



# Community Services Commissioning Strategy

**2009-2013**

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## Executive Summary

1. The 2008 NHS “Next Stage Review” and the “Transforming Community Services” (TCS) programme, which was launched in January 2009, set out a vision to put quality at the heart of the NHS and made a public commitment to creating modern, responsive, personalised, productive, community services of a consistently high quality. They also re-iterated the national focus on transforming community services to enable reduced admissions into hospital, increased care closer to home and the benefits associated with these.
2. Significant developments and investments have been made across Eastern and Coastal Kent over the past few years to develop and improve community services in both health and social care. The development of the PCT’s Strategic Commissioning Plan (SCP), other more specific commissioning strategies and Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) intentions all support community services. However, a number of issues and challenges remain which are associated with the unique needs of the people of east Kent.
3. This strategy sets out the PCT’s commissioning intentions to transform community services in NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent (NHS ECK) and forms part of its response to the national Transforming Community Services programme. It describes both the overall vision for what community services will look like by 2013 and the key principles for how the PCT will commission in order to meet this vision.
4. The strategy describes the PCT’s aspiration in developing approaches to shifting services from acute (hospital) into the community that are outcome based, with providers leading the way to develop innovative and cost effective ways of improving the quality of services and delivering better integrated care. The definition of Community Services is that it covers all current providers, including the independent sector, voluntary sector and the provider arm of the PCT.
5. The strategy has been developed through consultation with local doctors, colleagues from Kent County Council, other commissioning teams, the clinical directorate and teams who look after functions such as estates and finance. The PCT also worked with Kent LINK to conduct a significant citizen engagement exercise across a wide range of age and ethnic backgrounds. This level of engagement will be maintained through the lifetime of this strategy.

6. The strategic commissioning principles for transforming community services over the next five years are:
  - *Commission more services in local community settings, ensuring they promote personalisation and independence and are responsive to the public.*
  - *Commission services according to need, using locality health and social care data to reduce inequalities.*
  - *Improve the integration and communication across community services and with all other areas of health and social care.*
  - *Increase health practitioners' and the public's knowledge of services available in the community to enable them to make informed referrals and choices.*
  - *Embed education and prevention within all community services and systematically commission evidence-based health promotion services.*
  - *Ensure that clinically-led quality, safety, efficiency and value for money are at the heart of all community services through a focus on measurable outcomes.*
7. The community services strategy will impact across all other areas of health and social care and therefore needs to remain aligned with other commissioning strategies and plans. It will be embedded within the PCT's commissioning cycle so that all teams understand their role in delivering this strategy.
8. In the past seven years the NHS has seen unprecedented growth in investment, which has resulted in improved services and reductions in waiting lists for healthcare. Times are changing and healthcare organisations are facing more challenges, both as commissioners and providers of services. The PCT will look for new opportunities to continue the development and improvement of services but believes that there will be a reduction in real terms in funding from 2011 onwards. More robust commissioning and performance systems will therefore need to be established to demonstrate effective and efficient delivery of service provision, value for money and continuous service improvement.
9. The strategy sets out how commissioners will aim to buy high quality services from productive and efficient providers. The action plan for the strategy focuses on improving existing services and better using current funding, rather than assuming new investment will be available to develop future services. The transformation of community services will therefore be achieved through the delivery of four major streams of work, as follows:
  - *Understanding the services we commission and informing people about them*
  - *Embedding the community services strategy within the core commissioning activities*

- *Commissioning new services in a more effective way*
- *Ensuring continuous improvement and value for money*

10. A Primary and Community Care Commissioning Steering Group has been established to manage and oversee the delivery of the strategy, reporting to the PCT's Commissioning Strategy Committee (CSC) and Commissioning Delivery Group (CDG) and remaining aligned with all other Commissioning Steering Groups.

11. This strategy sets out the PCT's high level commissioning intentions and future direction for community services, providing a focus to both current and prospective providers on reducing costs, improving performance and ensuring better services for the public.