

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

Date: **26 March 2015**

By: **HOSC Chair**

Title of report: **Joint HOSC update on acute mental health inpatient beds in Sussex**

Purpose of report: **To update the Committee on the Joint HOSC meetings with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) on the issue of the demand for acute mental health inpatient beds and the Trust's capacity to meet that demand.**

RECOMMENDATION

HOSC is recommended to 1) consider the report; 2) formulate questions for the nominated HOSC members to raise at future meetings with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT).

1. Background

1.1. Patients with functional mental health illnesses (such as Schizophrenia) who require urgent assessment and treatment in a safe environment may be admitted to an acute mental health inpatient unit. Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT), the mental health provider, runs six acute mental health inpatient units in facilities across Sussex including Mill View Hospital in Hove and Langley Green Hospital in Crawley.

1.2. In recent years there has been an increase nationwide in the number of reported incidents of patients being admitted to privately run or out-of-county acute mental health inpatient units because their local mental health trust has no available beds.

1.3. In late October 2013, a significant increase in the number of patients requiring admittance to inpatient mental health units led to multiple patients being admitted to private and NHS-run facilities outside of the county. The incident was reported widely in the local media at the time.

1.4. After hearing about the incident, the three health scrutiny committees in Sussex (East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove) agreed to meet with SPFT to discuss the challenges facing mental health services across Sussex. The East Sussex representatives were Cllrs Michael Ensor, Peter Pragnell and Michael Wincott.

1.5. The HOSC representatives have met with SPFT on two occasions. The issues discussed at the most recent meeting were:

- **Capacity and demand of services**, particularly for inpatient mental health services;
- **Performance and Quality of services**;
- **Plans for future service change or developments** across Sussex;
- **The financial constraints** SPFT is operating within.

1.6. The Members of the three HOSCs agreed to continue to meet with SPFT on a six-monthly basis to discuss Sussex-wide mental health issues. Individual HOSCs will continue to look at mental health issues affecting their local area.

2. Next steps

2.1. HOSC is recommended to consider the report and formulate questions that the East Sussex HOSC members could raise at the next joint HOSC meeting with SPFT.

2.2. The East Sussex Members will report back to HOSC at a future meeting with their findings and recommendations for further actions.

2.3. The next meeting with SPFT is expected to cover the CQC report and SPFT's 2020 Vision.

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL ENSOR
Chair
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Paul Dean

Tel No: 01273 481751
