



Essex Partnership University  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Essex County Council Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee

**7 March 2024**

**EPUT**

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# 1. About EPUT



- Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) provides **community physical and mental health services** to the populations of Essex, Thurrock and Southend as well as in Luton, Bedfordshire and Suffolk
- We operate across **three Integrated Care Systems:** Hertfordshire & West Essex, Mid & South Essex and Suffolk & North East Essex
- At any one time, we will be **caring for around 100,000 people**
- **We are a large employer with around 7,500 staff** working across over 200 sites as well as in people's homes, schools, GP practices and health clinics
- **We provide training placements for healthcare students with universities and colleges**, including the University of Essex and Anglia Ruskin University
- **We work with a wide range of partners** in statutory and non-statutory services across Essex and further afield

## 2. Our vision, purpose, strategic objectives and values

### New strategy launched in early 2023

- Aims to improve services for patients, carers, their families and the wider community
- Developed through wide ranging engagement and informed by what matters most to local people

### OUR VISION

To be the leading health and wellbeing service in the provision of mental health and community care.



### Four strategic objectives

We will deliver safe, high quality integrated care services

We will work with our partners to make our services better

We will enable each other to be the best we can be

We will help our communities to thrive



# 3. Working to provide the safest care possible

## Safety First, Safety Always Strategy

- Safety strategy approved by the Trust Board in January 2021 and updated in 2023
- **Now in its final year - leaves a legacy of significant improvement**
- Remaining focus is on:
  - Improved evidence tracking of benefits realised through new ways of working
  - Continued use of Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) and promoting our role in supporting other NHS trusts to implement the framework
  - Rollout of new standard operating procedures across all service areas
  - Continuing to get the basics rights and upholding the highest professional standards
  - Evidencing the 'feedback loop' from patients, families and partners in our improvement work

## Quality of Care Framework takes the strategy's work forward

- Agreed by our Trust Board in December 2023 and launches in April 2024
  - **Provides a holistic focus on safety, effectiveness and experience of care - co-created with people who use our services alongside families, carers and colleagues**
  - Helps us build an organisational approach for quality of care, co-created with what our people have told us quality of care means to them, along with the National Quality of Care standards
  - Keeps our focus on delivering on the NHS Long Term Plan, local Integrated Care Partnership strategies and the Southend, Essex and Thurrock All-Age Mental Health Strategy
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## 4. Care Quality Commission inspections and report

**CQC identified 73 actions we must take** following the most recent inspections in November 2022 and January 2023

**We introduced a new approach to responding to CQC inspections and reports** with actions locally agreed and owned by staff

**Our quality improvement plan has 275 sub-actions** we must complete to fully address the CQC requirements

**Over two thirds of these sub-actions are complete** and going through our check and challenge process

**Many improvements made**, including in medicines management, data quality, ward safety and staffing levels

**Positive feedback received** in recent CQC visits to adult wards

- **Trust Executive Team has full oversight and scrutiny of our Quality Improvement Plan** – including weekly review and detailed monthly report
- **External oversight of progress** – reporting to Mid and South Essex ICB and providing updates for local authorities
- **Significant focus on sustained learning** – using a quality assurance framework to share and act on findings
- **New Quality Assurance Framework** – including a cause analysis tool to fully identify and address root causes

# 5. CQC key priorities and progress

- **Trust Executive Team has full oversight and scrutiny of the plan** – weekly review and detailed monthly report
- **External oversight of progress** – reporting to Mid and South Essex ICB and updates planned for local authorities
- **Significant focus on sustained learning** – using a quality assurance framework to share and act on findings
- **New Quality Assurance Framework** – including a cause analysis tool to fully identify and address root causes

**Addressing sleeping on duty** – supporting staff to follow correct policies and procedures

**Reducing vacancies**  
–over 1,700 new colleagues joined in 2023

**New shared electronic patient record** - working with system partners to confirm preferred supplier

**Progressing our Time to Care programme** – freeing staff to spend more time with patients and people who use our services

**Introducing clinical site managers in inpatient units** – providing clinical leadership and support to staff and patients

# 6. The Lampard Inquiry

## THE LAMPARD INQUIRY

- **Baroness Kate Lampard submitted revised Terms of Reference to the Department of Health and Social Care in December 2023** – we expect confirmation of these revised terms to be announced soon
  - **We remain committed to working with the Inquiry** to deliver on the scope and terms of reference that are now established - it is vital that patients, families and carers get the answers they deserve
  - Our approach continues to be based on **co-operation and transparency**
  - **Independent support is available for patients, families and carers** who want to give evidence and/or who are affected by the content of the Inquiry
  - **Comprehensive support is in place to inform and encourage staff to give evidence**, and to help them with any personal impact they experience as a result
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## 7. Other key challenges and issues

### **Forthcoming inquests**

- A number of inquests into the deaths of people who passed away whilst in our care are scheduled to be heard by Coroners in Essex, Southend and Thurrock over the coming months

### **Demand for our services**

- Inpatient bed occupancy rates
- Continued focus on reducing inappropriate out of area placements
- Continued impact of industrial action
- Maintaining current positive trajectories in staff recruitment and retention

### **National reviews into mental health services**

- Care Quality Commission special review into services at Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – reports end March 2024
  - Healthcare Services Safety Investigations Body investigation into mental health settings – reports end of 2024
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## 8. Our services

### Safely managing demand for our services

#### Making best use of our inpatient mental health beds

- Ensuring all admissions are therapeutically led and outcome based
- Sustaining improved, supportive staff cultures on our wards
- Maintaining safe levels of bed occupancy
- Reducing length of stay and working with system partners to manage complex cases

#### Working with system partners to support people in mental health crisis

- **24/7 mental health urgent care department** at Basildon Hospital
- **Joint mental health response vehicles** in partnership with East of England Ambulance service
- **Ambulance control centre mental health practitioner roles**
- **New mental health crisis sanctuaries**
- **Street triage, homeless support and tenancy support services** for vulnerable communities



# 9. Our people

## Recruiting, retaining and supporting staff

- **We welcomed over 1,700 new colleagues in 2023**, including over 220 from overseas
- **Our turnover rate is at 9.1 per cent**, the lowest since before the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Overall vacancy rates are down to 8.7 per cent**, half of the rate in June 2022
- **Vacancy rates in our inpatient units have fallen to 10 per cent** from an all-time high of 40 per cent in 2020
- We are on track to have **no inpatient unit vacancies by the end of 2024**
- **We have more colleagues on track to join us** – our current pipeline has:
  - **80 registered nurses** with job offers or a booked start date
  - **53 healthcare assistants** with job offers or a booked start date
  - **42 allied health professionals** with job offers or a booked start date
  - **144 student nurses** forecast to join this year
- Working with system partners on **joint recruitment campaigns**



# 10. Involving our patients, families and communities

## Expanded Lived Experience team

- Around 250 people with direct or family experience of using EPUT services who support strategy developments, change programmes, service improvements and funding bids

## New working in partnership with people and communities strategy

- Agreed by our Board in November 2023

## Other initiatives and activities

- Developing our **lived experience framework**
- Developing a **service user research centre**
- Leading co-production in the development of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) mental health strategy
- Our **inpatient peer support team** now has ten members with lived experience
- The **Essex Mental Health Family Group Conferencing Service** supports adults aged 18 to 65 who use secondary mental health services to build trusted support networks
- New **dedicated support network for families and carers of people with an eating disorder**





# 11. Welcoming new Board members

**We have welcomed four new members to our Board this year**



**Ann Sheridan**  
Chief Nursing Officer



**Diane Leacock**  
Non-Executive Director



**Jenny Raine**  
Non-Executive Director



**Ruth Jackson**  
Associate Non-Executive  
Director



## 12. Other recent news from EPUT services

- Our **therapeutic education department at the St Aubyn Centre Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit in Colchester** was recently rated **Outstanding** following an Ofsted inspection in late 2023
- Our **rough sleepers initiative** covering six districts with partner organisations **helped over 1,000 people in 2023**
- **A former soldier has spoken about his positive experience of the NHS Op COURAGE veterans support programme** which EPUT leads across the east of England region
- We celebrated **National Apprenticeship Week in early February** by featuring several past and present apprentices to encourage more applicants
- **We joined partner organisations for recruitment events:**
  - Harlow College NHS student career showcase
  - Essex Cares Ltd event for autistic people and people with learning disabilities
- An **EPUT healthcare assistant has been shortlisted in the national Health Hero Awards** for work to tackle elder abuse

