

Subject:	Ambulance to Hospital Handover: Update		
Date of Meeting:	25 May 2016		
Report of:	Head of Law		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The item provides committee members with an update on the current situation regarding the handover of patients from ambulances to staff at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee considers and comments on the information provided by South East Coast Ambulance Trust: SECamb (**Appendix 1**);
- and,
- 2.2 that the committee considers whether (as suggested by SECamb) it wishes to schedule regular progress updates on system-wide work to improve handover performance that is being co-ordinated by the Sussex System Resilience Group.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In recent years there have been significant increases both in the numbers of people attending hospital for emergency care, and in 999 and 111 emergency ambulance calls. This has been the case both nationally and locally.
- 3.2 This increase in activity puts pressure on the entire urgent care system, but of particular concern is 'handover': the point where ambulance staff transfer patients to the care of hospital staff. When things are very busy, this process of transfer may not function effectively, meaning that ambulance operatives have to stay with their patients rather than getting back on the road. It also means that patients may have to wait in sub-optimal conditions for assessment and treatment. There tend to be particular difficulties at hospitals where there is little or no opportunity to flex the physical capacity of A&E units, although handover problems also relate to staffing levels in emergency departments.

- 3.3 Although there are handover problems across the region, they have been particularly acute at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH). The HOSC has examined this issue previously, most recently at its March 2016 meeting. At this meeting, representatives of South East Coast Ambulance Trust (SECamb) and of Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals Trust (BSUH) told members that the RSCH was experiencing severe problems with handover.
- 3.4 Representatives of both SECamb and BSUH have been asked to provide a verbal update on this situation to members at the May 2016 HOSC meeting. A written update from SECamb is also included as **Appendix 1**. In this update SECamb requests that HOSC members consider whether to receive regular progress updates on the system-wide work that is underway to improve handover performance. This work is being co-ordinated by the Sussex System Resilience Group.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 None to this report for information.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 None to this report for information.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the update on handover provided by SECamb and by BSUH and to determine how to further scrutinise this issue. SECamb has suggested that the HOSC regularly receives updates on the system-wide improvement work being co-ordinated by the Sussex System Resilience Group.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 None to this report for information.

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 None to this report for information.

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 None to this report for information.

Sustainability Implications:

7.4 None to this report for information.

Any Other Significant Implications:

7.5 None identified.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1 Information provided by South East Coast Ambulance Trust (SECAMB)

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None

