

Joint Working Arrangements

Continuing and Complex Children's Care
January 2026

Key teams involved in managing partnership arrangements:

- Hampshire County Council (HCC) Children's Services Department – Joint Funding and Commissioning Team
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department
- NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB) – Continuing and Complex Care Team

These teams work together and across systems to facilitate joint planning and funding to meet the needs of children and young people aged 0-18 years, including children in care (CIC), and supporting transition to adulthood.

The teams are responsible for:

- Liaising with front-line professionals across all systems to facilitate a joint holistic plan to meet the child's individual needs.
- Reviewing joint packages of care, placements, and S117 aftercare needs.
- Attending network meetings including the Hampshire Children's Complex Integrated Resource Allocation Panel (IRAP) which provides the governance for partnership working arrangements and is held monthly.

Decision making process

We have jointly designed a **decision-making process flow** (live model) which:

- Outlines the requirement for a **multi-disciplinary approach** and appropriate senior sign off.
- Sets requirements for a **co-authored holistic care plan** to meet the child's individual needs.
- Outlines the **appropriate pathways** to stream the child's case through:

Continuing Care	Section 117	Complex Lives	Individual Funding Request (IFR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A checklist is submitted to Children's Continuing Care (CCC) for consideration of a full assessment using the Decision Support Tool (DST).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 117 aftercare – legal duty of aftercare for individuals discharged from certain forms of compulsory detention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A complex lives MDT is held if the child is not covered by these routes but still has an unmet health need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submitted to the IFR panel by the child's NHS clinician.

Roles and Responsibilities

Organisation	Responsibilities
Children's Services Department Hampshire County Council	<p>Usually lead commissioner for children requiring a system approach.</p> <p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Searching for an appropriate placement• Assess suitability• Requesting appropriate funding via scheme of delegation (once placement identified as suitable). <p>Performed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Placement and Quality Team for residential placements.• The social work teams for community placements/packages of care.
Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department Hampshire County Council	<p>Responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessing the child's individual educational aims, needs, and provision required to access education if their needs cannot be met through ordinarily available provision in education settings.• Producing and reviewing an Education, Health and Care Plan if the child meets this threshold.• Contributing to the joint holistic care plan to meet the child's educational needs as part of their placement.
All Age Continuing Care (AACC) NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB	<p>ICB AACC support joint commissioning when HCC are the lead broker by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinical oversight assurance.• Care planning (alongside other clinical colleagues involved with the Child/Young Person (CYP)). <p>ICB AACC may lead on specific commissioning for joint funded CYP, with support from AACC brokerage, commissioning teams, and clinical case practitioners.</p>

Roles and Responsibilities continued

Organisation	Responsibilities
Joint responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build relationships for successful joint working.• Create a joint holistic care plan and support joint decision making on meeting the child's individual needs.• Work jointly to ensure the approved provider meets the young person's individual needs and plan a smooth transition into placement.• An emergency timeline can be implemented to ensure the young person is in a place of safety/out of hospital. Such as Ridgeway House, 28 day stay or sometimes involves using a provider with a crisis response and then transitioning to a longer-term provider.

Placement commissioning – availability and suitability

Challenge	Opportunities
Availability	<p>The HCC Sufficiency Strategy review (2024) indicated that demand currently exceeds capacity.</p> <p>ICB continue to work as part of the Regional Care Cooperative, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand regional demand and capacity.• Develop risk assessment tools to inform providers.• Implement workforce recruitment, retention and skills framework programmes. <p>Two new local placements open in the last 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hockley House - Jointly run and funded by Hampshire County Council and NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB, it is the first children's residential home in the county to combine social care, health care, and education in a single setting. The home has been developed in response to a growing number of children and young people both locally and nationally, whose needs do not meet the criteria for hospital treatment or for secure social care accommodation but who nevertheless require a high level of support, due to their significant mental health needs, neurodiversity issues, challenging behaviours or social and family breakdown. Staffed by both health and social care professionals, the home will deliver intensive therapeutic provision to children and young people aged between 12 and 18. Placements will typically last six to nine months and will focus on supporting young people to develop their independence and life skills, and to move successfully back home, on to another placement or independent living. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ridgeway House - a new short-stay residential unit located in Southampton. This service is a shared initiative between Southampton City Council, Hampshire IOW ICB, Hampshire IOW Healthcare, CAMHS Provider Collaborative and Hampshire County Council, designed to support children and young people aged 13–18 who are experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties. Ridgeway House provides a safe, therapeutic environment for up to four children, offering short-term placements (average stay of 28 days) during periods of crisis or transition. The service aims to stabilise young people and support their return home or to an appropriate placement, through coordinated work with families, education providers, and professional networks. Key features include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-disciplinary support from mental health, therapy, nursing, and social care staff• Individualised care and discharge planning• Continued education via school attendance or virtual provision• Family engagement and community integration• Purpose-built facility with ensuite bedrooms and therapeutic spaces

Placement commissioning – availability and suitability

Challenge	Opportunities
Suitability	<p>Continue existing programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinical quality visits from a health perspective, jointly where possible.• Joint work with the Independent Futures Team assuring a smooth transition to adult services.• HCC children's residential care tender awarding in 2025/26.• ICB CYPCC domiciliary care tender (CYP). <p>ICB continue to work as part of the Regional Care Cooperative, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Influence and shape market framework and suitability.• Implement regional programmes such as workforce and skills frameworks. <p>Support clinical placement assurance to support placement suitability searches.</p>

Joint actions – to increase placement availability and suitability

Programme	Actions
Complex Lives programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HCC and ICB have appointed Complex Lives posts to lead the operational and strategic response to children with complex lives.
Complete tenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of HCC residential care tender and ICB CYPCC domiciliary care tender.
Develop local pathways for poor emotional and mental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop local pathways for example:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complex Support Registers (CSR) to enable MDT support outside the Dynamic Support Register (DSR).• Mental Health practitioners embedded in family help model. Enabling professional consultation, advice, and MDT access earlier.
Support clinical assessment of placement suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support HCC placement team to determine complex lives placement suitability from a clinical perspective, especially in crisis by providing clinical assurance and advice.
Develop understanding of MHA sectioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop understanding of the mental health act sectioning requirements and guidance on admission and discharge where there is no safe place to reside in the community.