

Item 6: Kent and Medway GP Attraction Project

By: Gaetano Romagnuolo, Research Officer - Overview and Scrutiny

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12 March 2025

Subject: Kent and Medway GP Attraction Project

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider an update on the GP Attraction Project provided by NHS Kent and Medway.

1) Introduction

- a) In March 2022, the Chair of HOSC met with representatives from the then Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group Workforce team, Medway Council and the Local Medical Committee (LMC) to discuss the development of a pilot project to improve GP recruitment in three local areas (Medway, Swale and Thanet). These areas had a low GP:patient ratio and the pilot aimed to promote recruitment and relieve pressures on the local health system. If the pilot proved to be successful, the intention was to roll it out across other areas in Kent.
- b) In May 2022 the Committee considered the proposed package aimed at promoting the recruitment of GPs in Medway, Swale and Thanet, and resolved that it supported the scheme.

2) The pilot

- a) The “attraction package” pilot focused on recruiting GPs in Medway, Swale and Thanet. The package was to include:
 - Financial support for the GP and practice funded by the CCG.
 - Support from local councils with matters such as school places, childcare, housing and similar.
 - An educational package from the Kent and Medway Primary Care Training Hub.
Flexible and supportive job plans with mentoring from the practices/Primary Care Network.
- b) In March 2022, the Primary Care Commissioning Committee agreed a £500k package over a two-year period, to fund 5 coastal fellowships and 5 GPs in each of the three localities.

3) Barriers and challenges to GP recruitment

- a) The Workforce team at the time described several barriers and challenges to recruiting and retaining GPs. These included:
 - Limited resource: a general shortage of trained GPs, with it taking many years to produce qualified individuals.

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- Locally trained GPs tended to leave Kent to work in London or abroad.
 - Overseas trainees – there could be a lack of support in place and limited knowledge about the visa process. Individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds wanted assurance that they would be welcomed.
 - Myths and perceptions about living in a so-called 'deprived' place.
- b) The team considered best practice and lessons learnt in other areas with similar challenges.

4) Feedback provision

- a) The CCG collaborated with several partners, including KCC, and were set to advertise the positions in June 2022.
- b) NHS Kent and Medway have been invited to provide feedback from the project, setting out whether the original intentions were achieved and whether it will be rolled out to other local areas.

5) Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the update.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2022) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (02/03/22)
[Agenda for Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 2nd March, 2022, 10.00 am](#)

Kent County Council (2022) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (11/05/22)
[Agenda for Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 11th May, 2022, 10.00 am](#)

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