

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

BRIEFING NOTE – No. 7/21

Primary Care Briefing Note – Blue Suite, Rainham Healthy Living Centre

1. Background

- 1.1 This paper responds to the following actions from the Medway Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 March 2021:
- Meeting to take place between Rainham Councillors, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Primary Care Network to discuss the events at, and proposals for, the Blue Suite, including the processes involved in any proposed closure and also the use of the Rainham Healthy Living Centre.
 - Briefing to be sent to local councillors on the issues referred to above in advance of this meeting.

2. Minster Medical Group – Blue Suite, Rainham Healthy Living Centre

- 2.1 In line with any changes to services that affect patients, the practice undertook a limited engagement exercise as part of their initial application to close Blue Suite, Rainham Healthy Living Centre.
- 2.2 For clarity, Minster Medical Group (which runs Long Catlis Road Surgery) is seeking to make an application to close their branch surgery (known as Blue Suite) which is based within the Rainham Healthy Living Centre.
- 2.3 The application is only for Blue Suite, and is not connected to any other services or practices operating out of the same site.
- 2.4 During Covid the Blue Suite has been closed to patients but Minster Medical Group has been offering face-to-face appointments at Long Catlis Road Surgery.
- 2.5 During national lockdown, the practice has confirmed that no complaints were received regarding the temporary closure and elderly or vulnerable patients were reviewed over the telephone or via home visits.
- 2.6 Further, Minster Medical Group has recently been engaging with patients with regards to their usage of Blue Suite which will be taken into consideration as part of their closure application.

- 2.7 The CCG is currently advising Minster Medical Group in relation to what an appropriate consultation and engagement exercise would need to include as per the guidance as set out above.
- 2.8 Any application to close the Blue Suite would require an application from the practice to be heard at NHS Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group's Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC).
- 2.9 The practice's application has not reached the PCCC for consideration yet so absolutely no decisions about the Blue Suite have been considered or made to date.

3. Involvement responsibilities

- 3.1 The CCG has a statutory duty to make arrangements to involve the public in the commissioning services for NHS patients.
- 3.2 Although the CCG has significant flexibility in recommending a range of engagement approaches, the engagement undertaken with patients and stakeholders must be appropriate and proportionate in the circumstances and should include consulting with Kent Local Medical Committee.
- 3.3 Prior to making any decision, the CCG must demonstrate the grounds for such a decision and fully considering any impact on the GP practice's registered population and that of surrounding practices.
- 3.4 The CCG should also demonstrate that it has considered other options and has entered into dialogue with the GP contractors as to how any closure or merger will be managed.

4. Rainham Healthy Living Centre

- 4.1 Outside of dedicated space occupied by Medway Community Healthcare and General Practices there are 12 bookable clinical rooms at Rainham Healthy Living Centre. The current occupancy of these rooms (based on bookings) is:
- 87.5% overall (Monday to Friday AM and PM)
 - Individual days vary between 75% and 100% bookings (AM and PM)
 - There is currently minimal clinical activity in the evening (two sessions booked per week)
- 4.2 There are seven GP practices, delivering services over nine sites, in the Rainham area that have open lists for new patient registrations. Three of these practices operate from Rainham Healthy Living Centre.
- 4.3 Discussions have commenced with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) regarding space requirements for additional staff being employed by the PCNs. Options will include looking to utilise space in Healthy Living Centres to support the requirement.

4.4 The Medway and Swale Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), which incorporates Medway Maritime Hospital, community healthcare providers, the mental health trust, councils, primary care networks and commissioning colleagues, is committed to reviewing the use of healthy living centres. The intention is that they should continue to be used for a range of clinical services.