

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 OCTOBER 2023

EMERGENCY SERVICE TRANSFER OF MEDWAY AND SWALE TIA (TRANSIENT ISCHAEMIC ATTACK) SERVICE

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Summary

This report seeks to update the Committee on the future of the Medway (and Swale) TIA service as requested at the 22nd August 2023 meeting of the Committee. Specifically, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) was requested to advise the Committee on when the TIA service would be provided locally again and if this was not possible, why not. This report seeks therefore to provide an update on these matters.

1. Recommendation

1.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1 The commissioning and contracting for this service/pathway is the legal responsibility of NHS Kent and Medway ICB and is funded from the ICB budget.

3. Background

3.1 The Committee was previously advised that the Medway and Swale service provision associated with symptoms of TIA underwent a temporary emergency service transfer to Maidstone Hospital (MTW – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Foundation Trust) and Darent Valley Hospital (DGT – Dartford and Gravesham NHS Foundation Trust) with effect from 26th June 2023 in order to ensure continuity of service, patient outcomes and to ensure

care could still be provided by stroke experts following the departure of 1.4 WTE (whole time equivalents) TIA nurses.

- 3.2 Patients in Medway (and Swale) still have full access to a TIA service but no part of it is currently provided within Medway NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) following the departure of the two stroke nurses provided by MCH (Medway Community Healthcare Community Interest Company). MCH were unable to replace the nurses within the time available and other options were not viable such as locum/agency cover. As before, the clinical consultation with patients can be either face to face or virtual depending on patient need but the main change for the patient as a result of this temporary emergency service transfer is the need to travel for imaging (MRI, Ultrasound, CT), Cardiac ECHO and issuing of prescriptions.
- 3.3 The Kent and Medway Integrated Stroke Delivery Network (ISDN) created a proposed solution to provide remote assessment (in line with many other clinical consultations and current medical practice) and then remotely arrange for, but locally provide, imaging and prescriptions at MFT (termed option 1 in the previous August HASC paper). This was judged by the MTW and DGT stroke clinicians as a safe pathway and a better patient experience.
- 3.4 Option 1 became unviable due to the inability to manage remote electronic order requests at MFT where some systems remain paper based. This is not anticipated to change until the end of Q3/Q4 this financial year and the ICB is working closely with MFT through its diagnostic programme to ensure this work is completed on time.
- 3.5 As the next step, and in order to keep the patients of Medway (and Swale) safe, option 2 was enacted (as previously reported to the August 2023 HASC). This involves the patients being assessed/imaged/prescribed medication at either MTW or DGT depending on their home postcode with MTW and DGT absorbing the additional activity into their own TIA services.
- 3.6 As previously reported to the Medway HASC in August 2023, the Kent and Medway ISDN, with the support of the Medway and Swale Health and Care Partnership, has provided to referrers and to the TIA providers details of transport assistance and other types of support available that patients might need in order to support with their travel needs to either MTW or DGT during this temporary emergency service transfer.
- 3.7 MTW and DGT remain prepared to provide the specialist input to the service and to work with a more locally based system so long as it is safe (i.e. not paper based as it is now for some diagnostics). The providers have stepped in to provide the current service as a temporary measure while a long-term solution is sought.
- 3.8 The long-term solution is being developed by the Kent and Medway ISDN. The ISDN is a multi-disciplinary clinically led network that includes Medway representation and is responsible for ensuring pathways of care meet best practice for TIA and stroke patients across the whole of Kent and Medway.

3.9 A proposal will be brought to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board by the 31st January 2024 and after which a further update will be provided to the Committee. In the interim, a safe and effective TIA service is still available to the population of Medway but regrettably patients do need to travel further for some aspects of it.

3.10 The Kent and Medway ISDN established a multi-stakeholder working group to complete the emergency service transfer and this working group continues to function to ensure the pathways are operating as expected, to address any issues that emerge including patient feedback, monitoring expected referral numbers and to explore how the future model will be provided.

4. Options

4.1 As per paragraph 3.9, a proposal will be brought to the ISDN Programme Board by the 31st January 2024 and the ICB would be able to update Medway HASC thereafter.

5. Advice and analysis

5.1 See section 3. Relevant impact assessments will be discussed associated with the proposals/options presented to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board by January 2024.

6. Risk management

6.1 Risks associated with the proposal will be presented to the ISDN Programme Board in January 2024.

7. Consultation

7.1 As this was an emergency service transfer, consultation with the public was not sought, but engagement across the Network stakeholders was undertaken in order to identify the solutions and work through the pathways/processes. Subject to the proposals presented to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board, consultation or further engagement may be deemed necessary.

8. Climate change implications

8.1 As previously reported, longer journeys are expected as a result of this temporary service transfer for the estimated 212 patient contacts for the remainder of this year. This was unavoidable to ensure continuity of service. Climate change implications will be considered as part of the proposals/options presented to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board by January 2024.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1 There are no financial implications for Medway Council as a result of this temporary service transfer. Financial implications will be considered as part of the proposals/options presented to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1 There are no legal implications for Medway Council as a result of this temporary service transfer. Legal implications will be considered as part of the proposals/options presented to the Kent and Medway ISDN Programme Board, but the ICB does not expect there to be any for Medway Council.

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Appendices

None.

Background papers

Report to August 2023 Committee meeting
<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=69993>