

Southend People Scrutiny Committee

On

8 February 2022

Report prepared by: Tricia D'Orsi, NHS Alliance Director
&

Helen Farmer, Interim Director for Children & Young People

Community Children's Services – South East Essex

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the current position and proposed arrangements for the safe transfer of South East Essex Community Children's services currently provided by Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust (MSEFT) within the Lighthouse Child Development Centre to Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) during March 2022.

During 2022 MSE Health Care Partnership will also commence a co-design programme with all key stakeholders to continue to transform Children's Community services to ensure children and families receive appropriate care in a timely way and close to their home and community.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note:

- The planned transfer of service provision for South East Essex Community Children's Services to Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) during March 2022.
- Plans to commence on a co-design programme to further transform Community Children's Services across Mid and South Essex Health Care Partnership Integrated Care System (ICS).
- System Leadership Executive Group have identified Children and Young people as one of the top 3 priority areas for Mid and South Essex ICS.

3. Background

The Lighthouse Child Development Centre provides community Children's services for the population of Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Southend CCG (79,686 children for South East Essex in total).

The Lighthouse Centre is a bright, modern, child and parent friendly purpose-built venue. The centre provides services for children up to the age of 16 providing specialist specialised outpatient care for those with significant delay in more than one area of development and have or are likely to require the support from more than one secondary agency, service or discipline.

The centre functions as a multi-agency facility for the benefit of children and their families. The environment is conducive to multi-agency working and supports the Team around the Child model of delivery. The services offered include:

- Multidisciplinary assessments and early support
- Developmental, behavioural and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) clinics
- Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy, speech therapy
- Audiology services
- Assessments to support the Education Health and Care Plans and Initial Health Assessments for Children who are in the care of the Authority.

There have been significant challenges to some areas of service delivery over the years primarily through workforce issues including long term sick leave, recruitment and retention.

Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust wrote to the CCG on the 19th May 2021 informing them of their intention to cease provision and willingness to work collaboratively to transfer the service to another provider(s).

Out of scope are the other services provided from The Lighthouse, including audiology which will remain under the management of MSEFT, speech and language therapy, specialist school nursing, specialist health visitor, the Play and Parenting Advisor service and the toy library which are commissioned by Local Authority and EPUT.

In response the CCG has been working closely with the Community Collaborative, formed of EPUT, Provide and NELFT, to develop a solution which will address the current challenges faced by the service and offer a longer-term sustainable commissioning model. EPUT currently deliver a range of wider children's community services and aligning this provision offers the opportunity to maximise integration and offer a seamless and coordinated care for children and families.

During the review of the current service provision immediate action was taken to extend service provision to 18 years old, with sufficient resources put in place to support this change in service model.

Throughout the transfer process information has been shared with key stakeholders and weekly meetings held with Southend and Essex Parent Forum for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) to ensure effective engagement at this time. Although this is an anxious time for staff, stakeholders and families the response has been a positive one, welcoming this opportunity to improve service provision.

The CCGs have been working with Attain to ensure the CCGs remain compliant with procurement regulations and processes required to award a contract directly to EPUT. Within the regulations there are specific grounds upon which the CCG can award a contract by a negotiated procedure without prior publication.

MSEFT communicated their intention to step away from and hand back the Services as soon as possible. The CCGs are required to ensure continuity of service and so there was an urgency to secure an alternative provider which did not allow sufficient time for a full procurement process to be undertaken.

To provide assurance the CCGs have undertaken Due Diligence process with the new provider EPUT. The Due Diligence process included five criteria Quality Safety & Effectiveness, Value, Integration & Collaboration, Access, Inequalities and Choice, Service sustainability and social value.

4. Update and Next Steps

Mid and South Essex ICS Senior Leadership Executive Group have identified 3 priority areas for development including Children and Young people. This support and focus will facilitate the wider service improvement plans for children and their families ensuring we seek to maximise the benefits of integration and work together to address the challenges we face.

Following the safe transfer of services to EPUT the Health and Care Partnership will continue to work together with the Community Collaborative to improve the quality of service provision for children and young people and their families across all current NHS providers including EPUT, North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) and Provide. The outcome of this work would be to:

- Reduce unwarranted variation in outcomes and access to services
- Reduce health inequalities
- Build greater resilience across the system
- Coordinate the challenges to workforce recruitment, retention, Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Consider consolidation of low volume and highly specialist services
- Promote clinical excellence across the MSE landscape.
- Effectively coproduce and codesign with children and young people and their families.
- Greater integration of services both across the health economy and with wider agency partners.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

6.2 Financial Implications

6.3 Legal Implications

6.4 People Implications

6.5 Property Implications

6.6 Consultation

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.8 Risk Assessment

6.9 Value for Money

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.11 Environmental Impact

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

None