

Item 5: NHS Waiting Times for Cancer Care

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 19 July 2023

Subject: NHS Waiting Times for Cancer Care

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

1) Introduction

- a) The NHS Long Term Plan, published in January 2019, set out the ambitions for national cancer care, including:
 - by 2028, 55,000 more people each year will survive their cancer for five years or more; and
 - by 2028, 75% of people with cancer will be diagnosed at an early stage (stage one or two).¹
- b) A report was presented to HOSC on 19 September 2019 that gave an overview of local performance against cancer waiting time standards. At that time, no Cancer Alliances across the country were meeting the 85% target to begin treatment within 62 days. July 2019 data showed local performance was at 80%. Figures from the National Audit Office showed that the key measures had not been met since the end of 2013.²
- c) The Committee were told that a network approach was being adopted across Kent and Medway to drive improvements across the system, with a particular focus on the four areas of worst performance – lung, upper gastrointestinal, colorectal and urology (specifically prostate).
- d) Developments at that time included:
 - i) the introduction of a new standard of 28 days to get a diagnosis.
 - ii) working towards diagnosing 75% of cancers at stages 1 or 2 by 2028. In 2019, Kent was diagnosing 25% of cancers at stage 1 or 2.
 - iii) The conversion rate of GP referrals to positive diagnosis was 3%, but a straight to test model was being developed so that diagnostic services could be accessed directly by patients.
- e) The ICB has been invited to provide an update on performance at today's meeting.

¹ NHS England (2019), 'NHS Long Term Plan Ambitions for Cancer', <https://www.england.nhs.uk/cancer/strategy/>

² Kent County Council (2019) 'Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19/09/2019)', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=112>

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2. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the Committee consider and note the report.

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2019) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19/09/2019)*', <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=112>

NHS England (2019), 'NHS Long Term Plan Ambitions for Cancer', <https://www.england.nhs.uk/cancer/strategy/>

NHS (2019) The NHS Long Term Plan, <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/nhs-long-term-plan-version-1.2.pdf>

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