

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

Date of meeting: 26 June 2025

By: Deputy Chief Executive

Title: NHS Sussex Winter Plan 2024/25 – review and evaluation

Purpose: To provide an update on the implementation and delivery of the NHS Sussex Winter Plan 2024/25 and learning from it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the report.

1. Background

1.1. Winter planning is an annual national requirement of the NHS to ensure that the local health and social care system has sufficient plans in place to effectively manage the capacity and demand pressures anticipated during the Winter period. The Sussex Winter Plan is a whole system health and social care plan, recognising the interdependencies of the system to meet the needs of the local population. The Plan period ran this year from November 2024 to March 2025.

1.2. The Committee considered the 2024/25 Winter Plan at its meeting held on 12 December 2024, where it requested a further update be brought to this meeting to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the plan's implementation. This report provides an update, and evaluation of, the impact of the NHS Sussex Winter Plan with learning to be taken forward to enhance the winter planning for 2025/26.

1.3. The Sussex ICS Winter Plan 2024/25 focussed on supporting the population to stay well while maintaining patient safety and experience. The plan was structured around five key pillars and detailed capacity and demand modelling, which was informed by data analysis from previous years' winter performance. The modelling reviewed bed occupancy using a series of demand assumptions and predicted likely gaps between capacity and demand.

1.4. The impact of planned mitigations outlined in the plan was modelled to ensure that the gaps identified could be mitigated by the actions planned within the workstreams supporting the five pillars. As a result of this modelling, several schemes were identified as having an expected impact on performance over the winter period.

1.5. This report outlines the results of the review and evaluation of the plan which took place the end of March 2025, which immediately followed the cessation of the period covered by the Winter Plan. Each of the five Pillars have been reviewed by workstream leads to determine whether they were effective in maintaining performance, patient safety and experience over Winter 2024/25. The demand and capacity modelling has also been reviewed against actual performance to determine accuracy.

2. Supporting information

2.1 A summary report providing a review and evaluation of the NHS Sussex Winter Plan 2024/25 is attached as **Appendix 1** for consideration by the HOSC and covers the following topics:

- Demand and capacity modelling of the following areas:
 - Predicted bed gaps
 - Four-hour A&E performance targets
 - 12 hour stay in A&E metrics
 - Average length of stay
 - Ambulance response times
 - 'No Criteria to Reside' inpatients
- Review of outcomes against the five key pillars of the winter plan:
 - Prevention and case finding, including workforce, vaccination programmes, Integrated Care Teams (ICTs) and communications
 - Same day urgent care
 - Improvement in discharge to support patient flow
 - Sound operational management
 - Governance, oversight, and escalation
- The Reset Event
- Winter plan survey
- Winter Plan Debrief

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 HOSC is recommended to consider and comment on the NHS Sussex Winter Plan review and evaluation.

PHILIP BAKER
Deputy Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Patrick Major, Scrutiny and Policy Adviser

Telephone: 07701258227

Email: patrick.major@eastsussex.gov.uk