

Item: Phlebotomy services in Deal

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 28 January 2025

Subject: Phlebotomy services in Deal

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

It provides background information which may prove useful to Members.

1) Introduction

- a) Prior to October 2021, Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) provided phlebotomy services (blood tests) from Victoria Hospital in Deal and Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital (QVMH) in Herne Bay. In early November 2021, the Chair of HOSC was made aware of an unexpected closure of the Blood Unit at Victoria Hospital in Deal and invited the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (what is now the ICB) to provide an update at HOSC.
- b) The CCG presented a paper to the Committee on 26 January 2022. They explained that GP surgeries provided phlebotomy services under the Primary Care Quality Standards (PCQS) contract and as KCHFT were not being directly commissioned or funded by the CCG for the service, there was no need for their additional capacity. Assurances were received that general practice could provide enough capacity to cover the level of phlebotomy that was being provided by KCHFT.
- c) Whilst a formal public consultation on the closure had not been required, there was a communications plan in place, though it was acknowledged that this was postponed in launching.
- d) Service arrangements from 1 November 2021 were set out on page 2 of the [report](#), listing four registered surgeries that would provide blood tests:
 - i) Manor Road Surgery
 - ii) St Richard's and Golf Road Surgery
 - iii) Balmoral Surgery
 - iv) Cedars Surgery

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- e) The following reassurances were given:
 - i) KCHFT as the owner of the site had confirmed that it saw Deal hospital as an important local resource and had no plans to remove other services.
 - ii) The CCG also believed local community hospitals like the Deal site were an important part of the overall provision of NHS care and had no plans to decommission services provided at the hospital.
 - iii) The CCG had contacted other NHS Trusts that also use the site. Both East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust and Kent and Medway Health and Social Care Partnership NHS Trust (mental health) confirmed that they did not have any plans for changes to the services they run from the site.
- f) The CCG listened to the concerns of the Committee and its local Members and resolved to take action to address them.

2) The latest position

- a) A local Member has raised concerns around
 - i) ongoing problems in accessing blood tests for patients that are being treated through a specialist hospital
 - ii) the availability of blood tests through GP surgeries
- b) NHS Kent and Medway (the Integrated Care Board and relevant commissioner) have been invited to attend HOSC and provide an update on the service.

2) Recommendation

- a) RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the report.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2022) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (26/01/22)*', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8761&Ver=4>

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