

**Redesign of substance misuse services.
Response from Solent NHS Trust to Portsmouth Health and Overview Scrutiny Panel.**

Solent NHS Trust would like to provide a response to the proposed commissioning direction in relation to Substance Misuse Services in Portsmouth.

Solent NHS Trust is committed to providing a recovery focused substance misuse service. In fact we currently provide substance misuse services across the rest of Hampshire where the primary focus of the model is on the client's recovery.

As a provider we would like to express our concerns about the current commissioning proposals. We have outlined three areas of concern below.

1. The review process has not been adequate

The first; is that the review process that led to the new model appears to have flaws within it. We have shared the concerns, outline below, directly with Commissioners.

- Consultation was limited and not inclusive of the full client group.
- The audit tool utilised to inform the report focused only on alcohol users; drug users were not included.
- The validity of the commissioner adapted audit tool was not tested.
- The report states that local provision is a potential reason for relapse and yet Baytrees exceeds targets for both alcohol and drug detoxification.
- Successful completions – the figure of 62% is not correct. The service is currently achieving 68% for drug users and 89% for alcohol users.
- The admission figures utilised do not correlate with the data held by the Trust.

2. The complex needs of the client groups may not have been fully considered

It should be noted that this client group can have very complex needs. It is felt that the commissioners may not have not fully understood the complex clinical requirements of this client group. The clinical expertise within Solent NHS Trust was not adequately utilised when developing the model. This is evidenced in the suggestions below.

- Suggesting alternative units that provide treatments that do not comply with NICE guidelines.
- Appearing to not recognise the limitations of alternative providers in terms of available staffing / expertise.
- Placing the weight commissioners have on the outcome of the adapted audit tool.

3. Impact across wider healthcare system

The final concern is the lack of proper consideration for the impact of the change in provision will have for clients across the wider area / healthcare system.

- Non-alignment with NHS Hampshire has implications and associated risks for the sustained delivery of inpatient detoxification services to Hampshire. These were not fully recognised within the report which assessed the likely severity of impact as minor.
- Links with AMH and other substance misuse providers. It is not unusual for clients with substance misuse issues to move localities and / or be involved with mental health services. Current provision ensures that there are clear pathways across the various elements of service delivery. Providing services across Hampshire has highlighted for us how challenging it can be to develop effective links with services within other large organisations. In Portsmouth the interface between mental health and Substance Misuse is significantly better in comparison.

Solent NHS Trust recognises that the commissioners have now given notice on all elements of the Portsmouth Substance Misuse Services, provided by Solent NHS Trust, and are embarking on a retendering process.

Solent NHS Trust is committed to putting the health needs of the local population first. Objective 1 of our 5 year strategic objectives emphasises this – ‘Our services will enable improved health outcomes with a particular focus on areas of known health inequalities.’ Therefore Solent NHS Trust is committed to ensuring that those individuals and families who, in the future, may require support from a substance misuse service receive a safe service no matter who the provider is.

We are concerned that this model will not adequately support local people and we would have liked the opportunity to work more closely with commissioners to redesign the model based on sound evidence and expert clinical opinion that safely meets all the needs of the population of Portsmouth.