Purpose
To raise awareness of the Health Based Place of Safety work stream of the London wide crisis care programme and to note the next steps in engaging at a local level around the preferred option for Health Based Place of Safety sites in London.

This work is being co-ordinated at a London level by the Healthy London Partnership and their recent briefing on this issue for Health and Well Being Board Chairs is attached to this report at Annex 1.

Key Points

1. The Better Health for London report (2014) in line with the National Crisis Care Concordat, the Mental Health Five Year Forward View and more recently the NHS Five Year Forward View next steps has put the spotlight on mental health crisis care services so that we deliver high-quality, coordinated care for some of the most vulnerable Londoners.

2. The difference in care for people with mental health issues as opposed to physical ones is still disproportionate and our service users and all partners realise that the status quo isn’t good enough. Service users are often denied access to Health Based Place of Safety sites and A&E departments, left in the back of police cars and ambulances, or transferred unnecessarily between A&E departments and mental health trusts due to a lack of holistic, integrated care.

3. Changes are also essential if we are to ensure that the NHS in London is prepared for the Mental Health Act legislation changes that will come into place in the autumn. Fundamental changes include reductions in detention time from 72 to 24 hours and an increased scope in where section 136 can be used. Following recent multi-agency training workshops held at all London Mental Health Trusts, staff are aware of the legislative changes that are coming. However, there are concerns that the crisis care system isn’t ready and does not have sufficient capacity or processes in place to respond to these changes, especially if changes are likely to mean an increase in people being detained under section 136.

4. Throughout 2016 a London wide section 136 pathway and specification for Health Based Place of Safety sites was developed and endorsed by all partners across the crisis care system. This involved significant engagement across London, led by Healthy London Partnership. Over 300 service users from across London were involved in the development of the guidance as well as key stakeholders from London’s acute and mental health trusts, London Ambulance Service, London’s three police forces, local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Proposal

5. The key components of the new model of care include:
• Ensuring a pan-London approach to care where individuals are taken to the nearest place of safety from their pick-up location (despite where they reside) and following assessment, if necessary, transferred promptly to inpatient services at their local mental health trust;

• Ensuring system transparency around capacity at Health Based Place of Safety sites, as well as robust escalation processes when capacity is full (in line with the NHSE (London) ‘compact’ due to go live this Autumn);

• A dedicated, 24/7 staffed service at London’s Health Based Place of Safety sites;

• Increased physical health competencies at Health Based Place of Safety sites to ensure unnecessary referrals to A&E departments and more timely, integrated care;

• Streamlined pathways between A&E departments and Health Based Place of Safety sites, for when individuals require more intensive physical health treatment, including the use of telephone triage, robust information transfers and timely physical health assessments in the A&E department.

6. In South West London there is an existing Health Based Place of Safety site in Tooting at South West London and St George’s Hospital’s Mental Health Trust’s Springfield site. The proposal is for this site to remain, ensuring that the key components of the new model of care are met.

Consultations

7. It has been agreed that mental health STP programmes will lead on further engagement in their area over the next six months, in order to come to a preferred option for Health Based Place of Safety sites in London. This will include sharing the model of care and pathway changes with local stakeholders, including senior and operational staff at mental health trusts, commissioners, Directors of Adult Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Boards, HealthWatch as well as discussing proposals at local boards and forums.

8. A South West London stakeholder event to discuss the proposed new model of care is being scheduled for 18th October 2017

Background papers

None

Author of report – Tonia Michaelides Managing Director Kingston and Richmond CCGs
Email tonia.michaelides@kingstonccg.nhs.uk / Telephone: 020 8734 3006