



Transforming mental health care services in Kent and Medway – proposed changes at St Martins site (west) in Canterbury

Kent and Medway Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

6 February 2020

1. Introduction

The Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) and the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Groups, are working together to improve mental health services, demonstrating a shared ambition to make sure that everyone across Kent and Medway has access to safe, high quality and effective mental health services when they need them.

Presentations were made to the Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) in July 2019 and the Medway Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC) in August 2019 in relation to temporary changes to acute inpatient services at St Martins Hospital in Canterbury. This update covers the progression of our work to understand the current capacity and future demand for adult inpatient mental health beds in light of KMPT's ongoing enabling projects to deliver more care, treatment and support closer to home if clinically appropriate.

2. Delivering best practice in Kent and Medway – progress to date

Best practice and national policy in mental health care, as with physical health care, is increasingly focused on caring for people as close to home as possible, reducing reliance on hospital admission unless it is absolutely clinically necessary.

KMPT and Kent and Medway CCGs have initiated this clinically-led programme of work to look at making improvements to community-based services with the aim of treating, caring for and supporting people in more effective ways both in and outside of hospital.

An integral part of this work is to make sure that there is the right number of inpatient beds available to meet the needs of local people both now and in the future, as well as making the best use of staff, estates, facilities and budgets in the years to come. To inform our work we have commissioned some independent bed modelling, the outcome of which is expected in February 2020. This will model demographic growth in the Kent and Medway population, the current and predicted incidence and prevalence of mental health need, and the impact of recent national benchmarking

reports, alongside available data. This work will inform future planning around the number of inpatient beds and other service capacity which will be required to meet future need.

A group of primary care and secondary care clinicians have been brought together as a Clinical Reference Group to ensure any future changes to mental health inpatient provision are clinically-led, are based on clinical evidence and best practice, and result in the best outcomes for patients.

Work has begun to develop a process for the development and appraisal of potential options for the permanent re-location of services currently provided on Cranmer Ward, but the outcome of the bed modelling and significant clinical input is required, before this work can be completed. A formal options appraisal process, led by an independent analyst, and informed by ongoing discussions with staff, patient and stakeholders, will support the development of this work in due course.

3. Better outcomes for local people – ongoing work to improve patient experience

KMPT has already introduced several initiatives to improve services, some of which have helped to reduce reliance on admitting people to hospital when they need urgent care. They have found alternative and better ways to provide the care, treatment and support needed including: **improving ‘patient flow’ and discharge planning**; offering **urgent care support and a signposting service 24/7** as an alternative to inpatient treatment when this is clinically appropriate; and, **reducing the length of stay for older people**.

The success of these projects, and other additional community initiatives, means that there have been fewer admissions to hospital due to improved community care over the last three years. In June 2016 there were 302 inpatient admissions, 50 of which were out of our area, compared to 210 in May 2019 where all acute admissions were cared for in Kent and Medway facilities (a small number of female patients requiring specialist, intensive care were treated out of the area). If people do need hospital care, they don't need to stay in for as long because more support is now available in local community settings and closer to home.

4. Changes at St Martins Hospital, Canterbury

We are making some temporary changes at St Martins Hospital in Canterbury, which houses several mental health units catering for older people and younger adults who need inpatient care. A planned upgrade to Samphire Ward (soon to be re-named Heather Ward) at St Martins Hospital (east) has been completed, offering a much higher standard of facility for patients of all ages.

At the St Martins Hospital (west) site, the old asylum-style building contains one remaining ward, Cranmer, a 15-bed inpatient ward for people aged 65 and over, for the assessment and treatment of acute mental health difficulties (such as severe dementia) and frailty. The building is of poor quality and, even if upgraded, the design and layout of the building means it will not meet the modern standards we expect to provide for our patients, families and carers, and staff. Whilst acknowledging the work of the staff based within Cranmer ward, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), has repeatedly highlighted the need to provide care from a safe, modern, fit-for-purpose environment. In response to these concerns and the drive to improve patient care, we have committed to closing that ward and leaving the St Martins (west) site in early 2020.

The west part of the St Martins site has been sold to Homes England and the money from the sale will be invested in local mental health services across Kent and Medway where it is most needed.

Patients from Cranmer ward will be moved to Samphire (Heather) ward in February 2020 on a temporary basis until a final decision is made by commissioners about how adult mental health care should be organised across Kent and Medway in the future.

All changes to date have been discussed with patients, families and staff and they will continue to be closely involved as plans progress.

5. Developing options for the future

We want to make sure that people are cared for as close to home as possible and in the right environment to meet their needs. Sometimes this will mean a hospital bed but we must also give consideration to developing safe, accessible and effective services and support at home and within the community.

Over the coming months we will be listening to and working with patients, their loved ones, families and carers, staff, stakeholders and the general public about services, looking for ideas and input to inform the development of options for providing the right levels of inpatient care across Kent and Medway. We have some way to go before we have any firm proposals to discuss but we are committed to making sure that our mental health services support local people, so that they get the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

6. Recommendation

The Kent and Medway JHOSC is asked to note progress with this work. We will continue to engage and update JHOSC and welcome members' input. Further updates will be provided over the coming months.