

From: Graham Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health

Meradin Peachey, Director of Public Health

To: Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Subject: **Findings of the Review of School Nursing in Kent**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: SMT Public Health

Future Pathway of Paper: Public Health Board

Electoral Division: Countywide

**Summary:**

The paper provides an introduction to the School Nursing Service in Kent and then goes on to report on the key findings of a review of School Nursing undertaken by Public Health and Education and Learning, KCC. The review sought the views of children, parents and carers as well as education. The review found that the service was valued by education colleagues, parents and carers but work needed to be undertaken to standardise the offer across Kent, meet the ambitions of the Healthy Child Programme, address equity and enhance effectiveness through information sharing.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee are asked to note the findings of the review of School Nursing in Kent and endorse the short term recommendations as detailed in section 4.8.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. School Nursing is a universal service for school aged children currently delivered by Kent Community Health Trust in all parts of Kent with the exception of Swale where the service is delivered by Medway NHS Foundation Trust. It works at the critical interface between health and education. It has a key role in addressing health inequalities.
- 1.2. The School Nursing Service delivers key elements of the Healthy Child Programme and the mandated National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The School Nursing Service delivers the National Immunisation Programme and is resourced to do this by Public Health England through NHS Commissioning. School nurses also attend and contribute to initial Child Protection conferences for school aged children in Kent.
- 1.3. The contract for School Nursing Services in Kent was passed over to Kent County Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. Public Health and Education and Learning (ELS) initiated a review of the service in order to identify what developments

were required to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Kent.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1. The current budget for the School Nursing Service in Kent comes from the Public Health Grant. Additional funding was agreed on 4<sup>th</sup> October by the Social Care & Public Health Cabinet Committee in a paper entitled 'Kent's Public Health Grant 2014/2015'. The aim of the funding was to address the inequity of provision in Kent.

## **3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework**

- 3.1. The School Nursing Service impacts positively on attendance and attainment of children in Kent as well as addressing school readiness. Children's increased attendance and attainment *tackles disadvantage* and will *help the Kent economy grow*.
- 3.2. The Review of School Nursing sought the views of children and young people and their parents on the current experience of the School Nursing Service as well as the how improvements could be made so *putting the citizen in control*.

## **4. The Report**

- 4.1. The review of school nursing was progressed through the development of a multi-agency steering group, undertaking a literature review as well as a review of key strategic documents. Surveys, interviews and focus groups were then undertaken with Head teachers, parents and young people. The findings were validated and interpreted by the steering group. A report was written and key organising principles were identified.
- 4.2. The review identified that the current School Nursing Service is not standard across Kent and does not include all the elements of the School Nursing Service as defined within the Healthy Child Programme. Specifically, the Health Assessment at Year 6 which supports children's transition into secondary school is not currently delivered in Kent. The nursing service does, however, meet its targets regarding the delivery of the National Child Measurement Programme in and the National Immunisation Programme.
- 4.3. There are groups of young people who are not consistency receiving a school nursing service in Kent including young people in Pupil Referral Units, young people who are Young Offenders, children in Independent Schools, young people in Colleges of Further Education and Home Schooled Children.
- 4.4. School nurses work within other health professionals including Children in Care Nurses, Community Nurses, GPs and Specialist Nurse Leads for conditions such as epilepsy and diabetes. There needs to be improvements to the way that information is shared between health professionals. There also needs to be clarity regarding information sharing between health and education.
- 4.5. Head teachers and their representatives require greater clarity regarding what the School Nursing Service offers. Where Heads know their School Nurse and the interventions they provide, for example around enuresis and emotional and health, they are valued. The opportunity to consult with School Nurses was also referred to as being useful. However, improvements in information sharing were identified.

- 4.6. The majority of parents and carers who responded to the survey did not know their School Nurse. They wanted clarity regarding the service offer, a visible presence and better communication between the nurse and parents.
- 4.7. The majority of young people did not know their School Nurse. They could however identify ways in which school nurses could provide a confidential service for young people which would support them to improve their health.
- 4.8. As a result of the review, the steering group propose that:
- A School Nurse resource is immediately identified to support the health of young people who are young offenders.
  - Clarity is sought from Health Commissioners regarding the role of Community Nurses and Paediatric Nurses in the delivery of public health functions in Special Schools.
  - A new model for School Health, which incorporates the School Nursing function and integrates with other children and young people's services, is universal but also provides more targeted delivery, is developed and consulted upon with a view to full implementation in 2014-2015.

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1. The review of School Nursing in Kent has identified the critical role that School Nurses play in the interface between health and education for school aged children. Where relationships exist with school nurses, education colleagues value the contribution that nurses make. However here is a lack of clarity regarding what the service provides. Information sharing between health professionals and communication between schools, parents and the nursing service needs to be improved.
- 5.2. As a result of the review actions will be taken to ensure that young people who are youth offenders and who are pupils of Special Schools get their health needs better met. A new model for School Health will be developed and consulted upon with a view to implementing it from 2014-2015.

## 6. Recommendation(s)

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The Social Care and Public Health Cabinet Committee are asked to note the findings of the review of School Nursing in Kent and endorse the short term recommendations as detailed in section 4.8.

## 7. Background Documents

- 7.1. 'Kent's Public Health Grant 2014/2015' presented at Public Health and Social Care Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2014  
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s42735/D2%20-%20Public%20Health%20Grant.pdf>

## 8. Contact details

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