

<b>Report To</b>	Kent Corporate Parenting Panel, 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups Update Report on the Health of Looked after Children</b>
<b>Kent CCG Representative</b>	Bethan Haskins, Chief Nurse, Ashford NHS CCG and Canterbury and Coastal NHS CCG

## 1. Context

In March 2015, the Department of Education and Department of Health reissued statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commission groups and NHS England (*Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children*). This document sets out an expectation that Local Authorities, NHSE and CCGs cooperate in commissioning resources for looked after children (LAC) and to ensure that the health and wellbeing needs of children are met.

Alongside the statutory guidance, the Intercollegiate Role Framework, March 2015, further details the competences and the expected set of abilities that health staff should have to effectively safeguard, protect and promote the welfare, health and wellbeing of looked after children and young people, as well as care leavers.

These two documents provide the framework for an effective and child-centred approach to meeting the health needs of looked after children, and also the quality of care that children can expect to receive. Part of that duty is discharged within the roles of Designated Doctor for LAC and Designated Nurse for LAC. These roles are to ensure that the needs of LAC are sufficiently represented at a strategic level and influence the commissioning arrangements to improve outcomes for LAC. The Intercollegiate Role Framework states that both the Designated Nurse and Doctor should be a member of the Corporate Parenting Board; in Kent, this is the Corporate Parenting Panel. These are senior and experienced positions within the CCGs and they are currently filled by:

- Dr Georgie Siggers, Kent Interim Designated Doctor for LAC
- Ene Odeh, West and North Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC
- Janette Shaw, East Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC

The Kent CCGs are currently recruiting for permanent posts for all positions and will update the Panel accordingly.

All Kent CCGs have a responsibility to meet the health needs of Kent LAC but also for those children placed in Kent by other Local Authority areas. Currently, Kent CCGs are accountable for over 3,600 children and young people that fall into this category. CCGs are required to deliver statutory initial and review health

assessments and to provide enough capacity for wider health and wellbeing needs.

## **2. Response to Corporate Parenting Select Committee Report (December 2015)**

Since the last CCG report to the Corporate Parenting Panel in September 2015, KCC have published the Select Committee Report on Corporate Parenting.

The findings have been discussed within the Kent LAC and Adoption Health Commissioners Group and in response to the recommendations the Kent CCGs would like to confirm their support to KCC in meeting the commitments within the report. Kent CCGs are keen to support the Corporate Parenting Panel and KCC Members to:

- Develop a wider understanding of the health system and the health needs of Looked after Children
- Support with informing the health aspects of sufficiency
- Improve the information we collect about the health needs of LAC
- Work in partnership to look holistically at the needs of this population within Kent.

## **3. Strategic Planning and Service Innovation**

Kent CCGs have increased commissioning resource and commitment to deliver improvements for looked after children. To deliver this effectively, the CCGs are working with partners to develop a LAC health strategy which will inform future planning and commissioning arrangements and will link with any strategy refresh from KCC. Initial meetings with health and partners strongly highlighted the needs of care leavers and the gaps in both statutory imperative and services to support this vulnerable group.

As a response to identified need through the strategy work, Thanet CCG have successfully bid for some significant funding from NHS England, Health and Justice department to pilot an integrated Thanet Youth Taskforce which will target LAC, care leavers and other vulnerable groups aged 14 to 21. The project will support those with mental health issues and are at risk of/or have offended. This project will support Kent CCGs to better understand how to target and address health needs of this population and the learning and models will be shared across Kent.

Over the past 15 months, Kent CCGs like KCC have had to mobilise vast capacity and resources as a result of the increased number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) entering Kent. Initially, the health response was slow to mobilise and there were challenges regarding information sharing between KCC and the CCGs due to unremitting numbers arriving. However,

issues resolved rapidly and productive partnership arrangements are in place with CCGs represented at the UASC Partnership Board.

In September 2016, Kent CCGs launched a specific UASC Health website ([www.uaschealth.org](http://www.uaschealth.org)) which contains clinical resources, tools, templates, translated videos and materials. This has been recognised as national best practice and has been referenced within the national transfer protocol from the Home Office. Kent CCGs are working closely with KCC through the UASC Partnership Board to explore opportunities to expand the web resource to include social care, education and wider support knowledge of UASC.

#### **4. Looked after Children provision**

CCGs have a statutory responsibility to provide initial and review health assessments for LAC and adoption medicals for those Looked after Children who have a plan of adoption. In addition the statutory guidance clearly articulates other health interventions that a specialist LAC team is required to undertake. Further to this CCGs have to commission medical advisers to give advice on the health of prospective foster carers and adopters (to ensure that they are medically fit to foster/adopt), meet with adopters to discuss the health needs of potential adopted children and sit on the adoption panels. For a number of years Kent CCGs have commissioned Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) and East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) to provide these services. The lengthy, holistic assessments are carried out by community paediatricians and specialist LAC nurses. The assessments are undertaken to ensure that previously unmet or unrecognised health needs are identified and relevant support and intervention provided, recognising the health vulnerabilities that this population have. There is a statutory timeframe in which children must be seen and a statutory framework around the content of the assessment and the actions required as a result.

Both KCHFT and EKHUFT are working in partnership with the CCGs to improve pathways of care and to transform services to make them effective and holistic. Senior CCG representatives have been in dialogue with both provider Chief Executives Officers, gaining commitment to the long-term improvement of current services which are child-focussed and seamless.

Mental health support for LAC continues to be delivered through Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) through both the 'mainstream' Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and the dedicated CAMHS Children in Care team. Kent CCGs and KCC are working in partnership to procure a new CAMHS services to be in place in September 2017.

In March 2016, Kent CCGs committed additional funding through the Children and Young People Mental Health Transformation Fund, and SPFT were asked to

undertake a research project into the health needs of UASC. The project offered direct support to staff and young people in the KCC Appledore Reception Centre and those in independent living. Feedback from KCC has been very positive and the findings of the project have been showcased at national conferences, published in health journals and both universities in Kent are keen to apply and test the finding from the project across Europe.

## **5. Areas of Focus for 2017/18**

All seven Kent CCGs are working hard to design new models of care for the whole population of Kent, including our most vulnerable children and young people. The financial pressures within the health system are significant and increasing. However, CCGs recognise the imperative to deliver services for LAC and as such are prioritising the following for 2017/18:

- Closer working and support with KCC operation, strategic staff and Members to deliver recommendations within the Scrutiny Committee report
- Recruiting a stable and permanent designated professional work force to strengthen Corporate Parenting representation and interface
- Putting in place a clearer and more holistic service specification with KCHFT and EKHUFT and driving improvements for a seamless pathway
- Supporting the mobilisation of the new CAMHS contract
- Continuing to develop the UASC expertise and share with CCG and Local Authority areas outside of Kent
- Commissioning a bespoke LAC database to collect vital health profiling information to support commissioning intentions

## **6. Further Information**

Further information on the health needs of Kent LAC can be found on the KCC Public Health website; *Health needs assessment of children in care in Kent March 2015*.

*Report author:*

*Sue Mullin, Commissioning Manager, LAC*

03000 424638 [suemullin@nhs.net](mailto:suemullin@nhs.net)

*Report contributors:*

*Dr Georgie Siggers, Kent Interim Designated Doctor for LAC*

*Ene Odeh, West and North Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC*

*Janette Shaw, East Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC*