

REPORT CLASSIFICATION	✓	CATEGORY OF PAPER	✓
Official	✓	Proposes specific action	✓
Official: Sensitive Commercial		Provides assurance	✓
Official: Sensitive Personal		For information only	

BOARD

30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Report Title:

Primary Care Access Recovery Programme (PCARP)
End of Programme Report 2023 - 2025

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report and presentation is to provide the Board with an End of Programme Report on the Primary Care Access Recovery Plan during 2023-2025.

The programme will now be replaced with a Modern General Practice Access (MGPA) Programme, one of the core components within the ICB Neighbourhood Health Programme, with regular reports scheduled at future Primary Care Subcommittee meetings.

Key points

The presentation aims to provide NENC ICB Board with a final review of the Primary Care Access Recovery Plan (PCARP) and summarise the progress made through the programme and next steps to delivering improvement in our populations' experience when accessing Primary Care.

- 18% increase in NHS App registrations
- 99% of practices have enabled the 4 core functions of the NHS App
- 270% increase in record views
- 229% increase in repeat prescription orders via NHS App
- 87% increase in repeat prescription orders via all digital routes
- 130% achievement of self-referral targets
- 28.7% increase in Pharmacy First consultations
- 85,100 additional appointments enabled through estates improvements
- 77% Overall patient experience at your GP practice

This report also outlines a next step for MGPA delivery, including continued support for digital enablement, workforce development through the Workforce Strategy, and move to Modern General Practice Access being a core component of Integrated Neighbourhood Health.

Risks and issues

Key risks identified:

- Funding to continue to deliver all elements of the Modern General Practice access model.
Mitigations: Continued digital support via NECS / Transition funding for practices, currently funded in 2025/26 through continuation of SDF arrangements.
- Workforce capacity in both ICB and General Practice to support the move to and delivery of Modern General Practice through the Neighbourhood Health Models.
Mitigations: Workforce strategy 2025–2030

Assurances and supporting documentation

- Digital Framework – Primary Care and Digital Teams within the ICB working closely with NHS England to maximise any resources available to maintain digital solutions and support delivery of key areas of focus of Modern General Practice Access.
- Comprehensive GPIT plans to identify future requirements is underway.
- All activities reporting into the ICB Primary Care Sub Committee, the ICB Executive, ICB Board and NHS England Regional Team, highlighting any potential pressures and risks.
- The Primary Care Subcommittee received an in-depth report in July 2025 on the PCARP.

Recommendation/action required

The Board are asked to receive the report for information and assurance.

Acronyms and abbreviations throughout report explained

ABPM – Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring
ARRS – Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme
BP - Blood Pressure
CAIP - Capacity and Access Improvement payment
CAP - Capacity and Access Payment
CPD – Continued Professional Development
CPDG - Community Pharmacy Delivery Group
GP – General Practitioner
GPIP - General Practice Improvement Programme
HI NENC - Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria
ICS – Integrated Care System
ICB – Integrated Care Board
LCIG - Local Clinical Interface Groups
MFA - Multi Factor Authentication
MGPA - Modern General Practice Access
NHS E – National Health Service England
NENC – Northeast & North Cumbria
PCARP – Primary Care Access Recovery
PCC - Primary Care Collaborative
PCN – Primary Care Network
PF - Pharmacy First
PRA - Prospective Records Access
PLT - Protected Learning Time
PRIMIS - Cumbria Primary Care Informatics
SMI – Serious Mental Illness
SDF - Service Development Funding
SOPs - Standard Operating Procedures
SLF - Support Level Framework

Executive Committee Approval	9 September 2025					
Sponsor/Approving Executive Director	Levi Buckley, Chief Delivery Officer					
Report author	Catherine Horn, Senior Primary Care Lead Debbie Johnson, Programme Lead					
Link to ICP strategy priorities (please tick all that apply)						
Longer and Healthier Lives	✓					
Fairer Outcomes for All	✓					
Better Health and Care Services	✓					
Giving Children and Young People the Best Start in Life						
Relevant legal/statutory issues						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Primary Care Access Recovery Plan NHS Operational Planning Guidance 						
Any potential/actual conflicts of interest associated with the paper? (please tick)	Yes		No	✓	N/A	
Equality analysis completed (please tick)	Yes		No		N/A	Not for this paper, but relevant to all projects outlined in the update report
If there is an expected impact on patient outcomes and/or experience, has a quality impact assessment been undertaken? (please tick)	Yes		No		N/A	Not for this paper, but relevant to all projects outlined in the update report
Essential considerations						
Financial implications and considerations	Finance involvement included as appropriate within the MGPA programme.					
Contracting and Procurement	Contracting and Procurement included as appropriate within the PCARP programme.					
Local Delivery Team	Local Delivery Teams included as appropriate within the PCARP programme and as part of the Access Workstream.					
Digital implications	Digital involvement included as appropriate. There is a digital workstream included within the PCARP programme.					
Clinical involvement	Clinical involvement is included as appropriate within each project.					
Health inequalities	Not applicable for the purposes of this paper.					
Patient and public involvement	Not applicable for the purposes of this paper.					
Partner and/or other stakeholder engagement	Not applicable for the purposes of this paper.					
Other resources	Not directly, any additional resources will be requested through project delivery and presented separately for decisions in line with appropriate governance arrangements.					

Primary Care Access Recovery Programme (PCARP)

End of Programme Report

High level Summary of Primary Care Access Recovery Programme Improvements

The Primary Care Access Recovery Programme (PCARP) from 2023 to 2025 aimed to enhance patient access to primary care services in Northeast and North Cumbria. The programme focused on empowering patients, modernizing general practice access, building capacity, and reducing bureaucracy, resulting in significant improvements in digital engagement, service capacity, and patient experience. The programme will transition into the Modern General Practice Access (MGPA) programme as part of the Integrated Care Board's ongoing efforts.

- **Patient empowerment through digital tools:** NHS App registrations increased by 18%, with 99% of practices enabling core app functions, leading to a 229% rise in repeat prescription orders via the app and expanded community pharmacy services including Pharmacy First.
- **Modern General Practice Access implementation:** Digital telephony improvements reduced the 8am call rush by 86.4%, with care navigation training provided to all practices, enhancing triage and appointment management. All practices met key payments related to digital telephony and online requests.
- **Capacity building in workforce and estates:** The programme supported workforce development through training and recruitment, meeting Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme targets, and created 12 new clinical rooms enabling 85,100 additional appointments annually.
- **Reducing bureaucracy at care interfaces:** The Primary Secondary Interface project improved transitions between primary and secondary care, with Local Clinical Interface Groups facilitating coordination and policy updates such as the Consultant to Consultant Referral Policy to streamline patient pathways.
- **Achievement of national PCARP targets:** NENC exceeded national targets for NHS App use, self-referral pathways, Pharmacy First consultations, and digital telephony adoption, demonstrating substantial progress across all four PCARP ambitions.
- **Patient experience monitoring:** Surveys and additional research indicated improvements in patient confidence and satisfaction with access changes, including increased NHS App usage and digital support. The following is a summary of the independent national survey of patients.

	2023		2024		2025	
Question	NENC ICB	National	NENC ICB	National	NENC ICB	National
Overall, how would you describe your experience at your GP practice?	Good 76%	Good 71%	Good 77%	Good 74%	Good 79%	Good 75%
Generally, how easy or difficult is it to contact your GP Practice on the phone?	Easy 53%	Easy 50%	Easy 52%	Easy 50%	Easy 57%	Easy 53%
Generally, how difficult or easy it is to contact your GP Practice on your website?	Easy 69%	Easy 65%	Easy 51%	Easy 48%	Easy 53%	Easy 51%
Thinking about your last appointment, were your needs met?	Yes 92%	Yes 91%	Yes 91%	Yes 90%	Yes 91%	Yes 90%
In your last appointment, were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care and treatment?	Yes 92%	Yes 90%	Yes 91%	Yes 90%	Yes 92%	Yes 91%

- **Next steps with MGPA integration:** The programme will evolve into the Modern General Practice Access initiative within the Integrated Neighbourhood Health framework, focusing on streamlined access pathways, equitable service options, and enhanced staff workflows to support proactive care
- **Risk management and assurance:** Key risks include funding continuity and workforce capacity, mitigated through ongoing digital support, transition funding, and a workforce strategy for 2025–2030, with comprehensive reporting and collaboration with NHS England.

Integrated Neighbourhood Health - Modern General Practice

NENC ICB will continue to support general practices with the delivery of the Modern General Practice Model to deliver improvements in access, continuity and overall experience for people and their carers

- This is a response to increasing demand and a foundational step to enable practices to move from a model of reactive to more proactive care.

ICBs are expected to streamline the end-to-end access journey for people, carers and staff, making it quicker and easier to connect with the right healthcare professional, team or service, including community pharmacy, use of Pharmacy First and digital self-service options such as repeat prescription ordering via the NHS app.

- This approach will accommodate the needs of different groups and patients and support continuity of care.

People and their carers should have the ability to access services equitably in different ways (online, telephone and in person) with highly usable and accessible online systems (the NHS app, practice websites, online consultation tools) and telephone systems.

- There should also be structured information gathering at the point of contact (regardless of contact channel) and clear navigation and triage based on risk and complexity of needs.

Staff should have access to structured information about the complexity of the presenting complaint and need. This information should be organised alongside population segmentation (including by age) and risk stratification information into a single workflow.

This approach will support staff in efficiently navigating and triaging needs safely and fairly, including enabling risk-based prioritisation of continuity of care and optimising use of the general practice and wider multi-professional team.

Name of Author: Catherine Horn, Senior Primary Care Lead
Debbie Johnson, Programme Lead

Name of Sponsoring Director: Pamela Phelps

Date: 20 August 2025