SE19 SEND Children's Continuing Care Network Meeting
Notes of meeting
Monday 28th September 2026

Attendance

Name	Role	Local Authority
Amanda Brierley	All Age Continuing Care and Section 117 Team Manager	Wokingham Borough Council
Anne Bryson	Children & Young People's Continuing Care Lead	NHS Surrey and Sussex ICB
Aparna Belapurkar		NHS Kent and Medway ICB
Bethan Mabe	Commissioning Support Officer	Brighton & Hove City Council
Catherine Smith	Head of Service	Buckinghamshire Council
Graham Davis	Designated Social Care Officer, Family Help and Protection	Brighton & Hove City Council
Heidi Payne	Head of Children and Young People, AACC	Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust / Kent and Medway
James Joyce	Service Manager, Children and Young People with Disabilities	Reading Council
Jane Taylor	Service Manager, Health and CVS Children's Commissioning	West Sussex County Council
Jenna Austin	EHCP Provision Manager	Milton Keynes
Jo Kent	Complex Commissioning and Joint Funding Manager	Hampshire County Council
Keir Fuller	Children with Disabilities Occupational Therapy Team Manager	Surrey County Council
Kelli Scott	Head of Service, Children with Disabilities, and Designated Social Care Officer	Wokingham Borough Council
Kevin Kasaven		Kent County Council
Liam Doherty	Continuing Healthcare Specialist	Achieving for Children / RBWM
Lin Ferguson - **Chair**	Executive Director Children's Services and Education	Achieving for Children / RBWM
Sonia Dayal	Project support	SESLIP
Sue Kocaman	Project lead	SESLIP
Kshipra Moore	AACC Clinical Commissioning Manager	NHS Kent and Medway ICB
Lisa Bowman	Service Manager, Children with Disabilities	Surrey County Council
Liz Hall	Associate Director, AACC	Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust / Kent and Medway
Lorraine Hughes	Head of Service, Specialist Community Disability Service	Brighton & Hove City Council
Louise Kayim	Continuing Care and Section 117 Lead	Kent County Council
Marie Bell	Associate Director, Corporate Parenting	Achieving for Children / RBWM
Matthew Richardson	-	NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB
Michelle Ziregbe	Team Manager, Children with Disabilities, and Designated Social Care Officer	West Berkshire Council

Nazmin Mansuria	Senior Children's Commissioner	Southampton City Council
Nikki Donegan	Head of Service	Slough Council
Peter Houlders	Designated Social Care Officer	East Sussex Council
Samantha Rogers	Head of Integrated Commissioning	Home and Future
Sarah Bloor	Head of Service, Care Leavers and Children with Disabilities	West Sussex Council
Suki Hayes-Lapham	Specialist Services Manager, Children and Young People's Disability Services	Achieving for Children / RBWM
Tanya Brown-Griffith	-	NHS Surrey and Sussex ICB
Tracey Brown	Director of Nursing, AACCC	NHS Thames Valley ICB
Vicky Rasey	Regional Coordinator	South West region
Victoria Courtis	Head of SEND	Milton Keynes
Victoria Gray	-	NHS England
Wendy Gower	AACC Manager	Bracknell Forest Council
Wendy Phillips	-	NHS England

1 Welcome and introductions

- Lin welcomed colleagues to the meeting and colleagues were asked to introduce themselves in the chat.
- New NHS and ICB colleagues were welcomed to the group.
- Vicky Rasey joined the meeting from the South West, to learn from the network as a similar regional group is being developed there.

2 Home and Future – Integrated Commissioning

- Samantha Rogers introduced Home and Future, a south-east regional care cooperative pathfinder. Its partnership spans five integrated care board (ICB) footprints and three provider collaboratives, with local authorities, NHS England and Ministry of Justice partners.
- The programme covers needs-led and integrated commissioning; end-to-end fostering; workforce development; data, insight and sufficiency; participation and engagement; and securing resources. Samantha highlighted a national recruitment website for residential roles, potential links to training, and work through existing local participation leads.
- Integrated work focuses on children in care and on the edge of care whose needs are not met by existing provision, including gaps between social care and specialist mental health services. Samantha described crises involving emergency departments and young people's concern that being labelled 'too complex' made them feel services could not help. Language was therefore important.
- Examples included Hockley House, a jointly funded health and local authority model offering support over six to nine months; Hope House in Surrey; and the developing Greenways model in West Sussex. Samantha described benefits of Hockley House for step-down support, admission prevention and giving young people time to stabilise.
- Further examples included a provider collaborative-funded service across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, and the NHS England-funded Link Service in Thames Valley, which includes youth workers. Comparing outcomes from existing models, sharing learning and avoiding duplication will inform the regional work. Health panel learning and Section 117 templates were also identified as resources to share.
- The new integrated commissioning board will meet quarterly, starting the following Thursday. Proposed workstreams require its agreement before wider confirmation. Place-based meetings and task-and-finish groups will support delivery, while each organisation retains its own governance and business-case approval responsibilities.
- A memorandum of understanding is being developed around joint strategic commissioning. Samantha will coordinate programme planning, business cases, meetings and reporting with system partners.

- The Home Again opportunity would be local authority-led with ICB support; discussions with the Department for Education on timing were continuing. For Care Together, Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB had prepared an expression of interest supported by Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. Funding and success were not confirmed; an operational delivery plan would follow only once these were understood.
- A question was asked regarding the proposed workstreams. Samantha explained that direction and priorities needed board agreement first. It was also requested that the presentation include the names of relevant leads.
- Liam highlighted the House of Lords inquiry into children's social care and suggested that Home and Future could contribute examples of emerging practice. The network agreed to receive a Home and Future update at every other meeting.

Actions

- Sonia to share the Home and Future presentation with colleagues.
- Sonia to arrange Home and Future updates at every other network meeting.
- Liam to share the link to the House of Lords inquiry into children's social care.

3 Legal advice – updates and next steps

- Sue Kocaman and Liam Doherty presented a summary of legal advice commissioned through the local authority-led regional project. The aim was to clarify recurring practice difficulties, identify relevant case law and focus further work on unresolved issues. The presentation was not adopted as a jointly agreed local authority/ICB legal position.
- The presentation summarised the advice under the following topics, Referral thresholds, Triage, Rejecting referrals on initial information, Delays because a child is not 'optimised', Pending ADHD, autism or psychological assessments, Identifying health needs
- Four possible grounds for challenge were also identified in the summary - irrationality, illegality, procedural unfairness and fettering discretion. Colleagues were advised to consult their own legal teams when considering how to use the material in practice.
- The summary also presented proposed analysing the substance of care and individual tasks, identifying health and social care components and allocating costs proportionately. Sue acknowledged the practical difficulties with allocation tools and pragmatic percentage splits.
- The advice presented was that a need does not disappear because it is being managed effectively. Reviews should consider underlying needs and the support maintaining stability, rather than assuming that reduced incidents automatically justify reduced provision or funding.
- The presentation highlighted case laws. The summary with further references would also be circulated for review with local legal teams.
- A question was raised on how ICB colleagues had been involved in choosing counsel and framing the questions. It was advised that a different legal advice was held and that different interpretations and counterarguments needed to be recognised. Liam confirmed that ICBs had not been directly involved in selecting the barrister or developing the questions.
- Sue described previous difficulties securing consistent health representation and welcomed the broader attendance. Sue and Liam emphasised that the next stage needed to be joint work, closing gaps in understanding rather than allowing disputes over responsibility to delay support for individual children.
- ICB colleagues supported collaboration and greater consistency, while highlighting different commissioned services, pathways and local arrangements, including across Thames Valley. Regional discussions also need to connect with ICB and wider partnership governance; consistency will require sustained work rather than a single solution.

Actions

- Sonia to share the legal presentation and word summary to colleagues.
- All colleagues to review the material, seek local legal input as appropriate and send comments, further questions and requests to Sonia Dayal via email on sonia.dayal@sdsa.net with one month of this meeting.
- Sue and Liam to co-ordinate responses and follow up at the next meeting.

4 Sharing of practise – Case study – Children with disabilities who receive CCC input and how children's occupational therapy services are provided to them.

- Keir Fuller presented Surrey's experience of providing social care occupational therapy (OT) for children receiving continuing care. The small countywide service has an assessment team for initial referrals and a complex intervention team for longer-term specialist work. Proposed reorganisation into two unitary authorities was expected to add further capacity pressures.
- Longer-term work includes specialist moving and handling, seating and equipment, major home adaptations, housing projects and multi-agency case management. Referrals often follow specialist hospital care or involvement with the Children's Trust in Tadworth.
- Keir described a pathway in which social care often undertakes the assessment, funds equipment and adaptations and retains review responsibilities. Health OT input generally focuses on immediate discharge or shorter-term needs; longer-term work commonly falls to the local authority. Nursing involvement varies and professional responsibilities can be unclear.
- There is no jointly commissioned OT service specifically for this group in the model Keir described. He highlighted gaps in shared pathways, service-level agreements, funding arrangements, review ownership and escalation. The central concern was timely access, clear accountability and sustainable provision, not simply which organisation employs the OT.
- Keir asked colleagues to respond to four questions:
  1. Are service-level agreements in place in your ICB or local authority for this provision?
  2. Is children's occupational therapy input commissioned specifically in your ICB or local authority?
  3. Does your ICB employ its own children's occupational therapists to provide input for children receiving CCC?
  4. What core occupational therapy provision should be available to children receiving CCC, regardless of which local area is responsible?
- Keir proposed that families and professionals should be able to understand the pathway on one page: who assesses, who funds, who reviews and how disagreements are resolved. He sought examples of clearer joint working and commissioning arrangements.
- Keir's recent participation in the Surrey and Sussex continuing care multidisciplinary eligibility panel was acknowledged and welcomed, noting the value of his specialist perspective.
  – An offer was made to connect Keir with Hampshire's OT manager and share the presentation. Nikki Donegan described marked differences across Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell, Slough and Wokingham and offered to collate responses to the four questions.
- A view was expressed where a colleague explained that children receiving CCC remain entitled to universal NHS OT services and that this does not automatically imply a separately commissioned additional service. It was suggested involving strategic commissioning managers, rather than relying only on continuing care leads, to map provision and responsibilities.
- Keir clarified that his concern was the balance of responsibility for longer-term specialist work involving health needs, which currently falls heavily on the social care OT team. The discussion did not establish a new funding or commissioning arrangement.

Actions

- Sonia will circulate the questions in a template. Colleagues to consult their local OT services and relevant commissioning teams, return responses through Sonia via email, and the collated information will be brought back to the network to consider next steps. At the close of the meeting, a one-month response period was agreed.
- Sonia to share Keir's presentation.
- All health and local authority colleagues to consult relevant OT and commissioning colleagues and return the completed template to Sonia within one month of this meeting.
- Return the OT findings to a future network agenda once responses have been collated, to agree next steps.

5 ICB updates

- Sue reported that she and Wendy Phillips had prepared a basic map of the new ICB footprints against local authorities, together with available information on key roles and contacts. This follows the discussion at the July meeting.

– The mapping will be circulated. Members were asked to provide additions or corrections so that the information can be updated as structures and contacts become clearer.

Actions

- Circulate the ICB/local authority mapping and available contact information. All colleagues to send additions or corrections to the project team after review.

6 Response to Law Commission Proposals

– Liam reported that the government had issued an interim letter rather than a substantive response to the Law Commission proposals. The fuller response was being linked to SEND reforms and was expected by the end of the 2026 calendar year.

– In the earlier next-steps discussion, Liam highlighted the proposal to put clearer legal limits on children's social care into statute, drawing on Section 22 of the Care Act and the approach already described in Welsh legislation. He saw this as a potential route to a revised children's continuing care framework.

– It was cautioned that the adult legislation had not removed differences in interpretation and argued that a more integrated approach would do more to reduce tension. Liam agreed that legislative change would not resolve everything, but considered that it could be a useful step towards greater clarity and a revised framework.

Action

- Liam to share the government's interim response letter/link with members. No specific deadline was agreed.

7 Any other business

Recent case law

– Liam drew attention to the email circulated by Sonia on the preceding Friday containing new case law of potential interest to members.

Data workstream

– The project is beginning to develop its data workstream, considering what information would be both useful and feasible for local authorities to collect about children's continuing care. Liam reported an initial discussion with Data to Insight about potential support.

– Volunteers were invited to help shape the working group. An email request was made explaining the ask and expected commitment, so this could be discussed with data/analytics colleagues. Measures and commitments had not yet been agreed.

Actions

- Circulate an email setting out the purpose, proposed ask and expected commitment for the data workstream.
- Colleagues interested in supporting the data working group to email Sonia.. No deadline was specified.

8 Future meeting dates

The future meeting dates are as follows:

- Monday 30th November 2026, 12noon to 1:30pm virtually via Microsoft Teams
- Tuesday 2nd February 2027, approx. 9:00am to 3:30pm, in person at Broadway House – register here

Lin thanked members for their continued contributions and closed the meeting.