

# Infant, Children and Young People Strategy 2019-2024

**Keeping infants, children and young people at the heart of what we do**

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# Introduction

In 2019, East Kent Hospitals published the Infant, Children and Young People (ICYP) Strategy. This strategy was the start of a 12-month programme of continuous improvement for all services that a child or young person could use within our hospitals- from the children's ward, to Emergency Department and surgery.

The Children's Care Group was realigned in 2021, with the leadership structure comprising of clinician's professionally supported by operational management teams with the sole purpose of focusing on children's health. We remain committed to ensuring infants, children, young people and their advocates are involved in our work, that we fully understand children's health needs, supporting the professionals who work with them and improving the health of children in East Kent. We hope that this mid-term review will enable us to consider the current progress and align our continued journey to improvement.

ICYP for this strategy is defined as infants, children, young people and their advocates where appropriate. This includes parents, carers, guardians, families, friends, health professionals, support workers- plus others.

## Our Vision

**To provide a holistic service that puts our infants, children and young people at the heart of what we do. The service will be delivered by a well led, passionate and engaged team who seek innovation, which is financially viable and work in partnership across the service.**

## Strategic Aims

1. Children, young people, parents and carers will be treated with respect and given support and information to enable them to understand and cope with illness or injury and treatment needed. They will be encouraged to be active partners in decisions about their healthcare and where possible exercise choice.
2. Children and young people will receive care that is integrated and co-ordinated around their needs and that of their family.
3. Children and young people will receive appropriate high-quality evidence-based care, developed through clinical governance systems and delivered by staff with the right set of skills and competencies.
4. Care will be delivered in an appropriate location and in an environment that is safe and well suited to the age and stage of development of the child and young person.
5. Children, young people, parents and carers will participate in designing NHS services that are readily accessible, respectful, empowering, follow best practice and provide effective response to their needs.

## Enhancing Core Values with Strategic Themes

In October 2018, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected services for children and young people provided at the William Harvey and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospitals. In its report, the CQC recognises the consistently high numbers of families who would recommend the care they have received at our hospitals to friends and family. This external assurance reporting gives an opportunity to reflect on the overall quality, safety and offer for families who require care, diagnoses and treatment at our hospitals.

In linking with strategic themes, the Children's Care Group have focused on the requirements of Paediatric Services in line with:

- **Quality of care and patient safety** e.g. thorough regimes of daily safety checks in paediatric areas,
- **Participation and engagement improving the environment children are cared for within**, particularly in our emergency departments,
- **Workforce development** e.g., recruitment of more specialist children's staff, re-training staff in recognising and responding to early warning signs that a child may be becoming more unwell,
- **Business sustainability** e.g., strategic planning with children's services seen in parity with adult services.

Together, and working with our partner organisations, young people and families, we will continue to transform the culture of children's services across all areas of the hospital. We want experiences of care to be consistently excellent, with the needs of children and young people at the heart of every area of practice and everything we do.

Every child deserves excellent care in hospital, and we remain committed to transforming services for children, young people and their families.

## **Listening to Children and Young People**

Children (0-19 years old) form 24.1% of the population in Kent (ONS population at Kent County Council 2016), alongside with data that 1 in 5 of the UK's population is aged 10-25 years.

Over the last 10 years, the profile of young people's health has been raised, with an improved understanding about children and young people's needs. As such all healthcare should be done in partnership with children and young people. We believe that young people have a right to good health and high-quality accessible healthcare.

Using the skills of specialist children's care professionals, we have collected feedback from patients accessing our services in order to identify the thoughts of children and young people accessing acute paediatric services:

- **Give us things to do to take our mind off being poorly**
- **We want a playground**
- **Talk to us as well as our parents**
- **Keep us safe**
- **I may be small but I am important**
- **We want to be in a separate children's area.**

This strategy presents the challenge from children and young people to the Trust, to invest in making a difference for all children living in East Kent. The Trust must advocate for those that are not able to speak, champion equality for all children and ensure that the voices of the most disadvantaged are heard.

## Understanding Children's Health Care Requirements

This Children and Young People's Strategy is set within the context of emerging health and wellbeing integrated care systems. An integrated care system is when all organisations involved in health and social care work together in different, more joined-up ways. The focus is on providing care in a way that benefits patients, and this case, children and young people - not what is easiest for organisations. We remain committed to working with all statutory providers and agencies that contribute to children's good health and wellbeing.

In 2019, Health Watch Kent and Medway reviewed the NHS Long Term Plan in relation to Children & Young People Services. The findings of the joint report matched, in part the findings from children and young people attending for care at East Kent Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust:

- Access to internet and age- appropriate information,
- Good food and accommodation,
- Staff with right training to care for us,
- Cared for in a young people friendly environment
- Choices

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust continue to work with the thoughts shared from our children and young people. We believe that the opportunity of involvement with children and families will make children and services safer.

## **Making Family and Carer Contact Count**

When a child has ill health, family life is turned upside down and healthcare becomes more precious than ever. Having expert professional advice enables families and carers to be supported at the most critical time, giving practical and emotional support, as needed over the 24/ 7 time for and for as long as is needed.

We support the whole family including parents, carers, the unwell child, brothers, sisters and grandparents. Support is hugely varied and depends on the needs of the family. It can include:

- listening to a family's fears and anxieties
- helping to explain illnesses, diagnosis and treatments
- continuous specialist medical and nursing care during hospital stays and outpatient consultations
- support through specialist pathways of care

### **We have listened to parents, families and carers' who have identified areas of need:**

- Consistent information from all staff
- Help with parking costs
- Enough seats to be able to sit at the cot side with our baby
- Enough accommodation so that we don't have to leave our child
- To be actively involved in their care.

We recognize the significant contribution that carers and families make in the service improvement of child health care and believe their involvement is critical in shaping and influencing the provision they receive.

## **Service Planning and Delivery**

The Strategy sets out the priorities for core business themes for Paediatric Services across East Kent Hospitals. This involves not only the Children's Care Group, but all services that touch the lives of children requiring acute health care in acute services.

It is expected that services will be delivery smoothly, which are appropriate to the age and needs of the child or young person, with sufficient numbers in the workforce who have the right skills that offer evidenced based interventions. In addition, clear care pathways will be seamless with services and organisations working to the highest standards both within and across the health and social care economy.

We have worked with services across the Trust and the slide above acknowledges the specific contributes required from the key acute services:

- **Ambulatory Care**
- **Child Therapy Services**
- **Community Services**
- **Inpatients**
- **Medicine**
- **Neonatal Services**
- **Outpatients**
- **Surgery**

## In Summary

In the creation of this strategy, a 5- year plan was considered. Starting in 2019, the impact of Covid 19 could not have been anticipated as a significant mid-term impact. East Kent Hospitals remain committed to delivering the strategic objectives set, yet we recognize that national priorities will also need to be considered.

Alongside national guidance and Royal College guidance, the recovery plan will seek to realign this strategy against the Reset, Restore and Recover principles described by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2020).

RCPCH state *“In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have an opportunity to reset how we plan and deliver healthcare for children and young people. We have the opportunity to think about how we harness innovation and learning so that it can be shared and maintained and to use this as a basis to train and educate our paediatricians and broader child health workforce”*.

We want all babies, children and young people using our services to:

- **Have the best possible start – understanding the importance that the first 1000 days (from conception to early childhood) has on lifelong health and wellbeing**
- **Be supported to reach their potential**
- **Feel listened to and cared for as individuals**
- **Feel supported and empowered to gain independence in managing their own health & wellbeing**

Our fundamental strategy remains as the national agenda:

- **Achieve economic wellbeing**
- **Be healthy**
- **Stay safe**
- **Enjoy and achieve**
- **Make a positive contribution**



# Useful websites

[British Association of Paediatric Nurses](#)

[The Association of Chief Children's Nurses](#)

[Association For Young People's Health](#)

[British Association of Perinatal Medicine](#)

[Children's Commissioner](#)

[Family Action](#)

[Healthwatch Kent](#)

[National Network of Parent Carer Forums](#)

[NSPCC – National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children](#)

[Neonatal Nurses Association](#)

[NHS England and NHS Improvement](#)

[Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#)

## Additional Reference Sources

- Healthwatch (Kent and Medway). A Joint Report - NHS Long Term Plan Children & Young People Services. What matters most to people in Kent & Medway about Children's Services (2019).
- NHS England. Best Start in Life. Healthy Child Programme.
- NHS England. NHS Long Term Plan (2019).
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. Facing the Future- Standards for Acute General Paediatric Services (2015).
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. Reset, Restore and Recover – RCPCH Principles for Recovery (2020).