

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

Date of meeting: 18 September 2025

By: Deputy Chief Executive

Title: Access to General Practice in East Sussex

Purpose: To provide an update on work being done to improve access to General Practice and Primary Care Network (PCN) services in East Sussex

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) note the report; and**
 - 2) consider whether to include any further work on this topic in the Committee's future work programme**
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1. Background

1.1 The Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) has received a number of reports at its previous meetings which explored primary care services, most recently an overview and update of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) at its meeting in October 2024. At that meeting HOSC requested a further update on access to GPs and primary care services be brought to this meeting.

1.2 In July 2025, the Government published the 10-year health plan, which aims to improve access to general practice by: bringing care closer to home; ending barriers in Primary Care; improving digital entryways; and prioritising preventative care. Increasing GP appointments and improve inpatient experience have been identified as key priorities for PCNs for the year 2025/26.

2. Supporting information

2.1 PCNs are groupings of local neighbouring general practices that are a mechanism for sharing staff and collaborating while maintaining the independence of individual practices. These groupings started from 1 July 2019 and there are 12 PCNs in East Sussex, covering all areas of the county. PCNs require existing providers of general practice to work together and to share funds, with additional national funding being made available to employ Additional Roles Reimbursement staff (ARRS), to deliver services to patients across the member practices.

2.2 Integrated Community Teams (ICSTs) have been developed to act as the vehicle to integrate primary, community, social care and the voluntary sector services within a defined footprint. There are 5 ICTs in East Sussex which map to the geographies of the five district and borough councils.

2.3 The report, which is attached as **Appendix 1**, provides members with an update on the work being done to improve access to General Practice in East Sussex. It includes details on General Practice in East Sussex, and covers a number of areas which the HOSC asked about when it considered the report at its September meeting, as well as developments that have taken place since the last report. This includes:

- Background information about the wider context of this report
- GP appointment data

- The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS)
- Integrated Neighbourhood Teams
- Health Inequalities
- Approaches to addressing unwarranted variation in Primary Care
- Improving Primary Care patient experience
- Planning for winter 2025/26

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1. The HOSC is recommended to note the report and consider whether to include any further work on primary care or access to general practice in the Committee's future work programme.

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