

Item 9: Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust – Clinical Strategy – Developing a Specialist Digestive Diseases Unit for West Kent

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 21 July 2021

Subject: Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust – Clinical Strategy – Developing a Specialist Digestive Diseases Unit for West Kent

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Summary: This report falls under the clinical strategy reconfiguration at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust.

The Committee has yet to determine if this workstreams' proposals constitute a substantial variation of service.

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## **1) Introduction**

- a) In the previous item, the Committee received information about a clinical strategy reconfiguration that was under at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW).
- b) This item falls under that reconfiguration and specifically relates to gastroenterology services.
- c) On 29 January 2020, HOSC received a paper relating to general surgery reconfiguration at MTW hospitals. The proposal was to move complex elective gastrointestinal surgery from the Maidstone site to the Tunbridge Wells site in order to treat patients at the same location as complex emergency inpatient surgery. Following discussion, the Committee determined the changes did not constitute a substantial variation of service. Details from that meeting can be found online: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=53098>
- d) Included in the January 2020 report, MTW wrote about their aspiration to form a Digestive Diseases Unit (DDU) – a medical and surgical ward where patients with gastrointestinal conditions are looked after. At that time, a DDU had not been an option because the split site configuration of the surgical service lacked the scale and concentration of expertise that is required to set one up.

## **2) Potential Substantial variation of service**

- a) The Committee is asked to review whether the proposal to centralise gastroenterology services at MTW constitutes a substantial variation of service.
- b) Where the Committee deems the proposed changes as not being substantial, this shall not prevent the HOSC from reviewing the proposed changes at its discretion and making reports and recommendations to the NHS.

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**3) Recommendation**

If the proposed change to gastroenterology services is *substantial*:

RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) the Committee deems the proposed reconfiguration across Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust to be a substantial variation of service.
- (b) Kent and Medway CCG be invited to attend this Committee and present an update at the earliest opportunity.

If the proposed change to gastroenterology services is *not substantial*:

RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) the Committee does not deem the proposed reconfiguration across Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust to be a substantial variation of service.
- (b) the report be noted.

**Background Documents**

None.

**Contact Details**

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