

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

**Date of meeting:** 6 March 2025

**By:** Deputy Chief Executive

**Title:** South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb) update

**Purpose:** To provide the Committee with an overview of progress made by SECAmb to improve operational performance and meet the requirements of the NHS England Recovery Support Programme (RSP).

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note the report; and
  - 2) consider whether to request a further report on any of the areas covered in the report.
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## 1. Background

1.1. South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb) provides emergency and urgent care services in response to calls from the public and other healthcare professionals across Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Medway, Surrey, and parts of North East Hampshire. The Trust operates two emergency operations centres (EOC) that receive and triage 999 calls. The EOC provides ambulance dispatch as appropriate and provides assessment and treatment advice to callers who do not need an ambulance response, a service known as “hear and treat”. SECAmb is also the provider of the NHS 111 service for residents in Kent and Sussex who require urgent care and advice over the phone.

1.2. The CQC inspected SECAmb in March 2022 and in the report it published on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022, CQC rated the Trust as inadequate in its well-led domain. Due to the inadequate rating in the well-led domain, the CQC recommended to NHS England that the Trust be placed into the Recovery Support Programme (RSP). NHS provider trusts placed into an RSP by NHS England must produce an Improvement Plan that includes a target timeline for exit from the RSP. NHS England must be satisfied that the agreed exit criteria have been met in a sustainable way and any required transitional support is in place before agreeing that a trust may leave the RSP.

1.3. The Committee subsequently received updates from SECAmb at the HOSC meetings on 29 June 2023 and 30 July 2024 providing an overview of SECAmb’s progress in its Improvement Journey to address the findings of the CQC report and the work being undertaken to improve services and exit the RSP. The Committee requested an update report be brought to this meeting to provide an update on progress being made.

## 2. Supporting information

2.1. SECAmb has produced a report for the HOSC attached as **Appendix 1**. The report covers the work the Trust has been doing to improve operational performance to meet NHS England (NHSE) Recovery Support Programme (RSP) goals. Regular reviews have been held between the Trust and NHS England’s South East regional team to assess the Trust’s readiness for exit of the RSP. In December 2024, a final review was conducted, and a

recommendation for exit was submitted, however, the final decision on the Trust's exit from the RSP is still pending.

2.2. The report includes information on:

- **Performance of the 999 & 111 service.** Information on ambulance response times for all call Categories (1, 2, 3 and 4). The mean response time for Category 2 is under the agreed target of less than 30 minutes.
- **Hospital Handovers.** Updates on work with Hospital Trusts service East Sussex to reduce handover delays, with a focus on work at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH)
- **Urgent and Emergency Care – Unscheduled Care Navigation Hubs (UCNHs).** Information on the development and delivery of UCNHs, a new model of working aimed at reducing conveyance to Emergency Departments (EDs)
- **Community Provider Access to Category 3 & 4 Incidents.** Information on how SECamb is working with community Trusts Urgent Community Response Teams to get the right response first time for a patient
- **Improvement Journey (NHSE Recovery Support Program).**
- **Clinically Led Strategy 2024 – 2029**
- **South Central Ambulance Service and Southern Ambulance Service Collaboration.** Partnership working between SECamb and other ambulance trusts, including official collaboration between SECamb and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS)

### **3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report and agree whether it would like to schedule a further update report on its work programme.

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