

**From:** Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services  
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

**To:** Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee

**Subject:** 23/00046 Kent and Medway Designated Keyworker Early Adopter Programme

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of report:** None

**Future Pathway of report:** Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:** Kent County Council currently hosts the Children and Young People's Designated Keyworker Programme on behalf of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System.

The Designated Keyworker Programme is funded by NHS England and the funding is transferred to the Council via the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board.

This report seeks to share the progress and successes of the Programme to date and detail the requirements for the continuation of the Programme.

**Recommendation:**

The Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to CONSIDER and ENDORSE, or MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision to:

- A) To endorse Kent County Council as the provider of the Designated Keyworker Programme for Kent and Medway and to permit the acceptance of the funding from NHS England (via Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board) for the financial year 2023/2024.
- B) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, to negotiate, finalise and enter into the relevant contracts; and
- C) To take the necessary actions including but not limited to negotiating, finalising and entering into relevant legal agreements such as the direct award contract, as required to implement this decision.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2019, the NHS committed to implement the recommendations in [Dame Christine Lenehan's review into the care of children and young people with complex health needs](#), "These are our children", that by 2023/24 children and young people, aged 0-25, with a learning disability and/or those who are autistic with the most complex needs (hereafter referred to as 'CYP') will have a designated keyworker.
- 1.2 The commitment in the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) was made in recognition that, despite the best efforts of many committed professionals, the health and care system was not delivering the objectives of the Transforming Care Programme for CYP and for their families. Too many families were not receiving the support they needed at the right time, and too many CYP were continuing to be admitted to inpatient care when they reached crisis.
- 1.3 The ethos of 'Keyworking' is ensuring the 'system' takes a personalised and co-ordinated approach to supporting CYP and their families through a time of crisis to:
  - Ensure that CYP and their families get the right support at the right time and that local services are responsive to meeting their needs in a holistic and joined up way.
  - Prevent CYP being admitted unnecessarily to any form of acute mental health hospital or institutional care.
  - When a CYP is unavoidably admitted to an acute mental health hospital, to ensure that their stay is as brief as possible and support plans are developed and in place for discharge into the community.
- 1.4 Each Integrated Care System was tasked by NHS England to develop a Designated Keyworking Service model that translated the national framework into their local system. The national framework and guidance documents provided important parameters and guidance, but not a single national operating model that could simply be dragged and dropped into Kent and Medway.
- 1.5 Kent County Council is the provider of the Designated Keyworking Programme on behalf of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System.
- 1.6 To be effective locally, the Designated Keyworking Service required a high degree of flexibility and discretion, to understand the complex range of statutory frameworks underpinning provision for children, young people and families, not only those specific to CYP, and it needed to navigate the specific structures and challenges within the Kent and Medway areas.
- 1.7 It is testament to our effective joint commissioning arrangements that a crucial NHS England service is provided by the Council. We are one of only two Designated Keyworker Programmes nationally to be hosted in a Local Authority.

## 2. Current context

- 2.1 As part of the programme design and mobilisation, we ensured meaningful and extensive co-production by engaging parent and carers, CYP themselves, along with other key stakeholders. We engaged the services of a co-production partner [ActivMobs](#), a Community Interest Company, to ensure best practice in co-production and that the Programme delivery is rooted in the real-life experiences of families. This ensures that our model would make a difference and add value in an already complex system.
- 2.2 The scoping work undertaken to develop the Kent and Medway Keyworking model, informed by significant co-production with CYP and their families, resulted in the development of a multi-functional team comprising three distinct elements:
- Practice Consultant,
  - Behaviour Team, and
  - Peer Associate.
- 2.3 The Practice Consultant role ensures that the multi-disciplinary team around CYP and their family are in place, networked together and are making timely and effective decisions to support the best possible outcomes. Practice Consultants ensure that CYP and their families get timely, high-quality support in a holistic way and that the support is joined-up. Practice Consultants do not case hold; rather they work collaboratively with the responsible practitioners and clinicians in the CYPs' network. There are six Practice Consultants in the team.
- 2.4 The Behaviour Team support families to manage and change behaviours of concern, help ensure that behaviours are understood and that effective plans are developed to improve communication and reduce incidents of the concerning behaviours. The team supports families to learn new ways and means of communication and advise how interventions can be adapted/generalised to different environments as required. There is one Board Certified Behavioural Analyst and five Behaviour Technicians in the team.
- 2.5 The Peer Associates are currently employed by Kent PACT and are all Lived Experience Experts who provide advocacy to ensure families' voices are heard and listened to. They help navigate our complex care and support systems, whilst providing practical and emotional support, connecting CYP and their families to community services/assets including to peer support. There is one Peer Associate Lead and five Peer Associates in the team.
- 2.6 The Programme employs two Lived Experience Experts, who are both parents who have experienced a period of crisis with an autistic child. We utilise their expertise in all aspects of the Programme, and they have also been supporting change in the wider SEND network.
- 2.7 The Programme also employs a Programme Lead, Senior Educational Psychologist, an Occupational Therapy Lead, two Project Officers and two Administrators. A full-time Operational Manager is being recruited to oversee the day-to-day management of the multi-functional team. The Programme structure chart is attached as Appendix 1.

- 2.8 The Designated Keyworker Programme works closely with the NHS, utilising the Kent and Medway Dynamic Support Database and the Care Education and Treatment Reviews (CETR) to ensure all CYP at risk of crisis and potential admission are identified and their support co-ordinated and managed well.
- 2.9 One of the Programme's main targets had been to reduce the number of CYP detained under the Mental Health Act. At its highest in June 2020, twenty-one CYP were detained under the Mental Health Act. Kent and Medway had been set a target to have a maximum of six CYP in mental health hospitals by 2024. We have already exceeded that target. There are currently two CYP in an acute mental health hospital, and we have remained below the target of six since November 2021.

### **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 The Programme is wholly funded by NHS England and the funds are passported to the Council via NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board. The Programme management sits with a Senior Commissioning Manager in the Children's Commissioning Team and this post is not funded by the Programme. The revenue funding is held within the Disabled Children's 0 -18 Commissioning budget line.
- 3.2 Over the last two years, NHS England funding has been:
- £450,000 in 2021/22
  - £912,000 in 2022/23
- 3.3 Most of the funding is attributable to staffing including grant funding for Kent PACT, to host the Peer Associates Team. The remainder is for programme planning and implementation, and staff training.
- 3.4 The funding allocated for financial year 2023/24 is £1,434,000. It is anticipated there will be ongoing funding in future years, although this has not yet been confirmed.
- 3.5 The spending plans are in accordance with the NHS England conditions of funding. NHS England have specified that the funding should be used to scope and develop a Keyworking Service which will complement existing universal services and/or offer new interventions in order to improve support to CYP and their families in Kent and Medway.
- 3.6 The delivery plan continues to evolve and involves close working relationships with Social Care, Health, SEND and Education to support the delivery of core and statutory services.
- 3.7 Redundancy costs for staff have been calculated and set aside. No financial liability will fall to the Council should the programme end.
- 3.8 The programme funding from NHS England will cease in March 2024 and funding of the service will transfer to the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board from April 2024.

## **4. Legal implications**

- 4.1 Through our successful bid, on behalf of Kent and Medway Integrated Care System, for early adopter status of the Designated Keyworker Programme, the Expression of Interest created a contract between Kent County Council and NHS England. The obligations require Kent County Council to progress the scoping, development, and other activities of the Keyworking function in Kent and Medway during the life of the Programme.
- 4.2 NHS England monitors the progress of the programme by requiring submission of quarterly reports. Specific information is requested in the reports including number of CYP being supported and outcomes, workforce headcount and roles, case studies of intervention and support (see Appendix 2 for sample case stories), continuous improvement activities, challenges, and risks. An example of a monitoring report is attached as Appendix 3.
- 4.3 We have completed a full Data Protection Impact Assessment and there is a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the NHS regarding data sharing arrangements.
- 4.4 A procurement exercise is currently underway to identify a suitable future provider for the Peer Associate Team, as the initial arrangement with Kent PACT expires at the end of June 2023. This procurement will be completed in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and TUPE will apply.

## **5. Equalities implications**

- 5.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted which identified some negative implications for certain protected characteristics. However, the identified areas (e.g., age and disabilities) are unlikely to be fully mitigated as these are specific requirements of the Programme design. This Programme is solely for CYP aged 0-25 with learning disabilities and/or those who are autistic.

## **6. Other corporate implications**

- 6.1 The Designated Keyworker Programme aligns with the SEND Transformation Programme and its success will support the changes and vision for SEND.
- 6.2 The Designated Keyworker Programme was identified as an area of good practice in the recent SEND revisit report.
- 6.3 The Programme team have presented at several national events including a Community of Practice at the Local Government Association. The team is often approached by other areas to share best practice and to support them as they develop their own models.

## **7. Governance**

- 7.1 A Cabinet Member decision will allow for the continuation of Kent County Council as provider of the Designated Keyworker Programme for NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care System for financial year 2023/24.

## **8. Conclusions**

- 8.1 The Kent and Medway Designated Keyworker Programme, led by Kent County Council, has been a strategic and operational success for Kent and Medway Integrated Care System and is viewed nationally as an example of best practice.
- 8.2 In achieving such success, the Programme team have avoided unnecessary admissions and supported safe and timely discharge, prevented relationships breakdown in families and with professionals, reduced frequency and severity of behaviours of concern in CYP (and with parents/carers/siblings), improved CYP and their families' quality of life, and helped CYP to achieve their personal goals.
- 8.3 The programme team have also improved communication amongst system stakeholders, achieved change by unblocking the system, ensured that the complex support needs of CYP are at centre of all activities.
- 8.4 Whilst future programme/service funding is yet to be determined, the funding earmarked for the financial year 2023/2024 will continue to make a difference in the lives of CYP and their families in Kent and Medway.

## **9. Recommendation(s):**

The Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to CONSIDER and ENDORSE, or MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision to:

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## **10. Background Documents**

Appendix 1 – PROD

Appendix 2 – Equalities impact assessment

Appendix 3 - Structure Chart

Appendix 4a, 4b and 4c – Case Studies

Appendix 5 – Copy of NHSE Monitoring Report

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