

JOINT HEALTH

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2020

Dermatology Briefing

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NHS Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) suspended DMC Healthcare's contract to provide dermatology services in Medway, Swale, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley on 19 June 2020. This decision was taken to ensure patient safety after the CCG identified concerns about the provider's ability to meet NHS standard contract requirements.

Dermatology is the medical term for the treatment or management of skin conditions which can include rashes, lesions, lumps on the skin, changes to moles and skin cancer.

Sussex Community Dermatology Service (SCDS) provides dermatology services across Sussex, Surrey and Kent with a proven track record of service delivery for more than 10 years, working in acute hospital trust and community locations. The additional expansion of services across Kent will depend on a commissioning review that is being undertaken by the NHS commissioners and stakeholders .

DMC had provided a Minimum Data Set of open patient referrals to a data processing organisation: Source Group who carried out a validation exercise of this data. The validation exercise was completed by the end of August 2020 with 8,126 patients having been transferred to SCDS.

Sussex Community Dermatology Service had been commissioned to see new routine patients once priority patients had been treated. To date **98% of the high risk patients** have been seen and treated by the SCDS and 18 Week Support Team. There were 5500 patients transferred to SCDS as a backlog of follow up appointments, this has been **reduced by 50%**.

The service continues to receive new referrals and has the capacity to see more than 500 new patients per week. There will be approx. 10,000 outpatient appointments available during Q3 for North Kent patients, because of this capacity the *outpatient waiting times will reduce to 14 weeks (and under)* by the end of November 2020. SCDS have a target of 8-10 week wait maximum for routine appointments. All patients referred on a 2 week wait pathway have been seen and continue to be seen within 2 weeks and all cancer surgical waits are less than 2 weeks for new patients and new cancers.

Patients with newly diagnosed cancer and inflammatory skin disease are being seen and linked to other specialist services as required. This includes skin cancer support services provided at Queen Victoria Hospital and oncology services provided by Maidstone Hospital. Multidisciplinary clinics – which bring a range of clinicians from different specialities across provider organisations

together, are being held on a weekly basis to discuss complex cases and ensure patients are receiving optimum care.

Clinics have taken place at Rainham Healthy Living Centre, High St, Rainham and Fleet Health Campus, Vale Rd, Northfleet. There is sufficient clinical space at the end of September 2020 to deliver surgical volumes, paediatric dermatology, and specialist support clinics for biologics, systemic, isotretinoin, biopsies, patch-testing and PDT. Additional clinical space has allowed for further clinical recruitment to the service.

An independent harm review has been commissioned which means all patients will be clinically reviewed and assessed to see if delays to treatment have caused harm. Any patient outcome found to have been impacted by the delays will be investigated as a serious incident with patients contacted to ensure duty of candour is followed.

DMC Healthcare and the CCG have agreed in principle to a mutual termination of the dermatology contract. At the time of writing this report the CCG is unable to comment as to the future of the service but will provide a verbal update at the meeting