

PRESS RELEASE

GP services to continue at five sites

Following a period of public engagement, the decision on a proposal to merge five Medway GP sites into three has been postponed.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC), the group responsible for planning and buying primary care services (ie GP surgeries) for Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), on 29 August 2018.

The GP contracts at the Pentagon Centre, St Mary's Island Surgery, Sunlight Centre Surgery, Balmoral Healthy Living Centre and Twydall Branch Surgery all come to an end on 31 March 2019.

As part of the procurement process to ensure services continue after that date Medway CCG had proposed re-procuring services for all current patients at fewer sites, closing the Sunlight Centre Surgery and DMC Twydall Branch Surgery. This would have enabled a greater number of services to be provided on the three remaining sites and increased the availability and future resilience of care for patients.

However, following a period of public engagement and feedback from Medway Council's Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC), the PCCC has decided to delay the decision on the final number of sites to allow for further engagement with patients and stakeholders. The PCCC has decided to procure services for all five sites to ensure there is no break in GP provision when the current contracts end. A decision on the number of sites will be taken by the PCCC following the period of further engagement.

Stuart Jeffery, Chief Operating Officer at Medway CCG explained: "The closure of GP surgeries at the Sunlight Centre and DMC Twydall Branch Surgery was proposed in line with the Medway Model. The Medway Model seeks to offer a greater range of quality services away from the hospital environment, closer to people's homes, supporting GPs to work at scale alongside other health and care professionals. The proposal to reduce the number of sites will ensure a more resilient service in the future.

“However, it has become clear that further engagement with patients is required before a decision on reducing the number of sites is made and we have therefore postponed this decision to allow for more engagement with patients and stakeholders.

“To ensure that there is no gap in the provision of GP services to patients, we will continue to re-procure GP services across all of the five existing sites. We will continue our engagement with the public and stakeholders over a longer period, to ensure that we get the widest range of views before deciding on the final number of sites.”

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