have received updates since that time.
- 2.3. In addition to extensive engagement work, a formal public consultation ran from 1 February – 15 March 2022. This was a separate process to the NHS' engagement with health scrutiny. Responses were broadly in favour of the proposal, but key areas of concern were around travel and transport to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, particularly for visitors of patients. A public meeting has since been held to find ways of mitigating those concerns.
- 2.4. There will be workforce changes to support the new model of care, and the Vascular Team at Medway Hospital will be formally consulted about the changes and offered the opportunity to transfer their employment to EKHUFT.
- 2.5. Specialist Commissioning at NHS England and the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) considered the Decision-Making Business Case on 14 September 2022 and 1 November 2022 respectively and made their final decision. Boards at Medway Foundation Trust and East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust also considered the decision during November. The decision was to support the DMBC and locate (in the medium term) the inpatient vascular hub at Kent and Canterbury Hospital.
- 2.6. On 6 December 2022 the JHOSC met to consider the decision of NHS England. The draft minutes are attached to this report, and the Committee agreed the following:

RESOLVED that

- i) the Committee supports the decision of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Specialist Commissioning at NHS England regarding the interim solution for the delivery of vascular services in East Kent and Medway.*
- ii) the relevant NHS bodies be asked to consider that the TUPE consultation is carried out according to statute whilst taking into account industrial action.*

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3. Next Steps

- 3.1. In line with its Terms of Reference, the Kent and Medway JHOSC considered whether to recommend to the Medway HASC and Kent HOSC that the decision of NHS England on 14 September 2022 should be referred to the Secretary of State.
- 3.2. The decision of the JHOSC was not to recommend referral, as is set out above (2.6). As the power of referral was not delegated to the JHOSC, the Kent HOSC is able to determine its response to this recommendation.
- 3.3. As set out in KCC's Constitution, a substantial variation of service may only be referred to the Secretary of State for Health where one of the following applies:
 - i) The consultation with the HOSC on the proposal is deemed to have been inadequate in relation to content or time allowed;
 - ii) The reasons given for not consulting with the HOSC on a proposal are inadequate; or
 - iii) The proposal is not considered to be in the interests of the health service of the area.
- 3.4. If HOSC does not feel that any of these apply to the matter under discussion, it cannot make a legitimate referral. It can still monitor the implementation of the service and make comments and recommendations directly to the relevant NHS organisations at any time.
- 3.5. If HOSC does feel that one of these applies, it cannot make a final determination on referral at this meeting. The Constitution sets out that the proposer of the substantial variation of service shall be informed of the date on which HOSC intends to make a determination on referring an issue to the Secretary of State for Health.
- 3.6. Any referral to the Secretary of State must contain the following:
 - i) The full evidence of the case for referral.
 - ii) Evidence that all other options for resolution have been explored must be included along with all additional requirements for the submission of a referral required by legislation and statutory guidance.
 - iii) Where the referral is on the grounds that the Committee believes the proposal is not in the interests of the health service of the area, a summary of the evidence considered must be provided, including any evidence of the effect or potential effect of the proposal on the sustainability or otherwise of the health service of the area.
- 3.7. Prior to making any referral to the Secretary of State, the Committee would need to be assured that all the above could be supplied.

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- 3.8. Whilst a decision to refer cannot be made at this meeting, a decision to support the decision of NHS England, or support with qualifications and/or comments can be made at this meeting.

4. Further information

- 4.1. NHS England – Consultation on specialised vascular services in Kent and Medway: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south-east/our-work/info-professionals/spec-comm/consultation-on-specialised-vascular-services-in-kent-and-medway/>

5. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider the decision of NHS England Specialised Commissioning on 14 September 2022 and take one of the following actions:

- (a) Endorse the recommendation of the JHOSC and support the decision of NHS England about the medium-term model of care for vascular services in East Kent and Medway.
- (b) Specify concerns that the Committee has with the decision of NHS England and invite the NHS to a future meeting of the Committee where their response to these concerns will be considered ahead of a final determination by the Committee as to whether or not to refer the decision of NHS England to the Secretary of State for one of the reasons set out in 3.3.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2022) '*Kent and Medway NHS Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (06/12/22)*',

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=757&MId=9188&Ver=4>

Kent and Medway NHS Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee – meeting agendas and papers: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=757&Year=0>

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