

Update for HOSC on Chronic Pain Services throughout Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT – July 2007

1. Model of Care ('hub and spoke'):

a) Community clinics: - 'The Spokes'

A new model of care for Chronic Pain Services, based on a Hub and Spoke approach, has been developed for Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT population. The model, which has been developed by consultants, nurses and GPs, outlines a new way of delivering chronic pain services for patients, increasing service provision, bringing it closer to patients with easier access and more support services. Patients will see the most appropriate clinician, at the most appropriate time, in the most appropriate location. It has been designed so that the highly specialised skills of all the consultants and nurses are utilised fully to provide the best patient care possible.

The Spoke element of this model of care provides specialist clinics tailored to individual patients' needs, which will be run from a range of locations so that the largest cohort of patients with pain management needs will not need to travel to a single hospital location in future – they will be able to visit hospitals and other health facilities for this care.

We also have local GPs who have expressed an interest in undertaking specialist training with the consultants so that they can provide Specialist GP services across the PCT Community.

In addition to these specialist clinics, complementary therapies, including acupuncture and tai chi, are an integral part of the support services offered at the spokes. In conjunction with the complementary therapies, there will also be a range of other support services such as patient education sessions on how patients can begin to manage their pain, TENS¹ clinics, counselling, support groups and psychologist-led pain management courses; as well as 'flare-up' clinics that patients will be able to access at short notice if their condition deteriorates.

b) Acute hospital care: - 'The Hub'

The Hub will still be a service located within one acute hospital site, providing for the smaller number of patients whose pain management requires complex, interventional care e.g. epidurals. This will provide patients with high-tech support and access to local consultant expertise as and when required, which on average is likely to be no more than twice a year. This central hub is likely to remain at Kent & Canterbury Hospital.

2. Pain Management pumps:

For patients who *currently* have a pain management pump, the ongoing maintenance and replacement of these pumps will continue to be provided by a contract held with

¹ TENS machines – battery operated electronic device which is applied to skin near area of pain and stops pain signals to brain.

Basildon & Thurrock Hospitals Foundation Trust. Regular re-filling will continue to be undertaken locally at Kent & Canterbury Hospital. For new patients who require this treatment, pumps are now funded through Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT single patient funding request process. This is requested by a patient's GP, in conjunction with the Pain Clinic, directly to the PCT.

3. Individual Care Planning:

With the range of different services that will be available, each patient will be able to follow an individual care plan, accessing appropriate services at the appropriate time, as and when needed. These new services have been piloted in some areas of the PCT and this is currently being evaluated with the intention that, in future, this service will be available across the whole of Eastern & Coastal Kent locality. In the meantime, the current service provision will continue.

4. Waiting Times:

East Kent Local Health Economy (both Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT and East Kent Hospitals Trust) have committed to becoming an "early achiever" for the 18 Week Referral to Treatment (RTT) target. This means that by December 2007, 95% of patients requiring outpatient treatment and 90% of those requiring admission at East Kent Hospitals Trust will have waited no longer than 18 weeks from the date their GP referred them. The roll-out of the new chronic pain model of care will enable this service to be streamlined, provide better outcomes for patients and ensure that all patients receive the care they need in a timely manner.

5. Other relevant information:

The services in East Kent Coastal PCT have been awarded a National Award by NAPP for 'Pain Management in Practice'.

The PCT's Clinical Lead Nurse Consultant for chronic pain services is involved in the national working group led by Dr Joan Hester (Pain Specialist, Consultant Anaesthetist and President of the Pain Society), who currently works at King's College Hospital, London. The group are working on guidelines for the delivery of chronic pain services within Primary Care.

East Kent Local Health Economy was represented at the parliamentary launch of 'Pain, the 5th Vital Sign', and is working closely with the chronic pain coalition party.

For more information please contact:

Alison Davis, Assistant Director of Delivery and Performance,
Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT: alison.davis@ashfordpct.nhs.uk; 01233 618340.

Karen Stone, Therapy Governance & Modernisation Co-Ordinator,
Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT: karen.stone@ekentmht.nhs.uk; 01227 812100.