

Item 10: Mental Health Transformation: Section 136 pathway and health-based places of safety service improvement

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 19 July 2023

Subject: Mental Health Transformation: Section 136 pathway and health-based places of safety service improvement

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Summary: This report falls under the transformation of mental health services in Kent and Medway.

The Committee has determined that these proposals constitute a substantial variation of service.

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## **1) Introduction**

- a) The Kent and Medway Integrated Commissioning Board are proposing to centralise Health Based Places of Safety (HBPoS) and make improvements to the adult mental health urgent and emergency care pathway.
- b) The proposal includes plans to centralise the 5 current places of safety (currently across 3 sites) to one site in Maidstone. The new facility will be purpose built and adhere to best practice – the current estate does not.

## **2) Previous Visits to HOSC**

- a) This proposal falls under the programme of change for mental health and dementia services in Kent and Medway, as presented to HOSC on 10 June 2021.
- b) On 31 January 2023, the Committee determined that the proposals constituted a substantial variation of service. This means the NHS must consult with HOSC prior to a final decision being made, though the NHS remains the ultimate decision maker.
- c) As well as centralisation, members raised concerns about journey times, accessibility for friends and family, and the low percentage of Mental Health Act assessments that were completed within the nationally and locally recommended 4 hours. There was also concern that the proposals were dependant on securing enhancements at the Maidstone site.
- d) The ICB returned to the Committee on 10 May 2023, highlighting the following points:

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- i) A benefit of centralisation would be a single, dedicated team, as opposed to staff working across and travelling between sites.
  - ii) The impact of longer journey times had been considered but it was explained that the service would provide much better equitable provision for all. Moreover, procurement for a 24/7 Safe Haven (a community crisis facility) at an East Kent hospital was underway.
  - iii) Following feedback about a patient's return journey, a private ambulance service had been put in place.
  - iv) The introduction of an 836-advice line for police officers, staffed by KMPT staff, had reduced the numbers detained under the S136 Act. The advice line gave the police access to clinical advice 24/7 as well as access to patient records.
  - v) The risk of a single site becoming a single point of failure had been recognised by NHS colleagues and mitigations were built into the design of the facility.
- e) Following the discussion, the Committee resolved that
- i. the committee note the report and
  - ii. the ICB attend the next meeting to present the Draft Business case before it goes to the Board for approval.
- f) Members wanted to understand what happened to patients that bordered other Integrated Care Systems, as well as requesting that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be brought to the Committee once available.
- g) ICB colleagues have been invited to today's meeting to present the draft Decision Making Business Case before it goes to the Board for approval, as well as providing the information requested above in (f).

**3) Next Steps**

- a) The Committee's comments from this meeting will be included in the final Decision Making Business Case.
- b) The ICB will make its final decision (expected to be on 5 September 2023), and this will be reported to HOSC at its meeting on 5 October. At that time, the Committee will decide whether it supports the decision or is minded to refer it to the Secretary of State (it cannot decide to refer at that meeting).

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4) **Recommendation**

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider the report and provide comments to the ICB ahead of its final decision.

**Background Documents**

Kent County Council (2021) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10/06/21)  
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8501&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2023) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (31/01/23)  
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9051&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2023) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10/05/23)  
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=9053&Ver=4>

**Contact Details**

Kay Goldsmith  
Scrutiny Research Officer  
[kay.goldsmith@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kay.goldsmith@kent.gov.uk)  
03000 416512