

Item: 8.1

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

BOARD

04 June 2024

Report Title:

Board Assurance Framework 2024/25

Purpose of report

To present the Board with an updated Board Assurance Framework (BAF) as part of the quarterly review for 2024/25.

Key points

The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring systems and controls are in place and sufficient to mitigate any significant risks which may threaten the achievement of the ICB's strategic aims and objectives. The Board achieves this primarily through the work of its committees, through use of audit, independent inspections and by systematic collection and scrutiny of performance data.

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF) is used to provide assurance on the management of key risks to the delivery of the ICB's strategic aims and objectives as well as the wider strategic goals of the Integrated Care Partnership.

The BAF is intended to provide a visible strategic risk summary, supported by the full detail of the corporate risk register.

The BAF was reviewed by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 09 April 2024 and the Audit Committee at its meeting on 22 April 2024. Minor changes were made following feedback from these committees to ensure the BAF included clearer details of all corporate risks.

A copy of the updated BAF for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix 1 (with additions highlighted in red and deletions noted for ease of reference) and a copy of the corporate risk register is available at Appendix 2.

Risks and issues

Risks are mapped to the goals identified in the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership strategy 'Better health and wellbeing for all' and from these goals the principal risks to the strategy have been identified as:

- 1. The ICB fails to commission services in a way that tackles the wider causes of ill health, and life expectancy of people within the North East and North Cumbria is not improving.**
The gap between how long people live in the North East and North Cumbria compared to the rest of England is not on track to reduce by 10% by 2030. Overall risk rated as 12 A (high).
- 2. Our health and care services are not delivered in a way in which improves the outcomes of communities who currently have much poorer health outcomes.**
The gap between the inequality in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth between people living in the most deprived and least deprived 20% of communities is not on track to narrow by 10% by 2030. Overall risk rated as 15 A (high).

3. The quality of commissioned health and care services varies across the ICB area and in some places falls below our high expectations for our public and patients.

The ICB does not maintain its good or outstanding rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the percentage of regulated services across social care, primary care and secondary care that are rated as good or outstanding by the CQC is declining. Overall risk rated as 20 R (extreme).

4. We fail to deliver health and care services which give children the best start in life.

The percentage of children with good school readiness when they join the reception class (including children from disadvantaged groups) is declining. Overall risk rated as 16 A (high).

Assurances

As set out in the attached report.

Recommendation/action required

The Board is asked to:

- Review the BAF to ensure it accurately reflects the principal risks to achieving our objectives as well as their current mitigations, and
- Approve the BAF for 2024/25.

Acronyms and abbreviations explained

BAF – Board Assurance Framework
 CRR – Corporate Risk Register
 AC – Audit Committee
 POD - Pharmaceutical, general Ophthalmic and Dental services
 NHSE – NHS England
 FOI - Freedom of Information
 MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
 VCSE - Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise
 SI – Serious Incident

Sponsor/approving director	D Cornell, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary
Date approved by executive director	28 May 2024
Report author	N Hawkins, Strategic Head of Corporate Governance

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

Note any relevant Acts, regulations, national guidelines etc

Any potential/actual conflicts of interest associated with the paper? (please tick)	Yes		No		N/A	✓
If yes, please specify						
Equality analysis completed	Yes		No		N/A	✓

(please tick)						
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	
Key implications						
Are additional resources required?	Not applicable					
Has there been/does there need to be appropriate clinical involvement?	Not applicable					
Has there been/does there need to be any patient and public involvement?	Not applicable					
Has there been/does there need to be partner and/or other stakeholder engagement?	Not applicable					

Board Assurance Framework 2024/25 (Quarter 4 2023/24 – Quarter 1 2024/25)

1. Introduction

1.1 The Board has overall responsibility for ensuring systems and controls are in place, sufficient to mitigate any significant risks which may threaten the achievement of the ICB's strategic aims and objectives. Evidence may be gained from a wide range of sources, but it should be systematic, supported by evidence, independently verified and incorporated within a robust governance process. The Board achieves this primarily through the work of its committees, through use of audit, independent inspections and by systematic collection and scrutiny of performance data.

2. Developing the Board Assurance Framework for 2024/25

2.1 The ICB manages risk across five levels with the principal risks to achieving the ICB's objectives forming the Board Assurance Framework (BAF):

1. Place
2. Area
3. Directorate
4. Executive directors (corporate risks)
5. Board Assurance Framework

2.2 Risks are considered at their corresponding committees to provide the Board with assurance that risks are reviewed individually by risk owners and also collectively by an oversight committee.

2.3 Following the publication of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership's strategy, the ICB's risks were assessed to determine their impact on achieving the vision and goals of the strategy and incorporated into the BAF for 2024/25. Each goal was reviewed to determine an overarching or principal risk to its achievement and each corporate risk was aligned to one of the four risks to determine the overall risk score.

2.4 All risks have also been aligned to the top five risks identified by the Executive Committee:

- Finance
- Quality
- Workforce
- System recovery
- Political

2.5 The updated BAF reflects these top risks against each ICS goal and is available at Appendix 1.

2.6 The BAF is monitored through the Quality and Safety and Executive Committees before submission to the Audit Committee to give oversight to the controls. For the next quarterly update, the Finance, Performance and Investment Committee will also review the BAF as an additional level of oversight and assurance to the Board.

2.7 All ICB risks are assessed against the Integrated Care System's goals with the highest risk score used to determine the overall risk to the achievement of each goal. In summary, the risks to each goal are:

ICS Goal	Previous overall score	Current overall score
Longer and healthier lives	16	12
Fairer outcomes for all	15	15
Better health and care services	20	20
Giving children and young people the best start in life	16	16

3. Risk movement

- **Risk NENC/0024** - Quality of commissioned services that fall below the required standards, putting patient health, safety and welfare at risk. This risk has reduced from 16 A (high) to 12 A (high) following review by the risk owner with controls and assurances updated. Residual likelihood reduced to possible.
- **Risk NENC/0032** - Management of the ICB's running costs position. This risk has reduced in score from 16 A (high) to 12 A (high) as the 2023/24 position delivered an underspend expected to have a positive impact on running costs in 2024/25.
- **Risk NENC/0001** – Risks to system resilience, escalation planning and management and business continuity arrangements. This risk has reduced from 16 A (high) to 12 A (high) following review by the risk owner with controls and assurances updated.

4. New corporate risks identified

- **NENC/0079** - Patient safety concerns, complex care case management in Tees Valley. As a result of changes in complex case management, there has been inconsistent and variable oversight of the caseload, which has and could result in quality and safety concerns including the exposure and actual risk of harm (safeguarding harms). Risk is scored 12 A (high).
- **NENC/0077** - Lack of identified digital support and estates capacity to deliver primary care access and recovery programme. Risk is scored 12 A (high).

5. Closed risks

- **NENC/0055** - Failure to achieve 2023/24 planned inpatient discharges and subsequent bed closure trajectories. This risk has been amalgamated into risk NENC/0046.
- **NENC/0048** - GP Practices losing connection to the Great North Care Record following migration to the TPP (SystmOne) clinical system. This risk has been closed as a new connection mechanism was introduced which means the gaps in information sharing no longer exists.

6. Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Review the BAF to ensure it accurately reflects the principal risks to achieving our objectives as well as their current mitigations, and
- Approve the BAF for 2024/25.

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Name of Author: N Hawkins, Strategic Head of Corporate Governance

Date: 17 May 2024