

Item: NHS Kent and Medway Community Services review and procurement

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 17 December 2024

Subject: NHS Kent and Medway Community Services review and procurement

Summary: This report provides background information for members.

The Committee has determined the proposals do not constitute a substantial variation of service.

1) Introduction

- a) NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) are developing the Community Services model of care in Kent and Medway.
- b) The current Community Services contracts end in September 2025, having been extended in March 2024. New contracts will predominantly be on a like-for-like basis for the first year. However, written into the contracts will be the need for the (new) provider to develop services to deliver improvements contained within the ICB's ambitions for those services.
- c) The ICB are engaging with staff, patients and wider stakeholders to understand what they need from community health services in the future.

2) Previous Scrutiny

- a) The ICB attended HOSC on 6 September 2023, setting out their plan to award new contracts in April 2024. The first year would be on a like-for-like basis with the incumbent contracts, allowing time for engagement and transformation. A new model of care would then come into effect from year 2.
- b) The Committee were concerned that there was a lack of detail in the plans, and were unclear how staff were expected to perform their main duties whilst looking to transform services at the same time. However, they recognised that initially there would be no noticeable change in the delivery of services and therefore agreed that the changes did not constitute a substantial variation of service.
- c) At the meeting on 7 December 2023, the ICB confirmed they had reviewed the procurement options for Community Services following HOSC and HASC¹ meetings in September. It was explained that a new contract extension would be made to the three existing community providers for up to two years with a

¹ Medway Council's Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee declared the proposals substantial at their meeting on 20 September 2023.

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six-month break clause. The additional time would allow for harmonisation of contracts while further engagement was undertaken with providers, stakeholders and patients to develop the new models of care and ensure the right services were offered in the right locations.

- d) The latest update was at the meeting on 17 July 2024. The discussion included:
- i) NHS Kent and Medway's Community Services Steering Group had approved a phased approach to communicating and engaging on the project. Phase 1 was looking at service design and ran March 2024 – July 2024.
 - ii) Streams of work related to adults had been clustered into three areas: better use of beds and short term services; thriving community hubs; and ageing well, end of life care and frailty. Children's services was also covered by the review.
 - iii) Invitation to tenders for new contracts were timetabled to be out in September 2024 with a contract award in January 2025 and full mobilisation in September 2025. Members were concerned that there was insufficient time to analyse the feedback from the phase 1 engagement before the invitation to tender.
 - iv) The lifetime contract value was £1.6bn.
 - v) Healthwatch reiterated the importance of engagement and were happy to help.
- e) At the end of the discussion the Committee:
- RESOLVED that the Committee note the report and invite the ICB to provide an update at the appropriate time (including information about finance and staff retention).*
- f) In November 2024, the Health and Social Care Secretary spoke at the NHS Providers annual conference 2024², setting out the three big shifts that will underpin the Government's 10-year plan for Health (to be published in May 2025) – one of these was "from hospital to community". The Committee may wish to explore with the ICB what impact this shift will have in Kent.
- g) The ICB has been invited to attend today's meeting and provide an update on the status of the procurement and transformation.

² Department of Health and Social Care (13 Nov 2024) [Our ambition to reform the NHS - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/our-ambition-to-reform-the-nhs)

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3) Recommendation

- a) The Committee is asked to note the report and invite the ICB to provide an update at the appropriate time.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2023) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19/07/23)',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9054&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2023) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (6/09/23)',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9388&Ver=4>

Medway Council (2023) 'Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (20/09/23),
<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=5809>

Kent County Council (2023) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (7/12/23)',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9319&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2024) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (17/07/24)',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9584&Ver=4>

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