

Item 6: Section 136 pathway and health-based place of safety service improvement

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 10 May 2023

Subject: Mental Health Transformation: Section 136 pathway and health-based places of safety service improvement

Summary: This report falls under the transformation of mental health services in Kent and Medway.

The Committee has determined that these proposals constitute a substantial variation of service.

1) Introduction

- a) The Kent and Medway Integrated Commissioning Board are consulting on proposed service improvements to the Section 136 (Mental Health Act 1983, as amended 2007) pathway and health-based places of safety (HBPoS) for the adult population of Kent and Medway.

2) Previous visits to HOSC

- a) This proposal falls under the programme of change for mental health and dementia services in Kent and Medway, as presented to HOSC on 10 June 2021.
- b) On 31 January 2023, the Committee reviewed the proposals to improve section 136 health-based places of safety and determined that it constituted a substantial variation of service. This means the NHS must consult with HOSC prior to a final decision being made, though the NHS remains the ultimate decision maker.
- c) During the discussion in January, members of the Committee raised the following concerns/ points:
 - i) there were currently 5 places of safety across 3 sites (2 in Maidstone, 2 in Canterbury and 1 in Dartford), and the proposal was to maintain 5 places but from 1 site (Maidstone, Priority House).
 - ii) One benefit of centralisation would be a single, dedicated team, as opposed to staff working across and travelling between sites.
 - iii) The current estate was outdated and lacked resilience, it also did not meet recommended standards and best practice.
 - iv) In terms of usage, 2 years ago there had been over 150 patients each month. In December 2022, that had reduced to 55. It was hoped this number would reduce further as improvement work on the mental health pathway continued.

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- v) Engagement work was underway. Members suggested Housing Associations be contacted as part of this. A public consultation would be carried out between 21 February and 18 April.
 - vi) only 5% of Mental Health Act assessments were completed within the nationally and locally recommended 4 hours.
- d) At the end of the discussion, the Chair reflected on the concerns raised and noted that the proposals were dependant on securing capital enhancements at the Maidstone site. The consultation would also be particularly sensitive.
- e) It was RESOLVED that:
- i. the Committee deems that proposed changes to places of safety are a substantial variation of service.
 - ii. NHS representatives be invited to attend this Committee and present an update at an appropriate time.
- f) NHS representatives have been invited to attend today's meeting to address the concerns raised by the Committee.

3) Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the report and invite the ICB to attend the next meeting to present the draft Business Case before it goes to the Board for approval.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2021) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10/06/21)
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8501&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2023) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (31/01/23)
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9051&Ver=4>

Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board - [Public consultation: Improving section 136 health-based places of safety :: NHS Kent and Medway \(icb.nhs.uk\)](https://www.icb.nhs.uk/public-consultation-improving-section-136-health-based-places-of-safety)

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