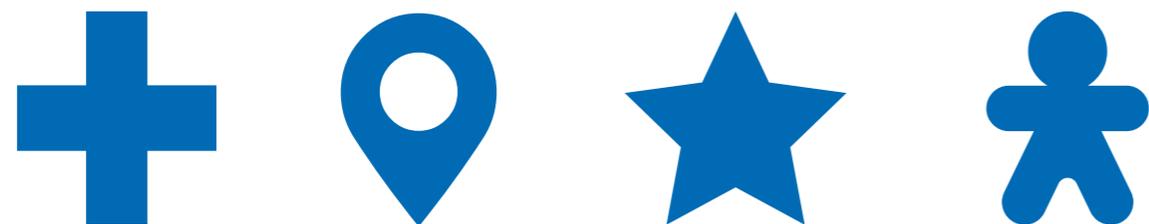




North East and
North Cumbria

Better Health and Wellbeing For All

Joint Forward Plan
2023 - 2028



Introduction

Since publishing our Integrated Care Strategy, Better Health And Wellbeing For All, in December 2022, we've been working together and engaging with partners across the region to develop our Joint Forward Plan.

This plan outlines how the NHS in the North East and North Cumbria, working with you and other local organisations, will deliver and support the key ambitions in this strategy, which are to ensure healthier and longer lives for our communities, fairer outcomes for all, better health and care services, and to give our children and young people get the best start in life.

Our plan outlines our main goals for improving all aspects of health and care and the steps we'll take to achieve them. While its purpose is to focus on NHS delivered and commissioned services, we know we can only improve and deliver our plans by working in partnership.

Like all Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and their partner NHS trusts, this is our first Joint Forward Plan. It will be reviewed and updated every March. Building on the engagement that has taken place in recent months, which has played an integral part in developing this plan, we continue to welcome your feedback so we can improve health and care.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in helping us shape this plan and we look forward to working with all partners across the health and care system to deliver on our shared commitment for better health and wellbeing of all our communities.

Sam Allen

**Samantha Allen, Chief Executive
North East and North Cumbria
Integrated Care Board**

Ken Bremner

**Ken Bremner MBE, Chair
North East and North Cumbria
Provider Collaborative**

What is the Joint Forward Plan?

Developing and publishing a Joint Forward Plan is a national requirement for all ICBs and their partner NHS trusts. This plan covers 2023 to 2029 but will be reviewed yearly.

Here in the North East and North Cumbria our plan sets out how we will deliver the NHS aspects of our 'Better Health And Wellbeing For All' integrated care strategy, which was developed by the NHS, local councils and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations who have come together as an Integrated Care Partnership for the region.

It brings together the goals we set out in the strategy and specific plans for:

- How we use technology and data, support our workforce and involve our communities to co-produce the best solutions. These are what we call our enablers.
- Improving NHS services such as mental health, emergency care and primary care and much more.
- Local areas, to ensure that while we work across the whole region, we also maintain a local focus. These are what we call 'place plans' and include close working and engagement with local authorities, health and social care providers, local communities, and voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations. These have been developed with partners and will be monitored with them, through place committees and health and wellbeing boards depending on local arrangements. *Some plans cover more than one local authority area such as North Cumbria and Tees Valley.

All parts of these plans are linked as shown opposite.



Longer & healthier lives



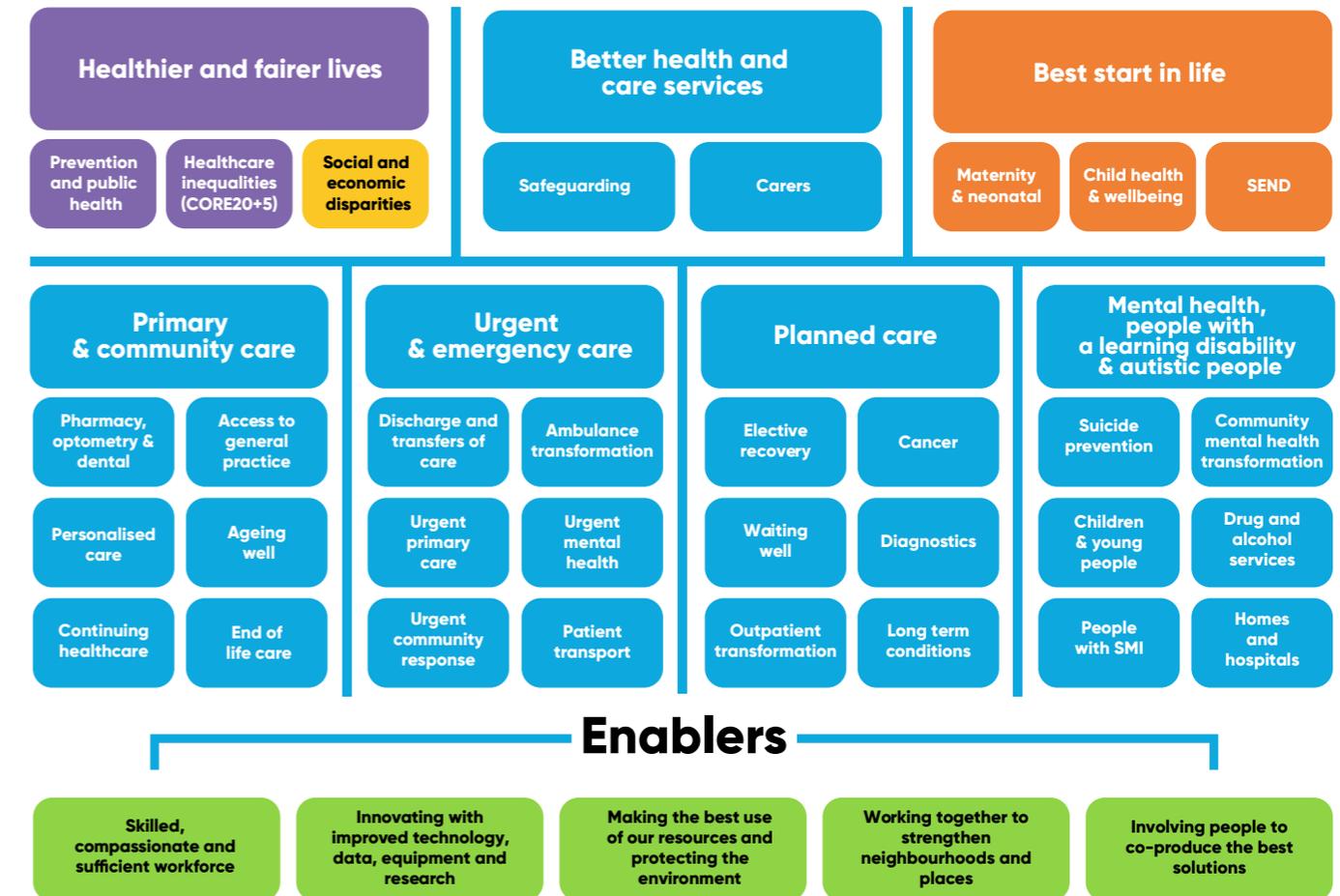
Fairer outcomes for all



Better health & care services



Giving children and young people the best start in life



SEND= Special educational needs and disability

SMI = Serious mental illness

Longer, healthier lives & fairer outcomes.....+

Our health and wellbeing are influenced by many factors that are often beyond the control of the NHS. These include things like education, housing, employment and our income. We also know that many illnesses can be prevented in the first place. The NHS can't always change these things on its own, which is why work with others to help make things much better.

Our Joint Forward Plan includes some key areas of action which will be delivered through partnerships and specific programmes.

Partnership working

Our healthier and fairer programme aims to prevent poor health, reduce health care differences and help the NHS to influence social and economic differences, which we know impact the health of our communities. It has three workstreams:



Prevention

Preventing the onset of illnesses and diseases, promoting healthy lifestyles, and reducing the risk factors of various health conditions.



Healthcare inequalities

Ensuring equal access to healthcare and the same health outcomes, regardless of people's backgrounds.



NHS role in reducing social and economic inequalities

Helping the NHS to address the social and economic factors that affect health.

Healthier and fairer programme areas of focus are as follows:

Prevention ambitions

Life expectancy in the North East and North Cumbria is lower than the national average, with a gap of up to 10.4 years between the most and least deprived communities. Our objectives are



Reduce harm from alcohol



Increase the rate of 'healthy weight' amongst the population



Reduce nicotine dependence rates to 5% by 2030



Improve detection and management of high risk conditions for cardiovascular disease

Reducing health inequalities

'Health inequalities' refer to unfair and avoidable differences in health across our communities. Our aim is to make the biggest improvements in health for people living in the 20% most socio-economically deprived neighbourhoods in England. This is about one third of the population in the North East and North Cumbria.



Adult objectives

- Health checks for 60% of adults with a serious mental illness
- More COVID, flu, and pneumonia vaccines for adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) to prevent hospital visits
- 75% of cancers found at an early stage (stages 1 or 2) by 2030
- Better identification and treatment of high blood pressure and high cholesterol to prevent heart attacks and strokes
- Reductions in nicotine dependence included in all plans



Children objectives

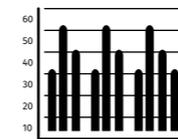
- Less asthma
- More children from deprived areas and ethnic minority backgrounds getting better diabetes care
- Better access to epilepsy specialist nurses
- Fewer children under 10 having decayed teeth that need to be removed
- Better access to mental health services for children of all backgrounds
- Reductions in nicotine dependence included in all plans



NHS contribution to reducing social & economic inequalities

Working with partners, our goals include measures such as:

- Ensuring clear and understandable communication for all (what we call health literacy).
- 'Poverty proofing' our health settings. For example working with children, families, community groups and health care staff to identify ways in which families on low incomes might struggle to get the health care they need, and developing action plans to improve access.
- Maximising the use of digital solutions. We will also be working to ensure that those who do not have access or the ability to use technology are not excluded.
- Creating a network of anchor institutions so we can have a greater impact on the health of our communities. Anchor institutions are organisations which have an important presence and relationships in a community such as large scale employers and big purchasers of goods and services.



Embed population health management

Our approach to managing the health of our population will be to use data to help us plan and provide care that improves health outcomes and reduces inequalities.

We aim to create a comprehensive set of data, work together with multiple partners to gather intelligence and use population health analytics. We also want to develop skills across the system to make population health a key part of decision-making.

Pregnancy & postnatal care

Most babies in England are born healthy, but children from poorer families or vulnerable groups often have worse outcomes. Our goals include working with pregnant women, especially those in our poorest 20% of areas or from Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic backgrounds, to improve their access to care. We also want to provide care for groups at the highest risk of health inequalities and offer resources to help with tobacco dependency, infant feeding, pre-conception health, and substance use.



Improve access to care



Proactive approach so we anticipate the needs of people with higher risk of experiencing health inequalities



Offer resources to support smokers as well as other risks in pregnancy

Housing

We're creating a plan with our partners to improve poor housing as we know this has an effect on the health and wellbeing of our communities. We also want to set up a framework for the housing, health and care sectors to tackle these issues together.

Our goals are to help older people, especially those who are frail or living with dementia, to live on their own in their communities, and to provide more 'extra care' housing for adults with complex health needs or a learning disability, while also reducing hospital stays.



Help more people live independently



More 'extra care' housing



Reduce hospital stays



Sort out cold damp homes

Work and health

While the NHS is not responsible for leading economic regeneration and ensuring good employment opportunities, we are playing a supporting role in achieving each of those aims.

The Department for Health and Social Care and Department for Work and Pensions asked the North of Tyne combined and local authorities to help create a plan for work and health with the ICB (called the Wellbeing Framework for the North of Tyne).

This plan looks to tackle the health barriers that can make it hard for people to find and keep good jobs. We're going to work with partners across the North East and North Cumbria to improve this situation, using what we've learned from programmes like this, while also making sure we consider the different needs of each local area.

Carers & volunteers

Carers and volunteers play a vital role in the health and wellbeing of our communities. We are committed to prioritising the support and health of carers and developing programmes for volunteers to make the most of the already high levels of civic engagement in our region. Our objectives include embedding support for carers (who can often struggle to find the right support for themselves and their loved ones) in all our programmes, as well as considering the impact on carers in our assessments of service changes and ensuring that their voices are better heard.



More support for carers and volunteers



Listening to carers more



More formal programmes for volunteers



Considering how service changes affect carers

Best start in life.....



Ensuring that children and young people are well looked after sets the foundation for a healthy and thriving society. Early health care interventions and support can have a profound impact on the long-term wellbeing of individuals, so we'll focus our efforts on children's services across the region to ensure they are always a top priority.

Maternity

Our ambition is for the North East and North Cumbria to be the best and safest place to be pregnant, give birth and transition into parenthood. We want to make sure everyone gets the same high-quality care, no matter what their background is, or where they live. Our key areas of focus are:



Developing and sustaining a culture of safety

including fostering a culture of safety leadership awareness, collective accountability and a compassionate response to safety incidents.



Listening to women and families with compassion

including those from diverse backgrounds and through involvement with Maternity and Neonatal Voice Partnerships (MNVP).



Supporting our workforce to develop their skills and capacity

including investing in the growth and retention of a skilled people with enough capacity to do their jobs well.



Meeting high standards that underpin our ambitions

including consistently meeting and upholding existing standards, utilising best practice, accurate data, digital technology, and prioritising key health pathways.



Developing family hubs

in partnership with local communities and potentially including the integration of community midwifery teams.

Children and young people

We'll improve health outcomes for children and young people, and work to ensure closer partnership working, particularly with local authorities, in relation to education, safeguarding and social care. Our key areas of focus are:

Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health services are consistently highlighted by professionals and children and young people as needing improvement. Our focus includes:



Improving access to mental health support



Reducing the reliance on inpatient care



Up-skilling children and the workforce to support resilience



Improving perinatal mental health services for mothers



Supporting fathers' mental health and wellbeing

Long-term conditions

Prevention and the effective management of long-term conditions are key to improving health and reducing demand for healthcare services. Our plan includes providing local services for conditions like epilepsy, diabetes, and asthma, pushing for new solutions in disadvantaged areas, and implementing the Core20PLUS5 approach (Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS England approach to support the reduction of health inequalities and improve care for children and young people). It includes five focus areas of asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, oral health, and mental health.

Health protection

We will ensure improvements in the rates of routine vaccination and immunisations as these are key to protecting the health of our communities.



Children and young people who may be vulnerable or have complex support needs

The pandemic has hit children hard so we're working to make sure they don't wait too long for healthcare. Focusing on those who need it most, like young carers and children who are often left out including those with special educational needs, our work includes:



Ensuring that the waiting times for elective care for children and young people improve at least as quickly as they do for adults

1001

Working with partners to deliver the Best Start in Life Vision for 1001 Critical Days*



Meeting the regulatory framework and good practice standards for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Best start in life, pre-school needs, and perinatal

We'll work with partners to give every child the best start in life, especially in their first 1001 days. This means focusing on early life, pre-school, and mental health for new parents.

** This national framework includes six areas of action to improve health outcomes for all babies in the first 1001 days.*



Improving health & care services...

Our 'Better Health And Wellbeing For All' strategy focuses on improving health and care by ensuring that NHS providers and services in social, primary, and secondary care are rated as good or outstanding by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Our Joint Forward Plan outlines the key principles that will guide our efforts in achieving these goals and enhancing health and care services.

Our principles



Reducing variation, inequalities and ensuring quality

Making sure the services we provide are not only high quality and safe but the same quality, no matter where you live and who you are.



Joined-up care

Working together across health and care to 'join up' care and break down the barriers that sometimes exist between different parts of the system.



Personalised care and closer to home

We want care to be more personalised, so people have more choice and control over the way their care is planned and delivered, and to ensure that this care is closer to, or in, a person's home.



Early intervention

At the same time, we will be working to deliver a step change to ensure early intervention and prevention of ill-health.

Other principles include:

- more holistic care towards the end of people's lives
- fostering a culture of innovation and using research evidence to drive decision making
- ensuring services are sustainable
- better use of technology and data
- using resources wisely and living within our financial means.

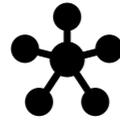
Provider collaboratives

Working in collaboration is key to improving health and care services and we have in place a range of provider collaboratives across the region.



Primary care collaborative

This includes general practice, pharmacy, optometry and dentistry. The collaborative will co-design the primary care strategy for the region and implement the Fuller Stocktake review which includes improving access and integrating primary care.



North East and North Cumbria Provider Collaborative

This includes all our NHS foundation trusts working together to improve health services, share resources, reduce variation, and lead workforce planning, as well as supporting economic development by leveraging their power as large employers and purchasers.



Mental health, learning disability and autism provider collaborative

This includes providers who have agreed to work together to improve care in priority areas, including children and young people's mental health inpatient services, adult low and medium secure services and adult eating disorder services.



Hospice collaborative

Hospice providers are valued partners delivering not just palliative and end of life care, but also a range of community services. This collaborative will enable us to work together to improve all aspects of these services.

At the heart of our plans...

We have identified some key areas, which we will be embedding across all aspects of health and care services. These include:



Personalising care

- Implementing personal health and wheelchair budgets.
- Ensuring all Primary Care Networks (PCNs) have social prescribing link workers and an expansion of other roles such as pharmacists, paramedics and physiotherapists.
- Providing personalised maternity care plans and informed choice for women.
- Enhancing care coordination across different organisations.



Supporting carers

- Improving access to support for family and informal carers, including young carers.
- Including carers' perspectives in service change assessments and engagement programmes.



Safeguarding adults, children and young people

- Collaborating with local authorities to improve health outcomes and service access for cared-for children and those transitioning from child to adult mental health services.
- Implementing a trauma-informed approach in all health services.
- Following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 for multi-agency support to victims.
- Supporting people with self-neglect and those needing treatment.
- Working with partners to prevent and reduce serious violence.



Boosting women's health

- Establishing a Women's Health Steering Group and a community of best practice for shared learning.
- Developing a women's health strategy for North East and North Cumbria.
- Planning for women-focused service delivery changes and hubs, and working with partners to reduce violence against women and girls.



Community focused services

Supporting people to age well

We have an ageing population, with people living longer and often with more complex health and social care needs. While this is good news, it does put extra demands on our health and care services.

Our plan sets out how we will adapt our services, expand and skill-up our workforce, and make better use of technology, as well as supporting people to age well.

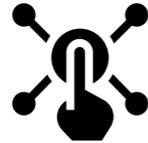
For example, we will be:



Improving urgent community response to provide care at home within two hours of someone's health suddenly declining



Offering proactive, personalised care for people with frailty or multiple long-term conditions



Advancing digital transformation in community health services, including better data use and adoption of shared digital care records



Enabling Integrated Neighbourhood Teams to provide comprehensive health care in care homes, ensuring residents receive the same support as those living independently

**These teams include professionals from health, mental health, social care, the voluntary sector, and other services, working together for cohesive and preventive care at a community level.*

Palliative and end of life care

Our plans set out how working collaboratively with hospice providers and the Hospice Alliance we will ensure that people with progressive illness or those nearing the end of their lives, and their loved ones and carers, receive the care and support they need to live and to die well.

Some of our key work programmes include:

- **Improving access to care:** this includes ensuring 24/7 generalist services and remote access to specialist palliative care (SPC) advice for staff and carers, in all places. As well as seven-day face-to-face SPC services in all places including the use of virtual wards or other models.
- **Improving quality** irrespective of age, condition, or diagnosis, with greatest improvement for locally identified priority groups.
- **Develop the workforce** across statutory and VCSE sectors with the support and capability to deliver high quality.

Pharmacy and medicine management

Managing the use of medicines well is a statutory responsibility of the ICB and we spend around £560 million on prescribing in primary care each year, which is nearly 10% of our budget.

Some of our immediate priorities are to:

- **Lower antibiotic prescriptions** to combat antimicrobial resistance.
- **Collaborate with community pharmacies** for better management of common infections, including the use of testing and medication supply.
- **Implement new digital systems** to improve long-term medication management in primary care.
- **Address over-medication in individuals** with a learning disability, focusing on education and support to prevent excessive and inappropriate prescribing, especially in children and young people.

Primary care – dentistry, general practice, pharmacy, and optometry

Primary care in the NHS includes GP practices, pharmacies, dental surgeries, and opticians, often collaborating with community mental health, social care, and the VCSE sector.

We're implementing the [Fuller report's](#) recommendations, which include creating integrated primary and community teams for older people and those with complex conditions. In April 2023, the ICB started to manage the commissioning of dentistry, pharmacy, and optometry.

General practice

The immediate goal is stabilise general practice, with a longer-term plan of transformation and integration of neighbourhood teams, as detailed in the Fuller Stocktake report.

Primary care is facing increased demand and workforce challenges, so we are focusing on:



Enhancing appointment access and resilience



Expanding practices through larger networks



Promoting digital transformation

Dentistry

Addressing dental access is a major concern for our communities where many people, especially in deprived areas, lack accessible dental care, which affects their oral, physical, and mental health. Lack of dentistry also puts pressure on other health services.

We have a phased plan of improvement. In the first two years we'll:



Boost resources in 2023–24 for NHS 111 clinical assessment services, out-of-hours dental treatment, and urgent care for high-need patients, including children



Implement faster, more efficient reallocation of NHS dentistry funds from contracts that are relinquished

In the next three to five years, we'll focus on transformative changes, like supporting water fluoridation, increasing NHS-contracted dentists, and expanding dental services.

Pharmacy and optometry

Our immediate focus has been to ensure an effective transfer of responsibility. Now that we have taken on the commissioning of these services we will be developing our plans for both services as part of the refresh of the Joint Forward Plan for March 2024.



Acute and secondary care

Cancer care

We are working to:

- **Increase early cancer diagnosis** through improved uptake of screenings, human papillomavirus vaccinations, lung health checks, and clinical trials.
- **Implement the national 'faster diagnosis framework'** to improve waiting times and focus on reducing long waits.
- **Enhance personalised care quality**, addressing health inequalities, and improving patient care experiences.
- **Use feedback from those with lived experience** to improve care and workforce development.

Elective care and diagnostics

People in our region are waiting too long to access diagnostics and planned care. Our plans to improve this include:

- **Eliminating waits over 65 weeks** by March 2024, except for specific complex surgeries.
- **Offering patients a choice of treatment provider** and developing digital tools to support this.
- **Assisting NHS trusts facing significant challenges through collaborative efforts.**
- **Working with the independent sector** to add to NHS capacity by delivering free at the point of delivery health care.
- **Forming clinical alliances** for shared learning, improved pathways, and effective workforce planning.
- **Expanding diagnostic capabilities** to reduce wait times and address backlogs.

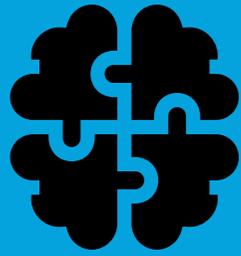
- **Enhancing workforce strength**, retention, and skill diversity, and exploring new working methods.
- **Leveraging digital technology** for improved care, treatments, and integrated data and reporting systems.

Urgent and emergency care

Despite increasing demand for urgent and emergency care services, our region compares well with other areas in the country when it comes to waiting times and other aspects of urgent care. But we are not where we want to be, and there is more to do.

Our immediate priorities include:

- **Increasing clinical assessment** in ambulance control centres including those with mental health expertise.
- **Eliminating the longest ambulance handover waits** and reducing average handover times to under 15 minutes.
- **Improving ambulance response times** for category 2 incidents, targeting an average of 30 minutes across 2023/24.
- **Boosting ambulance capacity** and establishing a single access point for paramedics.
- **Enhancing transfers of care** to support recovery at home or in community settings instead of prolonged hospital stays.
- **Expanding out-of-hospital care**, including virtual wards, urgent community response, same day emergency care (SDEC), and specialised infection hubs, along with step-up and step-down care.
- **Simplifying access to appropriate care**, expanding NHS111 online services, and offering direct booking for primary and 24/7 urgent mental health care.
- **Developing alternatives to 999 and A&E** for urgent care including 24/7 co-located urgent treatment centres (UTCs) and expanding same day emergency care services to at least 12 hours a day, seven days a week.



Mental health, people with a learning disability and autistic people

People with a learning disability and autistic people die on average at a much younger age. We will reduce the waiting times for initial assessments for suspected autism and for packages of support for people living with a learning disability and autistic people. We will also improve their access to physical health care.

We are developing a mental health, learning disability and autism collaborative so we can drive forward improvements working with people with lived experience to ensure their voice is heard.

Neurodevelopmental services

- **Accelerating access to neurodevelopmental assessments** to benefit education, health, and care plans.
- **Enhancing life outcomes for autistic and neurodiverse people** by reducing stigma, improving education and employment opportunities, and implementing mandatory training.

People with a learning disability

- **Supporting general practices to increase learning disability register enrolments and annual health checks.**
- **Learning from reviews** like the Whorlton Hall and Learning From Lives and Deaths (LeDeR) reports to improve healthcare.
- **Boosting vaccination rates** to prevent serious illnesses.
- **Ensuring services are reasonably adjusted** to meet the needs of people with a learning disability with a focus on cancer and long-term conditions.
- **Working with partners to reduce the reliance on hospital care** and enabling people to live healthy and positive lives in the community.

Mental health

Improving mental health and mental wellbeing is a key priority for our region. We know there is much more to do to improve access to psychological therapies for all our communities and diagnosis rates for people with dementia. Our key focus is also improving perinatal mental health and access to mental health services (immediately before and after birth) for our children and young people.



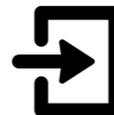
Providing integrated primary and community care for adults with severe and common mental health issues, ensuring faster access to talking therapies and crisis support through NHS111.



Aiming to halve the difference between the suicide rate in the North East and North Cumbria and the (much lower) suicide rate in England by 2031



Improving access to specialist mental health care for children and young people, including more school-based support teams, early intervention, and localised care. We're also enhancing treatments for eating disorders and minimising hospital admissions with crisis/home treatment teams.

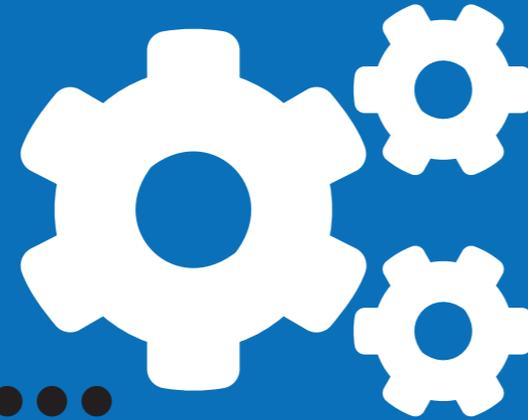


Developing a safe, personalised and therapeutic approach to in-patient care which includes reducing the number of people treated out of the area.



Collaborating with experienced professionals and partners to ensure our services are trauma-informed, acknowledging the significant impact of trauma on individuals' lives.

Enablers.....



Key to the delivery of our Joint Forward Plan are some important enablers that underpin our efforts and help make our plans work – turning our vision for a healthier North East and North Cumbria into reality.



Skilled, sufficient and empowered workforce

We want to be an even better place to work. We are developing a People and Culture Plan to help us become the region's 'employer of choice' as well as an even more equitable and inclusive place to work. Our goals include decreasing job vacancies by 50% by 2029 and improving staff retention.



Best use of resources

Our healthcare system in the North East and North Cumbria faces unique challenges, which has led to a cycle of poor health and financial strain.

We aim to develop a sustainable financial recovery plan over the next three to five years that will achieve balance, address health inequalities, allocate resources more efficiently, and maximise value with our partners.

This will include investing in health equity, primary and community services, mental health, and IT for service integration, while also ensuring fair financial practices that do not jeopardise the financial stability of our third sector partners, commissioned providers, or local authorities.

Involving people to co-produce the best solutions

It's only by actively involving people who use our services and those who work in them that we can improve, learn and develop the very best care.

We're setting up systems to capture people's real-life health stories, developing our citizens engagement approach to ensure regular insight, and creating a toolkit to support more people to get involved.

Additionally, we're launching new communication strategies that will build relationships with key partners, as well as running awareness campaigns on important issues such as how to access the right care and keeping people well.

We're also fostering collaborations with local authorities, independent care providers, VCSE sector and community groups to ensure their perspectives are included in our decision-making.



Protecting the environment

Environmental sustainability is essential for physical and mental health, and the NHS plays a crucial role as it accounts for 40% of the public sector's carbon footprint in the UK. We have set a target for the North East and North Cumbria to become the greenest NHS region by 2030. This is set out in our [Green Plan for 2022-2025](#) which builds on work in eight key areas:



Our people

Making small changes by our large workforce to significantly impact our green goals



Sustainable healthcare

Creating low carbon healthcare that improves health and reduces waste



Low carbon travel

Implementing green travel plans to cut NHS-related road travel emissions



Clean air

Developing a clean air framework to help NHS sites lower air pollution



Reducing waste

Working towards zero landfill waste and halving clinical waste by 2030



Supply chain & procurement

Working towards a carbon-neutral NHS supply chain by 2040



Greener NHS sites

Enhancing patient recovery with therapeutic green spaces at NHS sites



Energy

Boosting energy efficiency in buildings to cut 10% of the NHS carbon footprint

Innovating through research technology and data



Research

With partners we are creating a strategy to enhance research and innovation in the North East and North Cumbria to attract more research funding and make research findings easily accessible to decision makers.

We will also foster an innovative culture that encourages collaboration, supports economic growth, and focuses on adopting evidence-based solutions for better health and wellbeing.



Estates

We're planning to develop our longer-term estate plan that will improve our healthcare buildings and grounds by working together with partners to prioritise investments and make the best use of limited funds.

We aim to tap into national funds, help local primary care with their estate plans, consolidate our own offices for efficiency, and make sure any empty spaces are used well and responsibly.

Digital, data and technology

We're working hard to get the most out of digital technology for everyone's benefit. Led by our Digital Partnership Council, our priorities include:



Supporting system recovery

We're introducing digital solutions to reduce waiting times and improve access to health information and services.



Digital first primary care

We aim to equip general practices with digital tools to manage patient care and empower patients to manage their health online.



Digitising social care

We're increasing the use of technology in adult care, promoting digital record keeping and support through a network of champions.



Frontline digitisation of foundation trusts

We're working towards all NHS trusts having standard electronic patient record systems by March 2026.



Data-driven decision capabilities

Our goal is to lead in using data for healthcare decisions, enhancing our analysis capabilities and predictive analytics.



Digital inclusion in all settings

We're committed to ensuring digital healthcare is accessible to all, with plans to increase inclusion, and designing services that everyone can use.

Working locally



Our Joint Forward Plan also includes what we call 'place plans' which cover what will be happening locally to deliver improvement to health and wellbeing. These are underpinned by close working between local authorities, health and social care providers, local communities, and voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations. Each local authority area has its own action plan with some covering more than one area - such as North Cumbria and Tees Valley.

About the plans...

These plans focus on what's important in each local area and cover both immediate priorities for 2023-24, and longer-term transformation plans up to 2028-29. They consider what each community is like and how health and care providers can work together to improve health and wellbeing.

At the heart of these plans are how the key goals from the 'Better Health And Wellbeing For All' strategy will be best delivered locally.

Longer, healthier lives and fairer outcomes: Providing comprehensive health services for adults and children, assisting vulnerable groups, encouraging healthy living, and partnering with other sectors to address health issues related to lifestyle, economic challenges, and long-term illness prevention.

Best start in life: Supporting the well-being and health of children and young people through collaborative care, addressing special needs, safeguarding and including complex care needs, disabilities, mental health, and developmental services.

Improving health and care services: Enhancing regional services, focusing on 'integrated neighbourhood' teams, primary and community care, and urgent and emergency care. They support sustainable service models, integration, personalised programmes, and community-based care.



Get involved...

This is our first Joint Forward Plan and following engagement and discussions with partners we have tried to incorporate and take into account all the feedback we have received.

This engagement will continue in the months ahead as we start to refresh the plan for 2024. We're committed to improving our plan and value ongoing discussions with stakeholders.

We are working on better collaboration with partners, including voluntary and independent sectors, local authorities, and through statutory bodies and will be establishing clearer partnership frameworks and governance structures.

We also recognise there are gaps in services such as managing long-term conditions, dementia care, gender dysphoria services, recovery plans for primary care, pharmacy and optometry, and individual care packages. We're developing strategies to address these areas in line with best practices and national guidelines.



Better Health And Wellbeing For All

Joint Forward Plan 2023-2028

A summary of the Joint Forward Plan for the North East and North Cumbria

Produced by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for the North East and North Cumbria.

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