

# Community mental health services for West Sussex

## An overview - July 2019

### Introduction

The proposed changes described in the consultation document, ***Working with you to improve mental health in West Sussex***, involve moving some of our inpatient services to different locations. More broadly, we are doing a lot of work to improve community mental health services. While this doesn't relate specifically to the changes we are consulting people about, we thought it would be helpful to say a little bit about what we are doing and why.

There are a number of reasons we need to change. People are living longer and the NHS is treating an increasing number of patients with long-term conditions. Too often, however, people find it difficult to know how to get the help they need. The health and care system can feel difficult to understand, confusing to navigate and slow to respond.

A lot of the time in mental health services we end up reacting to when people become ill. We think it would be better for people if we did more to help them manage their mental health and wellbeing, focusing on helping people stay well.

We are working with our health and social care partners to improve services for people with mental health problems. This includes focusing more on prevention, so we get help to people at the earliest opportunity. It involves developing urgent care services to help people who are experiencing a mental health crisis and providing alternatives to hospital admission wherever possible.

At the same time, we need to make sure that those people who do need to be cared for in hospital receive high quality care and treatment in a safe, modern environment that safeguards their privacy and dignity.

### Our vision

Between now and the full implementation of the proposals we are consulting on, we will develop, with other providers:

- improved out-of-hours 'crisis cafes', as alternatives to A&E
- greater integration of crisis team function into community teams
- improved care pathway for people with personality disorders
- growth of mental health crisis teams across West Sussex
- growth of A&E psychiatric liaison services across Coastal West Sussex.

In addition, we want to make our services more efficient and effective, and easier to get into when people go into crisis. To do this we are:

- undertaking capacity and demand work across all our mental health teams to make sure our teams are working effectively with people who need our services
- building up our relationships with other providers to make sure we are not all trying to do the same thing, working better together, and ensuring less people are being 'bounced' around services trying to find the people who can help them
- changing the way our staff work with others when people are transferred back to their GPs or into the voluntary sector, by providing better relapse prevention and Wellness Recovery Action Plans (WRAPs), and enabling people to come back to us much more easily if they do relapse
- making sure our staff have manageable caseload sizes so we can improve the quality of our care as well as making sure we have the capacity to respond much more quickly when people are in crisis
- increasing our direct work with West Sussex County Council Approved Mental Health Professionals (WSCC – AMHP) service with the aim of reducing the need for detention and admissions, for instance enabling our crisis teams to be part of Mental Health Act assessments, so we can think about how they might support alternatives to hospitalisation as the least restrictive option
- planning to embed our crisis teams within the community services so we can make our community teams more robust when people go into crisis
- reviewing the way we use our buildings, and making better use of IT, so staff can be more efficient and effective when treating patients. But we do know we have some way to go still in terms of making our community building more fit for purpose.

These developments are being addressed as part of Sussex Partnership's wider community redesign work and are planned to be in place by end of 2019/beginning of 2020, including developing 'single points of access' together with partners to help us get people to the right place when they are referred for help.

There is a mental health investment plan in place for urgent care services across West Sussex during the next year. The STP Mental Health prioritisation process for 2019/20 has agreed to fund £1.3m for 2019/20 and £2.4m recurrently for investment in urgent care services across Sussex.

A clinically supported business case is being developed for the STP and its overarching aim will be for urgent care services in each area to meet core standards and resource will be allocated in response to shortfalls in existing service provision. We are aiming to increase the medical and psychological resource available within the urgent care system.

The STP has also agreed to fund recurrently 13 support workers and peer workers in Sussex and we are recruiting now for these posts.

Sussex Partnership has developed a set of core standards for urgent care services and we are working to meet these standards within our crisis teams. One main priority is to reduce

barriers between acute and community teams and, to achieve this, we are launching two Quality Improvement projects which include the roll out of an acute-community trusted assessor model.

Sussex Partnership is rolling out the trusted assessor model across all services and strengthening the provision of acute focused support groups across weekends and Bank Holidays.

Its dementia/older life community services are working on delivering a seven-day per week service to maintain people as safely as possible for as long as possible in their home environments. This work should be completed in the next 6-12 months.

There are weekly multi team (acute-community) clinical meetings and SPFT continues to review our estate to consider how to co-locate our community and crisis teams.

We want to improve the way we work with our partners in primary care and the voluntary sector. This will help us support people with serious mental health problems by working more closely with trusted organisations already connected to local people.

This will help us reduce the amount of time it takes people to be discharged from our care, as it will be easier to arrange specialist support for them in the community.

**‘Working with you to improve mental health in West Sussex’  
July 2019**