

NHS Sussex

Primary Care Networks

An overview for East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

March 2023

Better health and care for all

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What is a Primary Care Network?

Overview

Primary Care Networks (PCNs) are groupings of local general practices that are a mechanism for sharing staff and collaborating while maintaining the independence of individual practices. NHS England has stipulated that networks should 'typically' cover a population of between 30,000 and 50,000 people (the average practice size is just over 8,000). There are 38 PCNs across Sussex (12 of which are in East Sussex) and around 1264 across England. Networks are geographically contiguous and coterminous with Integrated Care System footprints.

These groupings started from 1 July 2019 and everyone in Sussex is covered by a PCN. PCNs are not new legal bodies, but their formation requires existing providers of general practice to work together and to share funds on a scale not previously seen in UK general practice.

The main nationally set ambitions for PCNs are to:

- take collective action with system partners to address the wider determinants of health,
- provide increased levels of joined up and coordinated care,
- become more proactive; using predictive tools to better support people to stay healthy,
- provide a differentiated support offer to individuals, thus reducing inequalities and supporting them to take charge of their own health and wellbeing, and
- attract and retain a multidisciplinary workforce.

These networks have responsibility for delivering nine national service specifications set out in a national contract (annex a).

The PCN picture across East Sussex

The largest PCN in East Sussex is Hastings & St Leonards PCN. This is made up of 9 GP practices and has 101,055 people on its registered list. The smallest PCN is Foundry Healthcare in Lewes. This consists of 1 GP practice with 28,293 people on its registered list. There are 2 PCNs in areas of significant deprivation across East Sussex, namely ALPs and Hastings & Leonards PCNs.

Details of each PCN, and their member practices, are shown at annex b.

PCN maps are shown at annex c.

How are PCNs progressing with developing their teams?

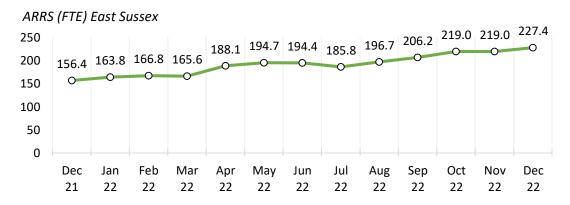
Overview

PCNs should draw on the expertise of staff already employed by their constituent practices and receive funding to employ additional staff under an Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS).

The work of the networks is coordinated by a clinical director. ARRS is the most significant financial investment within the Network Contract DES and is designed to provide reimbursement for networks to build the workforce required to deliver the national service specifications. The ARRS scheme provides funding for additional roles across the PCN to create multi-disciplinary teams. Some of the ARRs roles that PCNs can recruit as part of this scheme are:

- Clinical pharmacists
- Pharmacy technicians
- First contact physiotherapists
- Physician's associates
- Dietitians
- Podiatrists
- Occupational therapists
- Community paramedics
- Nursing associates and trainee nursing associates
- Social prescribing link workers
- Care coordinators
- Health and wellbeing coaches
- GP Assistants
- Digital Transformation Leads

As of December 2022, ARRS roles employed by PCNs in Sussex saw an increase of 71.0 FTE¹ (45.4%) compared to staffing levels in December 2021. The clinical ARRS workforce equates to 224.2 FTE, with non-clinical ARRS roles equating to 3.2 FTE.



For East Sussex this means that there are 156 more full time equivalents working in primary care since the start of this scheme. The majority of these are in care co-ordinator and pharmacy support roles.

Service development opportunities linked to a different team skill mix

The drive to broaden the professionals who can work in primary care teams is intended to take pressure off GPs and practice nurses but also develop the services that are offered.

¹ FTE – Full Time Equivalent

Some examples of new clinical models / approaches are:

- Foundry PCN has developed a *risk stratification model*. Patients are streamed to the
 most appropriate healthcare professional using systematic triage and clinical judgement.
 Combined with creating a dedicated 'green' site for those needing on-the-day access (and
 'amber' overflow). Capacity across the multi-site practice is now easier to plan and manage,
 drawing on teams made up of ARRs staff, enabling people requiring support to see the right
 health professional at the right time.
- Bexhill PCN has established a hub to Support Adolescent and Young Persons Health
 (SAYPH). This is a safe space for young people aged 11-16 years to come together,
 socialise, relax, and link in with healthcare professionals. The hub is run by the PCN's
 ARRS staff including the Children and Young Persons Care Coordinators and Social
 Prescribing team. These staff are actively supporting young people and referring them on to
 other services as appropriate. The team can also support any young person who is waiting
 for contact from the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- **Emotional Wellbeing Services** across PCN footprints we are developing new models of population based mental health care built around PCNs. They bring clinical Mental Health Practitioners alongside non-clinical Mental Health Support Coordinators within every PCN. They aim to establish individual Emotional Wellbeing Services that work at a neighbourhood level to provide easy and timely access to mental health support for a wide range of individuals. In East Sussex, each PCN, depending on its population served, will have 0.5 1.0 whole time Mental Health Practitioners alongside 1.0 2.0 whole time Mental Health Support Coordinators. Currently these professionals are working in the PCNs in Lewes, Greater Wealden, Bexhill and Hastings. By April 2023 this service will have rolled out further to cover much of Eastbourne.
- PCN vaccination clinics were developed in Hastings, Eastbourne East, Greater Wealden, Foundry and Victoria PCNs. These models are providing long term opportunities to develop strong, sustainable relationships within other providers across Sussex and are increasing vaccine uptake amongst vulnerable communities in East Sussex.
- From 1 October 2022, all East Sussex PCNs are offering *Enhanced Access Hours*. PCNs are expected to provide appointments between the hours of 6.30pm to 8pm Mondays to Fridays and between 9am and 5pm on Saturdays. The services are currently in infancy and are being closely monitored to ensure that that there are no gaps in provision and that our population can easily access these services.

Further work to support retention, develop and increase this workforce will form part of our Sussex Health and Care Shared Delivery Plan which will be published in the summer.

How are PCNs tackling health inequalities and personalising care in their areas?

PCNs in East Sussex are focussing on initiatives and projects that align with the NHS England Core20Plus5 model.

Each PCN is focusing on tackling a broad range of health inequalities ranging from supporting patients with high BMI, serious mental illness, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, proactive care and support for people who are housebound and health checks for people living in deprived areas. To fully understand the impact of this work evaluations will be taking place to identify 'what works' and what doesn't. This activity will be completed by end March and will inform our plans for the next financial year.

Each PCN in East Sussex is also supporting people to have personalised care plans. Personalised care means people have choice and control over the way their care is planned and delivered. It is based on 'what matters' to them and their individual strengths and needs. 10 out of 12 PCNs are currently finalising their personalised care strategy, key areas of focus for the majority of PCNs include:

- Proactively supporting older/elderly adults
- Long Term Condition and Mental Health Social prescribing
- Tackling loneliness

What are the next steps to develop PCNs further?

PCNs were established just as the health service had to shift its focus on effort on responding to a global pandemic. In some cases, this helped accelerate the development of these practice groupings; but this wasn't universal.

To support PCNs across East Sussex to deliver the national contracts and continue to innovate to respond to local need, we are undertaking several activities:

- PCN Clinical Model and Estates Toolkit commenced in November 2022 and aims to bring together PCN leaders and managers to develop clinical models that best respond to local population need. Subsequently an estates plan will be able to reflect the future clinical needs of the PCN. This will include infrastructure requirements, such as digital and estates. Ten of the twelve PCNs in East Sussex are currently doing this work².
- PCN Leadership Development Programme running from Jan 2023 to September 2023, this programme supports PCNs to: (a) understand the importance of purpose and network working; (b) develop critical thinking and methods to design / implement strategy; (c) build skills to create and lead true multi-disciplinary teams; (d) refine skills to use population health management and other innovative data driven approaches to implement new models of care; and (e) refine core skills and understanding in the management disciplines of Estates, Finance, HR and Information Management. Six PCNs³ in East Sussex are involved in this targeted work.
- Targeted Action Learning we will offer PCNs who are in their infancy and some who are
 'high performing' more focussed support from independent coaches. This focused work will
 allow those who are struggling to come together to find a common purpose. From those
 who are 'high performing' we will be looking to identify principles that others could adopt /
 adapt to their own local populations.

² The ten PCNs are: Alps, Bexhill, Eastbourne East, Hastings and St Leonards, The Havens, Seaford, Victoria Eastbourne, Foundry, Hailsham and Rural Rother.

³ The six PCNs are: Eastbourne East, Greater Wealden, Bexhill, Rural Rother, Victoria and Seaford.

Conclusion and next steps

The development of PCNs is critical to improve the care and support people across Sussex receive. NHS Sussex will continue to focus on the following key areas to support the on-going development by providing:

- time and support for implementation, including organisational development and leadership support, and
- meaningful monitoring, and a support offer for struggling networks.

Underpinning all of this will be the continued focus to recruit more GPs and fund activities across these footprints. If PCNs meet national expectations, patients stand to benefit from access to a wider range of services through a stabilised general practice. Better use of medications, less reliance on hospital care and improved links with other services in the community.

Amy Galea

Chief Primary Care Officer, NHS Sussex

Key reading:

Microsoft Word - FINAL 003 250522 - Fuller report[46].docx (england.nhs.uk) (accessed February 2023)

NHS England » Core20PLUS5 (adults) – an approach to reducing healthcare inequalities (accessed February 2023)

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Annex a - National service specifications set out in national contract

Scheme / Reference	Summary of Requirements
Medication Review and	Identify and prioritise PCN patients who would benefit from a SMR.
Medicines Optimisation	Offer and deliver as above.
	Work with ICB to optimise the quality of local Prescribing of: • Antimicrobial Meds
	Meds that cause dependency
	Lower carbon inhalers
	Meds of low priority.
Enhanced Health in Care	Deliver the EHCH specification.
Homes (EHCH)	The ICB Specification covers all the PCN DES specification requirements with additional local requirements. The PCN DES payments are integrated into the ICB scheme.
Early Cancer Diagnosis	Review referral practices for suspected cancers.
	Work with partners to improve NHS Cancer screening uptake. Adopt and embed FIT tests and use tele dermatology.
	Develop and implement a plan for prostate cancer assessment Review use of non specific symptoms pathways.
Social Prescribing	PCN patients must have access to a Social Prescribing Service

Annex a - National service specifications set out in national contract

Scheme / Reference	Summary of Requirements
CVD Prevention and	Improve diagnosis (NICE guidance).
Diagnosis	Improve blood pressure checks.
	Improve AF identification.
	Improve CVD prevention.
	Review CVD intelligence tools. Support system pathway development. Improve levels of diagnostic capacity for ABC testing. Ensure information sharing with Pharmacies are in place.
	Identify patients at high risk of FH. Ensure Statin NICE guidance is followed.
	Support early identification of heart failure.
Tackling	Deliver the LD Medicals requirements. Deliver SMI Medicals requirements.
Neighbourhood	Record ethnicity of all patients.
Health Inequalities	Appoint a Health Inequalities lead.
	Identify and deliver a Health
	Inequalities priority (lots of detail on what and how).
Anticipatory Care	PCNs must support ICS' to develop plans and then be part of the delivery.
Personalised Care	PCNs must work with partners to develop and implement a plan to improve social prescribing access.

Annex b - Details of East Sussex PCNs and member practices

PCN	Practice Name	PCN list size 1 Jan 2023	Practice List Size 1 Jan 2023
ALPS	Grove Road Surgery		5899
	Park Practice		12265
	Seaside Medical Centre	58284	11703
	The Arlington Road Medical Practice		11444
	The Lighthouse Medical Practice		16973
Bexhill	Collington Surgery		17271
	Little Common & Old Town Surgery	49077	17595
	Sidley Medical Practice (not signed up to PCN DES)		14211
Eastbourne East	Harbour Medical Practice		7215
	Sovereign Practice	36222	14588
	Stone Cross Surgery		14419
Foundry	Foundry Healthcare Lewes	28293	28293
	Bird-In-Eye Surgery		7794
Greater Wealden	Buxted Medical Centre		15763
	Heathfield Surgery	60261	12202
Greater Weatuerr	Herstmonceux Health Centre	00201	5780
	Mid Downs Medical Practice		9989
	The Meads Surgery		8733
	Bridgeside Surgery		6557
Hailsham	Hailsham Medical Group	29642	11407
	The Quintin Medical Centre		11678
	Beaconsfield Road Surgery		10223
	Carisbrooke Surgery		8563
	Harold Road Surgery		11589
	Hastings Old Town Surgery		24853
Hastings	High Glades Medical Centre	101055	18276
	Priory Road Surgery		3341
	Sedlescombe House		2900
	South Saxon House Surgery		3534
	The Station Practice		17776

Annex b - Details of East Sussex PCNs and member practices

PCN	Practice Name	PCN list size 1 Jan 2023	Practice List Size 1 Jan 2023
High Weald	Ashdown Forest Health Centre		9927
	Beacon Surgery		11013
	Belmont Surgery		8852
	Groombridge And Hartfield Medical Group	55687	5373
	Rotherfield Surgery		7369
	Saxonbury House Surgery		9511
	Woodhill Surgery		3642
	Fairfield Surgery		4199
Rural Rother	Ferry Road Health Centre		3939
	Martins Oak Surgery		8479
	Northiam Surgery	43087	6823
	Oldwood Surgery		6216
	Rye Medical Centre		7104
	Sedlescombe & Westfield Surgeries		6327
Seaford	Old School Surgery	27542	9613
	Seaford Medical Practice	27513	17900
	Chapel Street Surgery		6253
The Havens	HavensHealth	35647	18864
	Quayside Medical Practice		10530
Victoria	Downlands Medical Centre		10789
	Manor Park Medical Centre	46365	6731
	Victoria Medical Centre		28845

Annex c – PCN maps



