

Improving urgent stroke services in Kent and Medway

Summary

This paper describes a consultation on urgent stroke services being conducted by the NHS in Kent and Medway. It is relevant to south east London because some south east London residents (especially those in Bexley) use stroke services in Kent and because some Kent residents access stroke services in south east London (especially at the Princess Royal University Hospital, part of Kings College Hospital Foundation Trust). These arrangements may change as a result of the consultation. It is important to note that Bexley CCG is a consultor in this consultation whilst the other five CCGs in south east London and Kings College Hospital are consultees.

Background

Stroke services in London were reorganized nearly a decade ago to create a network of 8 Hyper Acute Stroke Units (HASUs) where patients suspected of having a stroke would be taken. These HASUs have the ability to provide patients with specialist care 24 hours a day which can minimize or even reverse the impact of a stroke. The HASUs are supported by a network of Acute Stroke Units (ASUs). Patients are repatriated to ASUs for further treatment and early rehabilitation following assessment and treatment at a HASU. In London patients are allocated to ASUs based on postcode so that they are as close to home as possible, which is important given that length of stay in ASUs can be several weeks. The stroke changes in London have been well evaluated in terms of lives saved, disability avoided and economic benefit.

The Kent and Medway proposals are similar to the London system. However, in all the Kent options HASUs and ASUs are co-located so patients remain in the hospital where they are first taken for all of their hospital stay. This avoids the need for patients to be transferred during their inpatient stay but may mean that they are away from their home area for a longer period. The details of the Kent consultation are included in the attached slides.



Next Steps

Bexley CCG are leading engagement events in Bexley.

Kings College Hospital will prepare a response on the potential impact of the changes on the PRUH site. In some of the options there will be more stroke patients attending the PRUH site because patients will no longer be taken to sites in Kent without a HASU. In other options there may be slightly fewer patients attending the PRUH site because there may be a HASU in Kent which is nearer. (At the moment Kent patients with a suspected stroke will be taken to their nearest Emergency Department whereas London patients will be taken to the nearest HASU. Once the Kent and Medway changes are implemented under all options Kent patients will be taken to the nearest HASU).

The STP plans to prepare a response on behalf of Bromley, Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham and Greenwich CCGs and the other provider organisations within the STP.

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