

Briefing on Care Quality Commission Inspection of Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT)

1. Background

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. It makes sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, caring, well-led and responsive care, and encourage care services to improve. They monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and publish what is found to help people choose care.

SPFT provide NHS care and treatment for people living in Brighton and Hove, East and West Sussex, Kent and Hampshire. Services in Sussex care for people with mental health problems, learning disabilities and an addiction to drugs or alcohol. SPFT are one of the largest providers of children and young people's mental health services in England, delivering community services in Kent and Medway, Hampshire and Sussex.

2. SPFT Inspection

The CQC undertook an inspection of Trust services by requesting and obtaining Trust information on services and patient records, and visiting in-patient and community services during January 2015. The team of inspectors and specialists including doctors, nurses, managers and experts by experience visited all of the trust's 41 hospital wards and 13 community mental health services. The trust's five places of safety and six crisis services were also inspected.

2.1 Summary Ratings

	Safe	Effective	Caring	Responsive	Well-Led	Overall
1. Community Based Mental Health Services for Adults of Working Age	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Wards	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
3. Wards for people with learning disabilities	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
4. Long Stay/Rehabilitation Mental Health Wards for Working Age Adults	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement

5. Mental health crisis services and health-based places of safety	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
6. Forensic Inpatient/secure wards	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good
7. Community based Mental Health Services for Older People	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
8. Community Mental Health Services for people with Learning Disabilities	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
9. Wards for Older People with Mental Health Problems	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
10. Adult Acute	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
11. Community based Mental Health Services for Child and Adolescents	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Outstanding	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement
12. Overall Provider Report	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement

2.2 Summary Comments

Overall the trust has been rated as Requiring Improvement. Although the trust provided services that were 'good' for being caring, improvements were needed for services to be consistently safe, effective, responsive and well led. The CQC found considerable variation in the quality of the services provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

While most community-based services were good, some areas of care in learning disability and older people's inpatient services were 'inadequate'. These services require urgent attention to bring them up to acceptable standards.

Not all ward environments were found to be clean, and some did not ensure the privacy and dignity of patients by providing separate facilities for men and women, and did not always ensure the safety of patients.

The rehabilitation service at Hanover Crescent (in Brighton) was of most immediate concern where there were serious problems relating to cleanliness, infection control and management of risks. The trust responded promptly to by closing the unit to new admissions.

The CQC were also concerned that the trust had no plan in place to tackle the relatively high rate of suicide in Sussex. Whilst it recognised that other agencies must be involved in developing a suicide prevention plan, the trust was urged to initiate urgent work with public health and community agencies to address this.

At the time of the inspection, some of the senior team were new in post. It was reassuring to find that they had themselves identified many of the problems highlighted by the CQC, which has seen encouraging signs of improvement in the four months since the inspection.

Inspectors found community mental health services for adults of working age, older people and people with a learning disability or autism were 'good'. Inspectors found nearly every service to be caring, with staff at all levels committed to providing good patient care. Forensic inpatient and secure wards, and specialist community mental health services for children and young people were rated 'outstanding' for being caring.

There was a shortage of beds across adult and older people's wards. This meant that often it was necessary for patients to access inpatient care some distance from their home.

A number of wards were mixed with some wards having separate corridors for men and women but women could only access bathroom and toilet facilities by passing through the male areas. Doors were left open between male and female corridors.

Inspectors found in child and adolescent services there were f concern in relation to ligature points in bathrooms that could endanger people at risk of suicide. Although these had been identified by the trust they were not being addressed as a priority.

In child and adolescent services there were significant delays in accessing services, although the trust has been working to reduce this. Waiting times for routine treatments, in relation to anxiety, low mood and autistic spectrum conditions could take up to a year.

3. SPFT Response

Chief Executive Colm Donaghy responding to the CQC report said:

"The CQC's report is based upon a thorough, independent assessment of what we do, informed by the people who use our services, our staff and organisations we work with. As such, it provides us with really important feedback that we must use to continue improving the services we provide to patients.

The CQC highlights services where the level of caring is outstanding and where staff are compassionate, kind and motivated to go the extra mile for the people they serve. Our challenge is to achieve this consistently across all our services. We also need to be much better at getting the basics right on issues like staff training and learning from incidents.

We've addressed areas where the inspection team raised concerns about the patient environment, improved the way we deliver staff training and have been talking with

patients, public and staff about the steps we need to take to improve patient care. Our 2020 Vision describes what we will do to achieve consistently outstanding care across all our services.”

4. Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Response

Amanda Philpott, Chief Officer of Eastbourne Hailsham and Seaford (EHS), and Hastings and Rother (H&R) CCGs responded to the Report by saying:

“SPFT is a provider of a range of complex services over a very wide geography. The summary rating of ‘requires improvement’ disguises the fact that some elements are rated as inadequate, and some are outstanding.

We were pleased to attend the Quality Summit on Friday, and welcome the 8th July date for the East Sussex listening event in Hastings

We will continue to work closely with the Trust to understand the specific implications for the people of East Sussex, on a service by service basis.”

Dr Joerg Bruuns, GP and dementia lead on the EHS CCG Governing Body, responded to the Report by saying:

“We welcome this Trust leadership’s refreshingly open and transparent dialogue about what it has been told by the CQC, its acceptance of the challenge, and what actions it has already taken and intends to take as a consequence.

We note that the Trust is in a period of significant change, and we need to work with them to ensure services are safe and high quality throughout this period of change.”

5. Preliminary Areas of Work

A strategy paper for developing more integrated mental health services in East Sussex is being prepared for consideration under the ‘Better Together’ programme. Amongst the issues it will address are ones which the CQC also identified, including:

- Re-admission rates – these are predominantly related to patients with personality disorders for whom dedicated care pathways and new services are under development;
- Delayed discharges – these are predominantly related to housing issues, though developing integrated pathways for rehabilitation and joint gateways to access and funding will also be important;
- Physical health – an expansion in the role of primary care in managing patients with severe and enduring mental illness should improve the generally poor physical health of this population.