

Item 7: Reconfiguration of Acute Stroke Services

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 26 January 2022

Subject: Reconfiguration of Acute Stroke Services

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the information provided by the Kent and Medway CCG.

It provides background information which may prove useful to Members.

1) Introduction

- a) The Kent and Medway CCG is establishing three Hyper Acute Stroke Services (HASUs) in Kent and Medway. These will be located in Maidstone, Ashford and Dartford.
- b) The implementation follows a long period of planning, consultation, and challenges. These are set out briefly in section 2.
- c) The Kent and Medway CCG has been invited to attend today's meeting and provide information about how the new services will be implemented, particularly in light of HOSC's concerns raised back in 2019. These centred on travel times; staffing levels over the long-term; and inequalities. The NHS is invited to engage with the Committee on how implementation of the HASUs will ensure delivery of the best possible service for Kent residents.

2) Timeline of previous scrutiny

- a) It is acknowledged that significant work has been undertaken to get to this point, and for the benefit of HOSC members who may not have been on the Committee at the time, the timeline below provides a brief summary of HOSC's involvement since the review commenced. Following the Kent HOSC decision in May 2019, the Committee's role is overview and scrutiny of the implementation.
 - i. 2014 – review of provision of stroke services began.
 - ii. Summer 2015 – Kent and Medway health scrutiny committees both deem the proposals to be substantial. A Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is convened.
 - iii. Early 2018 – Following an expansion of the programme, Bexley and East Sussex also deem the changes to be substantial, and a new Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is constituted.

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- iv. February 2019 - the Joint Committee of CCGs (JCCCGs) agreed to reconfigure stroke services across Kent and Medway and establish three HASUs.
- v. February 2019 – the JHOSC considers the decision of the JCCCGs and recommends the home authorities support that decision.
- vi. March 2019 – the Medway HASC considered the JCCCG decision and decided to refer it to the Secretary of State.
- vii. May 2019 - the Kent HOSC considered whether to refer the decision of the JCCCGs to the Secretary of State. Following that discussion, the Committee resolved the following:
 - a. *To ask the NHS to note and consider the strong reservations the HOSC has about the plans for reconfiguring acute and hyper-acute stroke services across Kent and Medway and the potential impact they could have on the following in particular:*
 - 1. *Travel times;*
 - 2. *Staffing levels over the long-term; and*
 - 3. *Inequalities.*
 - b. *That the HOSC accepts the rationale for the changes and the move towards centres of excellence across the County, recognises that there is no perfect arrangement of services and that the current proposals may be the optimal way forward at this current time and that any further delay may have a negative impact on health outcomes across the County.*
 - c. *That the HOSC recognises the work of the JHOSC and the positive impact ongoing engagement with the NHS has had, notably the decision by the JCCCG to develop stroke rehabilitation services and introduce them to many areas where they do not currently exist, including Thanet, and requests that the NHS engage regularly with the HOSC on the further development and implementation of the proposals to ensure they deliver the best possible service for Kent.*
- viii. Feb 2020 – Separate from the health scrutiny process, there was a judicial review process. This concluded with findings in favour of the JCCCG decision.
- ix. Nov 2021 – Following a referral from Medway Council’s HASC, the Secretary of State confirmed support for the JCCCG decision.¹

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/irp-kent-and-medway-advice>

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3. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the report and that the CCG be invited to return with an update at the appropriate time.

Background Documents

None

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