

## **Sussex CCGs Public Involvement Weekly News Briefing on COVID-19 (15<sup>th</sup> May 2020)**

This briefing will be produced weekly, and is aimed at **patient leads, public members, voluntary and community sector (VCS) leads and community group leads in Sussex**, to support the dissemination of information on coronavirus to our wider communities.

The NHS is committed to keeping our people informed during this crisis, ensuring that our communities have the information they need, in the right format, and at the right time. We know that our patient leaders, VCS and community organisations are all working exceptionally hard to support local people, and that they are key to working together to make sure that our communities have the support and information they need.

### **Local Focus**

#### **New way of working for health and care to benefit our populations**

NHS England and Improvement have announced that the Sussex Health and Care Partnership, which is made up of all health and care organisations across the county, has successfully met the criteria to become an Integrated Care System (ICS). Becoming an ICS will allow our health and care organisations to work closer together to take collective responsibility of the health of our populations.

The NHS Long Term Plan, published in January 2019, set the target for all areas of the country to become an ICS by April 2021.

To achieve ICS status, we had to meet a number of criteria for system-wide working and this has been achieved in advance of the deadline that was set in the NHS Long Term Plan.

This reflects the hard work and significant progress that has been made across our system over the last two years, which has seen improvement in the quality of care, greater integrated ways of working, a stabilisation of the financial position, services being commissioned in a more effective and consistent way, improvements to public engagement and the development of plans at system and local levels across partners.

The collaborative way of working has been beneficial in the way health and care organisations across Sussex have responded to the Covid-19 crisis, with partners working together as part of the ongoing emergency to ensure our populations get the care they need.

As we move forward to what we hope will be a recovery period within the pandemic, we believe we will be in a strong position as a health and care system to meet our key ambitions:

- To create a health and care system that better meets the health and wellbeing needs of our populations.
- To create and continually review new ways of working focusing on helping people to stay healthy for longer and give them greater support to manage their own health when they do become ill.
- To support all aspects of people's lives that contribute to their health and wellbeing.
- To create a system that better involves and supports the people who live across Sussex and the staff who work within our health and care organisations.

## Sussex Clinical Commissioning Groups making decisions during Covid- 19

Like Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) across the country, we are working to protect and care for our population and contribute as much as possible to the NHS response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our priority right now is getting health and care to those who need it, whether that is Covid-19 related or other health care needs.

In order to free up our people to focus on this work, some of our duties have changed for an interim period. This is the same for all CCGs in England, following the NHS declaration of a National Incident in response to coronavirus. CCGs across Sussex have activated their business continuity plan in order to protect our staff, and to ensure that the CCGs can deliver the statutory and core functions needed at this time.

### **What has changed?**

The significant pressures of Covid-19 in the NHS as a whole, on the Sussex health and care system, and on our workforce, are unprecedented.

Making sure our populations receive the right care, have the right information on keeping safe and to ensure our health system is able to cope with increased pressures, is our focus at this time. Therefore, the CCGs have reviewed how we make our decisions in order to allow for the majority of our time and energy to be spent on fighting the pandemic.

In response to national guidance, a fundamental review of the schedule, format and purpose of Governing Body and Committee meetings has been carried out, with a focus on any meetings or

matters of immediate importance to address significant risks, and to keep our core services running, as they need to for the benefit of our patients.

We also need to make rapid decisions at this difficult time, including those related to finances and the capacity of the NHS system to respond the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have therefore changed our decision-making processes temporarily to respond to the unique needs of this situation.

Our **Governing Bodies**, one for each of our three CCGS, will change as follows:

- Meetings will be held virtually
- Meetings will be held monthly, for two hours
- Content will be focused on decisions related to supporting the needs of our health system in Covid- 19
- We are exploring how members of the public can access these meetings ‘virtually’ through online means and hope to have this in place for the next Governing Body meetings.
- Members of the public will be able to view dates of Governing Body meetings and papers on the CCG websites:
  - [NHS East Sussex CCG](#)
  - [NHS Brighton and Hove CCG](#)
  - [NHS West Sussex CCG](#)

## **How can members of the public raise questions and comment?**

While we are in this emergency, we are suspending our usual processes around public questions to be raised at Governing Body meetings. However, we would invite you to email us any comments or any questions on anything outlined in Governing Body papers, and we will respond as soon as possible.

Please note that if Governing Body papers are required in printed format, we can provide these – please let us know.

For questions about our Governing Body papers, or our work on Covid-19, contact us on:

[Sxccg.involvement@nhs.net](mailto:Sxccg.involvement@nhs.net)

### **Our committees**

Due to the current emergency, we have paused our Primary Care Commissioning Committee, which also met in public.

We continue to hold our Quality Committee, as maintaining our duties around quality, safeguarding and related issues is extremely important, especially in a time of great change and challenge. This committee will be held monthly, as a Joint Quality Committee across all three Sussex CCGs.

We will be holding a “Joint Committee of the CCGs”, across all three Sussex CCGs, which will cover finance, performance, governance, risk and planning for recovery after the Covid-19 crisis has passed.

Our Quality and Joint Committee will report into our Governing Body, and these reports will be included in the public Governing Body papers.

## **When will these arrangements be reviewed?**

We will continue to review these temporary arrangements over the coming months. We are currently developing a plan to support the Sussex CCGs as we move away from the crisis, and will review our governance arrangements as part of this work and update in due course.

If you have any questions please contact **Mel Brown**, Company Secretary, West Sussex CCG: [mel.brown5@nhs.net](mailto:mel.brown5@nhs.net)

## **Community Matters**

The Covid-19 Community Connectors Team is working to get the right information to our people and communities across Sussex. The Clinical Chairs for the Sussex NHS Commissioners have produced a video answering some of the top questions being asked by our public, Healthwatch and voluntary and community organisations. You can read more about the questions in the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

[Click here](#) to watch the video of Dr Laura Hill (Clinical Chair of NHS West Sussex CCG), Dr Andy Hodson (Clinical Chair of NHS Brighton and Hove CCG) and Dr David Warden (Clinical Chair of NHS East Sussex CCG) talking through some of the answers.

## Community Hubs

Local Authorities now have the names and contact details of people that are "[Shielded](#)"; this group of people will be contacted directly to ensure they are provided with the help they need.

Community Hubs are up and running in each Local Authority area across Sussex, and offer additional help in coping with coronavirus.

The Community Hubs will focus their help on people who do not have an extreme medical condition but may be vulnerable because they are isolated from help, too unwell to buy food or have other pressing difficulties because of coronavirus.

Community Hubs will also provide a place for people to find out about local volunteering opportunities.

### **Brighton and Hove Community Hubs**

Contact details for the Community Support:

[Brighton and Hove Community Support Website](#)

Brighton and Hove Community Support Telephone: 01273 293117

### **East Sussex Community Hubs**

Contact details for the Community Hubs in East Sussex are on the next page:

[Eastbourne Community Hub Website](#)

Eastbourne Community Hub Telephone: 01323 679722

[Hastings Community Hub Website](#)

Hastings Community Hub Telephone: 01424 451019

[Lewes Community Hub Website](#)

Lewes Community Hub Telephone: 01273 099956

[Rother Community Hub Website](#)

Rother Community Hub Telephone: 01424 787000 (option 4)

[Wealden Community Hub Website](#)

Wealden Community Hub Telephone: 01323 443322

## **West Sussex Community Hubs**

Contact the West Sussex Community Support Team:

[West Sussex Community Support Team Website](#)

West Sussex Support Team Telephone: 033 022 27980  
(Lines are open 8.00am - 8.00pm)

## **If you See Something - Say Something**

The West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership is urging residents to help keep vulnerable children and their families safe by speaking up with any concerns.

The message is simple – if you see or hear something that worries you and you think a child may be at risk, say something by:



- Calling the West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 01403 229900
- Emailing [mash@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:mash@westsussex.gov.uk)
- Making an [online referral](#)
- In emergency situations call the police using 999

The West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership is made up of West Sussex County Council, Sussex Police and NHS professionals working together to protect children and young people.

Find out more about the [West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership](#).

## **Mental Health Awareness Week (18 – 24 May 2020)**

It is even more important to look after your mental health wellbeing and take time to get the support if you need it.

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has expanded the Sussex Mental Healthline – 0300 5000 101 – to provide a 24/7 service to people needing urgent help with their mental health.

MIND - the better mental health charity - have [new arrangements in place](#) for provide mental health support including online video groups to people in place of their usual face to face groups and drop-in sessions.

You can get in touch with the Samaritans if there is anything that's troubling you, no matter how large or small the issue feels.

You can call free by dialling 116 123. A list of [useful organisations who can give advice or specialist support](#) for a specific issue, such as a bereavement or domestic abuse is available online.

You can access the [NHS mental health and wellbeing advice website](#) for self-assessment, audio guides and practical tools. [Every Mind Matters](#) also provides simple tips and advice to start taking better care of your mental health.

## NHS Guidance - Be Clear On Cancer



If you or a loved one is concerned about a potential cancer sign or symptom, please do not delay in contacting your GP. The earlier cancer is found the easier it is to treat.

If you have been referred into hospital for an appointment or treatment for cancer, please do attend and contact your cancer team, if you have worries or concerns about going to hospital.

If you are undergoing cancer treatment or due to start but not sure how this is affected by coronavirus? Your cancer team are still here for you and will be in touch about your treatment plan to put your mind at ease. Your clinician will discuss with you the benefits of starting or continuing your cancer treatment against the increased risks of contracting coronavirus.

## National Updates

Following the announcement from the Prime Minister on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020 a series of new guidance is now available, which you can access below:

- [Staying Alert and Safe social distancing guidance](#)
- Staying Safe [outside your home](#)
- FAQs with advice on [what you can and cannot do when the new changes come into effect](#) (Wednesday 13 May)
- The public is advised to consider wearing face coverings in enclosed public spaces such as shops, trains and buses to help reduce the spread of coronavirus. You can [read more about this here](#)
- The government's [recovery strategy can be read in full here](#)

## Resources

UK SAYS NO MORE is working with Boots UK, Superdrug Pharmacies and independent pharmacies to ensure pharmacy consultancy rooms are a Safe Space for victims of domestic abuse during Covid-19. Resources, including a Safe Space toolkit can be found [here](#).

Please see our FAQs – gathered from comments and questions raised in the community. Section 12 of the FAQs includes a Resources Section which provides information on additional community support available.

## Tell us about your experiences and let us know what you need!

The Covid-19 Community Connectors Team are here to help make sure you, and the people you help and support, get the information and support needed. Please do contact us using the contact details on page 6.

### Healthwatch

You can also raise issues through Healthwatch, which is an independent body responsible for gathering people's views of health and social care services. Contact details are below:

#### Healthwatch Brighton and Hove:

Telephone: 01273 234 040

Email: [info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

Website: [www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/contact-us/](http://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/contact-us/)

#### Healthwatch East Sussex

Telephone: 0333 101 4007

Email: [enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk)

Website: <https://healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/contact/>

#### Healthwatch West Sussex

Telephone: 0300 012 0122

Email: [helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](mailto:helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

Website: <https://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/contact-us>

## Contact Details

If you have any questions, or if you need this brief in an alternative format, please contact the Community Connectors Team:

**Email:** [sxccg.involvement@nhs.net](mailto:sxccg.involvement@nhs.net)

**Telephone:** 0127 323 8725

Deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users can use a Video Relay Service (VRS) called [SignLive](#) (a free app which connects deaf people to a qualified British Sign Language Interpreter before connecting you to one of the Community Connectors Team). This service is currently available every **Thursday from 14:00-16:00**. Please contact the Community Connectors using the details above if this is not convenient.

Let us know what you need to see in this briefing, give us feedback on services and support related to Covid-19 and let us know about issues you are picking up from your communities.

