

11 May 2020

Sussex awarded Integrated Care System status following significant progress

Dear colleague,

We are pleased to be able to write to let you know that we have received confirmation from NHS England and Improvement that the Sussex Health and Care Partnership has successfully achieved Integrated Care System (ICS) status.

This means we will be able to progress further the collaborative way of working we have established across health and care over the last few years and develop a more formal and structured way of working across the system over the long term.

While we have received the news within the context of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, which is clearly the priority focus for us all at this time, we feel it is important that we take a moment to recognise the hard work that has gone into getting us to this point and how it will benefit our system in the future.

Becoming an ICS will allow our health and care organisations to work closer together to take collective responsibility of the health of our populations. This new way of working will be based on the priorities and outcomes that matter to local communities and will allow all organisations to work together towards the same plan to improve health and wellbeing.

We will now be working with all partners to ensure we have effective ways of working and clear governance in place to bring the most benefit for our populations, staff and organisations. This will build on the partnership working we have been developing at different levels – Sussex-wide, at a ‘place’ level around our local authority footprints, and at a more local ‘neighbourhood’ level. This will involve us operating in a more collaborative way and having shared goals, while continuing to work within the statutory framework and accountability of our partner organisations.

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 for all the country to be covered by ICSs by April 2021.

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 develop of plans at system and local levels across partners.

This is testament to the commitment from all partners to working together to improve the health and care for our populations and we would like to thank all those who have worked so hard to help us achieve this.

We are currently seeing tangible benefits from this collaborative approach in our system-wide management of the Covid-19 crisis. You will be aware that all partners are working closely together to ensure our populations get the care they need at this time of national emergency and the relationships and joined-up ways of working we have developed has played a key role in helping us manage what is an extremely difficult situation in the best possible way.

As you 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.

We would like to thank you for your support and we wish you well at what is an unprecedented time for us all.

Yours sincerely

Bob Alexander
Independent Chair
Sussex Health and Care Partnership

Adam Doyle
Senior Responsible Officer
Sussex Health and Care Partnership