

Breakthrough agreement on improving mental health crisis services

Leading representatives from Hampshire's two mental health trusts, two local authorities, commissioners and other partners have agreed to a fundamental change in their approach to improving the delivery of mental health services.

This breakthrough has followed months of careful observations of how teams are currently working, examination of processes and records, and over 150 hours of workshops and consultation involving hundreds of patients/service users, carers and staff discussing how services should look in the future and particularly how people would access community mental health services. The compelling findings of this extensive work have been crucial in establishing the principles and priorities for change, and that much closer working is needed.

Many patients/service users, family members, carers, staff and partners have given their time and energy to talk about their views on current services, being honest about their experiences, and making suggestions for the future. We are grateful for this important work which has been instrumental in making an agreement for the transformation of services.

It is undisputed that the people delivering care, treatment and support within services are hardworking and compassionate, and they strive to provide quality care. However it is clear that the processes and systems they are working within are not always efficient, can provide challenges in meeting demand.

What has been agreed?

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and Solent NHS Trust have agreed to work in closer partnership, alongside local authority and voluntary sector colleagues, supported by commissioners. We recognise that a key theme of the design was improving crisis response, so we will start by bringing the two crisis teams together into a single service model that improves responsiveness and consistency for adults of all ages.

You said	We will
You want a timely response when you need it	Deliver a 24/7 needs led crisis service with response time standards
You want alternatives to admission	Offer home treatment as an alternative to admission Work with our partners to continue to develop community support, such as wellbeing centres and safe spaces
There shouldn't be a post code lottery	Aspire to have the same service for everyone living in Portsmouth and South East Hants
You should be able to self-define your crisis	Open the service to self-referral
Carers need support too	Open the service to carers to call
You want to talk to people who have lived experience and can give you hope	Work to increase peer support in the service
You want staff to listen and you want to be empowered to look after yourself	Support our staff to develop skills to help you achieve this
You want us to look after our staff	Design a programme of staff support and development

This is the first time that Solent and Southern Health have had an agreement to work together on such a service at this scale.

Clearly, a great deal of work is needed. There will be some changes that can be made swiftly and others will take more time, but there is a consensus that this approach will make a significant difference to the people we support.

This is the beginning of a large scale programme of changes and improvements. We are working to ensure that good governance and robust project management is in place so that our progress will be tracked and measured. We aspire to go live with our combined crisis service by Summer 2019.

We are committed to the principle of coproduction and we will build on the inclusive approach to service change that we have already started. We will continue to communicate and welcome being held to account.

ENDS