

**Kent & Medway Community Services Redesign Update
7 August 2024****Introduction**

The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC) of Medway Council has asked for a single item meeting to discuss the inclusion of Medway children's community services into the wider procurement of Kent and Medway adult and Kent children's community services.

At the HASC of 20 September 2023, the Committee determined that the change of adult community services in Kent and Medway was a significant variation to the way in which services are provided, and as such the statutory duties which arise as a result are clear and will be abided by in full by both NHS Kent and Medway and, as services for children are jointly commissioned, by Medway Council.

This paper seeks to address the issues raised by the Council Members of why the HASC was not informed of the change of process from the initial position where Medway children's services were not included in the proposed procurement to one where they are.

NHS Kent and Medway ICB recognises and respects the statutory role of the HASC and apologises for not briefing the Committee sooner on this proposal.

The decision to re-procure Medway children's community services is a joint decision, taken between officers of the Council and NHS Kent and Medway. I recognise that this decision was different to the original proposal discussed at previous HASC meetings, and I apologise again for not briefing the Committee sooner. However, this was a joint decision which involved the Deputy CEO of the Council and of which, I am told by the Deputy CEO, the Deputy Leader was aware.

In the subsequent part of this report, I explain the background and the events which led to the decision.

Background

To ensure the long-term delivery of community health services in an equitable and efficient manner for patients across Kent and Medway, the Community Services Review (CSR) was relaunched in February this year and has been progressing in line with the Programme Plan and updates have been given to the HASC at various stages since then.

Our ambition is to eliminate the current variation by providing equitable services across all four health and care partnerships.

Contracts for community health services have grown organically over time while managed historically by the previous eight different clinical commissioning groups, which resulted in different levels of services in different locations

The re-procurement seeks to:

- Provide consistency to the contracts and procure based on local needs rather than historical services
- Increase the stability of services
- Create contracts that bring together services and are geographically based, this means we are now planning to put out potentially 6 lots within the procurement:
 - Adults': Four contracts to be let, one contract per health and care partnership area
 - Children's: Two contracts to be let, one for Medway and Swale and the other for the other 3 Health and Care partnerships in Kent and Medway

The intention of the ICB is to issue an Invitation To Tender on 9th September 2024. In order to meet this a number activities have been taking place collaboratively across the system in the recent months. This includes developing a new model of care for out of hospital services which was co-designed with our provider collaborative and based on successful models seen around the country with the ambition that the successful bidders will work towards implementing it over the first year of the contract.

This model includes interfaces with other key services such as 111/999 services being able to refer when appropriate into the single point of access as demonstrated here:

Out of Hospital Model of Care including Community Services

Our ambition is to enable those who are ageing and living in our communities to receive the best support and care they need, in the place that is best for them.

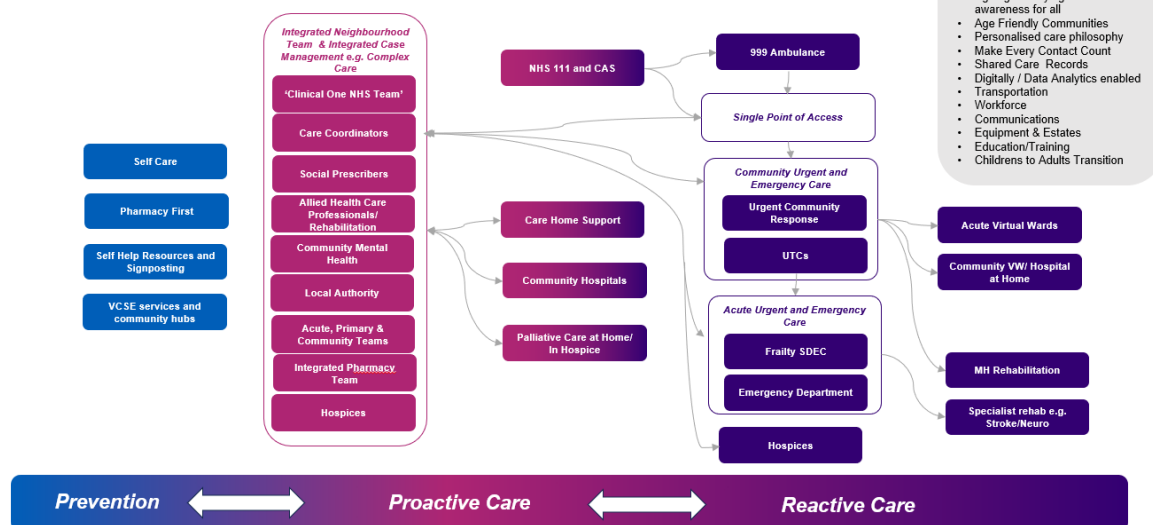


Figure 1: Out of Hospital Services

In order to produce the model above and achieve many tasks within the programme it has been a vital task to develop an understanding of what individual services fall within scope, the diagram below shows what is expected to be covered by the adults' and children's community services within this procurement.

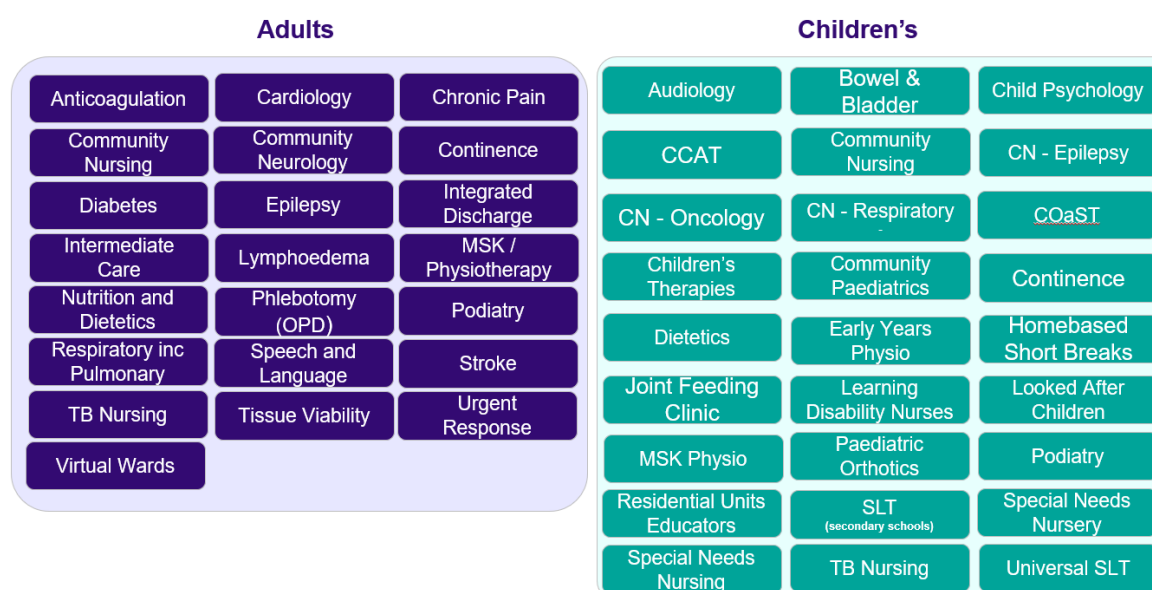


Figure 2: Elements of Community Services that are in scope

As part of the preparation for procurement, colleagues across the system have been working to confirm specifications, allowing a procurement of the 'as-is model' in the first instance, building up a complete picture of the currently used estates across Kent and Medway, a deep dive into the activity level of each current provider, financial modelling and hosting several in-person and virtual public engagement events.

Throughout July we held eight listening events: six for adults' services and two for children's. We held fewer for children's following discussion with partners across Kent & Medway who recognised the significant amount of engagement that had already been carried out to develop the Kent and Medway Children and Young People's Strategic Framework which will also be incorporated into the final report. We promoted these events, as well as three surveys (adults', children's and staff) via partners, the Kent Messenger and digital advertising, reaching 1.1m people across Kent and Medway.

We heard that for adults, fragmentation of services could sometimes be an issue with people finding it difficult to navigate through multiple referrals. We heard that much of the time the care given in services is excellent, but reaching those services can be difficult. We heard from both staff and patients that more and better integration is

needed and that communication and information can be improved, and that people would like to be able to access similar services regardless of where they live.

For children's services we heard that communication between services could be improved, particularly - but not solely - around transition from child to adult. Attendees spoke about inequity in resource distribution across Kent and Medway and the need for improved training to support children, both in educational settings and for families.

Improved relationships and better coordination across services was a clear theme across both age profiles. We are now developing a full report of the outcomes from all of our engagement which will be published in August. This forms the first phase of engagement, and we will continue to find opportunities to speak to people about the development of these services as we move through the transformation.

In this first phase:

- We reached 1.1million people with our messaging about community services transformation
- 175 people signed up to attend eight events
- 14 community organisations spoke to people traditionally less heard about the services
- 1500 postcards given to partners at KCC social Care, One You Kent and health and wellbeing buses for distribution
- Four community events attended
- 135 adults surveys completed
- 38 children's surveys completed
- 114 staff surveys completed
- Around a dozen staff interviews held

Moving into the next phase of the project we are holding a market engagement event on August 7th following the issuing of the procurement Prior Information Notice (PIN) in July. This will give us an opportunity to share our ambitions for the community services across Kent & Medway with all the potential bidders and engage in dialogue to help shape the final Invitation To Tender (ITT) on 9th September including the final make-up of the lots.

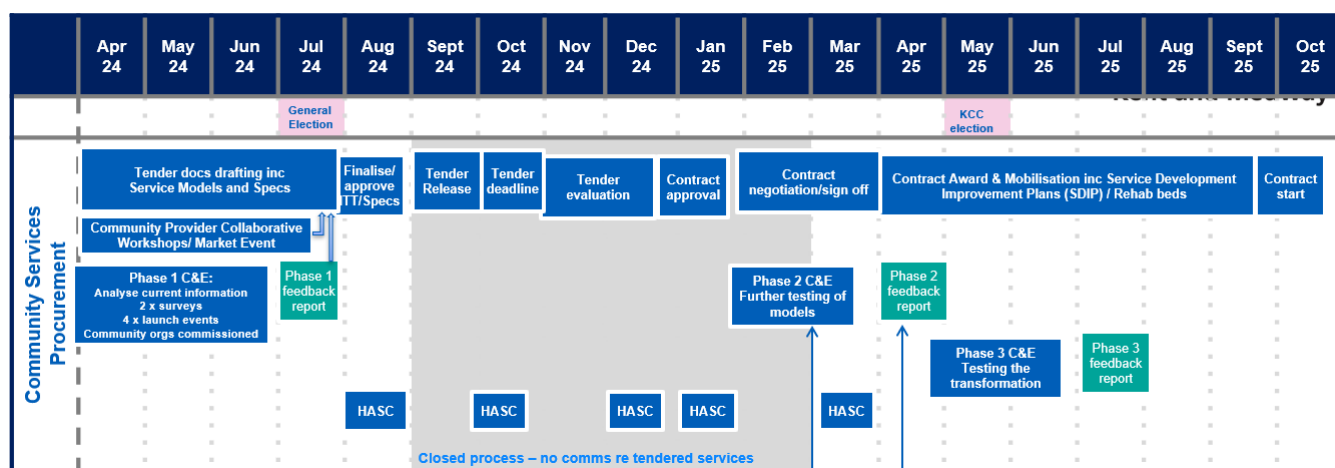


Figure 3: Full timeline for the procurement

Inclusion of Medway Children’s Community Service

The Committee wishes to understand the issue of the inclusion of children’s services for the community of Medway, given the reassurance it was given. The following timeline explains the sequence of events:

Initially, Medway’s children’s services were not part of the upcoming community procurement.

In Medway, there is a different commissioning arrangement for children’s services, whereby we have a joint partnership children’s commissioning team jointly funded and commissioned by the Council and the ICB. It was agreed that this team would attend the Medway CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee to update on any major issues relating to the commissioning of Medway Children’s Services.

Discussions took place between the former Director of Public Health for Medway and Chief Delivery Officer for Kent & Medway ICB regarding historic commissioning arrangements for children in Swale. This was following work that the ICB children’s team had developed which reflected the health inequalities for this population. It was agreed by these directors that it would be beneficial if commissioning arrangements for children in the Swale locality were incorporated into the responsibility of the Medway Partnership Team.

For assurance, there is no plan from the ICB to change the services or diminish access to services for citizens in Medway whilst looking to improve the equity across the ICS footprint. It should also be noted that the inclusion of the Medway & Swale children’s services has not had any detrimental impact on the timelines for the overall procurement and teams have worked closely to ensure the timeline has been

maintained and well managed to be able to go out to tender for both Adults' and Children's services across Kent & Medway on September 9th.

In March this year, the Partnership commissioning team developed a proposal, supported by the ICB children's team. In the ICB this went through the internal decision-making committee. This proposal asked for approval to "agree 2 separate Lots for the Community Children's Services procurement – namely one Lot for Kent and one Lot for Medway/Swale." This was supported by the ICB on May 10th.

A children's steering group and task and finish groups have been established and are meeting regularly. Both the Medway Partnership Commissioning Team and Medway providers have been active participants in those discussions. They are also represented at the Community Services Steering Group chaired by the Delivery Director. Collaboratively, these groups have developed the ambitions document for the procurement and updated service specs.

The procurement has been discussed widely at various meetings including the children's joint commissioning subgroup and the children's Programme Board, at which Medway are represented: The Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive of Medway Council is co-chair of the programme Board and chaired a meeting on 23rd May where this was discussed.

Timeline for Inclusion of Medway Children's Community Services:

- **Autumn 2023:** Discussion between the then Director of Public Health from Medway Council and the ICB Chief Delivery Officer regarding how the Medway and Swale Children's service could align in order to match the Health and Care Partnership footprint. It was agreed that this should be in scope for the procurement, so as to align services and make access of patients in Medway and Swale more equitable. At this stage it was expected that the contracts following procurement would commence in 2024 and more work would be needed to understand how the Swale contract could be aligned to Medway thus it was not expected to be part of the full Community Services Redesign procurement.
- **September 30th 2023:** In the minutes from HASC "The Chief Delivery Officer for NHS Kent and Medway introduced the paper and clarified that the children's services contracts mentioned in the paper did not apply in Medway".
- **October 17th 2023:** In the paper for HASC there is a section regarding financial modelling that says: "It excludes children's services, as Medway and Swale children's services were outside of the scope of the proposed procurement."
- **December 7th 2023:** KCC HOSC paper states the following with regards to Medway: "The proposed changes impact residents in both Kent and Medway

(excluding the Children's lots which do not cover Medway). For this reason, they were also presented to Medway's Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HASC) in September 2023".

- **January 18th 2024:** HASC paper presented that did not mention a split of services and just labelled them as community services rather than adults or children's specifically.
- **March 7th 2024:** Lead from the Medway Partnership Commissioning Team starts attending the Community Services Procurement Steering Group recognising discussions to potentially bring Medway children's services into the wider procurement.
- **April 3rd 2024:** Senior Partnership Commissioner from Partnership Commissioning Team started attending weekly Community Services Procurement Meetings.
- **April 9th 2024:** Email from Director of System Commissioning and Operational Planning at the ICB to Chair of HASC advising of SBAR paper going to an internal decision making group of the ICB regarding Children's Service lots including Medway and offering the opportunity to meet and discuss.
- **May 8th 2024:** Colleagues in the Children's Partnership Commissioning Team set up a procurement working group which looks at ensuring all aspects of the procurement are discussed between colleagues at Medway Council and the ICB; this links to the steering committee for the overall procurement.
- **May 10th 2024:** Proposal presented to ICB committee recommending Medway & Swale children's services are procured as a separate lot, this was approved.
- **May 23rd 2024:** Kent & Medway Children's and Young People's Programme Board where the children's services procurement was discussed.
- **July 9th 2024:** SEND Partnership Board (including Cllrs Price, Coombs & Murray): Item 7 Community Services Procurement presented by Julia Cox. Discussions and concerns raised regarding the services in Medway being grouped with Swale and also that it will be unsettling for patients with a potential new provider and some changes to services.

Conclusion

The decision to reprocare children's services has been a joint piece of work undertaken between the Council and NHS Kent and Medway.

For assurance, there is no plan to change the services or diminish access to services for people in Medway, whilst looking to improve the equity across the ICS footprint. Recognising that the Committee has previously determined adult community services is a substantial variation, it is recognised and respected by the ICB that children's services are likely to be included as part of this.

Notwithstanding this has been a joint piece of work with Medway Council, on behalf of the NHS Kent and Medway I am sorry that the communication to the HASC did not take place earlier and more effectively.

Paul Bentley
Chief Executive
NHS Kent and Medway

July 2024