

Item 11: Kent and Medway children and young people's mental health services procurement

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 7 December 2023

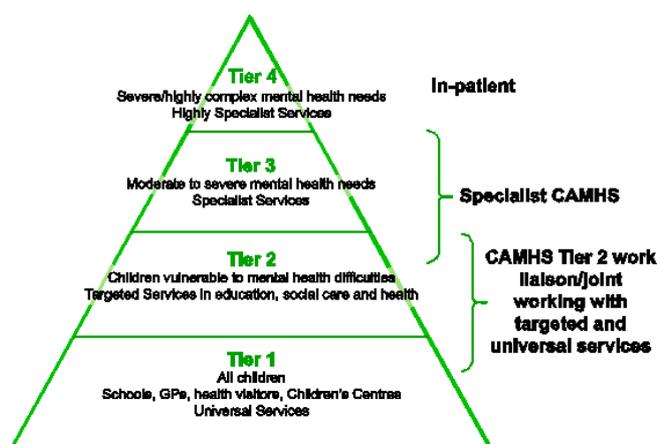
Subject: Kent and Medway children and young people's mental health services procurement

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

The Committee has yet to determine if the changes represent a substantial variation of service.

1) Introduction

- a) Children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) is an umbrella term covering a wide range of services commissioned by the NHS and local government. The diagram below helps explain the four tiered provision of the overall service.¹ NHS England commission tier 4 services and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Commission tier 1-3 services.



- b) NHS Kent & Medway ("the ICB") currently commission around £36m of children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health services from a range of providers from across the NHS, local authority and voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. All the contracts with current service providers are due to expire by the end of August 2025.
- c) The ICB's Children's Commissioning Team contacted the Chair of HOSC on 30 October 2023, informing him about the programme of work they are undertaking before the procurement of new Children and Young People's

¹ 1 Parliament (2014) CAMHS as a whole system,

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmhealth/342/34206.htm#note29>

Item 11: Kent and Medway children and young people's mental health services procurement

mental health services contracts. A pre-market engagement event took place on 9 November 2023, and provided an opportunity for NHS Kent and Medway to engage with providers and other stakeholders about the future design of services and develop a new model of care by September 2025. A survey was also carried out between July 2023 and October 2023 and sought the views of children, young people, families, carers, and health professionals.

2) Previous visits to Kent's HOSC

- a) Whilst the proposals being brought to the Committee today are new, the performance of CYPMHS has been discussed regularly by the Committee. The current provider, NELFT, and the ICB (formally the Clinical Commissioning Group) have attended the Committee and faced scrutiny several times, the most recent of which was in May 2022. Highlights from the report and discussion were:
- i. The number of children presenting in crisis continued to increase, rising from an average of 85 children per month before covid-19 to an average of 140 per month. That reflected national trends and there was a system wide steering group that met every two weeks to address the issue.
 - ii. The number of children experiencing anxiety continued to rise.
 - iii. Key areas of work underway included improving patient flow through the system, strengthening community support, recruiting an Associate Director of Pathways (Complex and Crisis Care), and an expansion to the NELFT crisis service.
 - iv. Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) were to be in 51% of Kent and Medway schools by 2023/24.
 - v. It was recognised that an inpatient bed was not always the right treatment for a patient. NELFT were also looking into what more could be done locally for patients with eating disorders as there was no inpatient facility nearby.
 - vi. A huge piece of work was underway looking at multidisciplinary roles in primary care including non-clinical ones, expanding the neurodevelopmental pathway pilots, and ensuring individuals knew how to access services.
 - vii. Recruitment continued to be a challenge.
- b) Previous scrutiny also identified concerns relating to waiting times; service provision because of capacity issues; and communication during waiting times.

Item 11: Kent and Medway children and young people's mental health services procurement

3) Recommendation

- a) The ICB have brought the proposal to HOSC today for their information. A decision on whether the changes are substantial are to be made at a future meeting.
- b) RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the report and invite NHS Kent and Medway to return to a future meeting with more detail.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2022) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (11/05/22)*', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8763&Ver=4>

Contact Details

Kay Goldsmith
Scrutiny Research Officer
kay.goldsmith@kent.gov.uk
03000 416512