

**North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**Tuesday 29 July 2025, 10:15am
The Durham Centre, Belmont, DH1 1TN**

Present: Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair
Samantha Allen, Chief Executive
Kelly Angus, Chief People Officer
Ken Bremner, Foundation Trust Partner Member
Levi Buckley, Chief Delivery Officer
Craig Blair, Director of Planning and Performance (deputy for Jacqueline Myers, Chief Strategy Officer)
David Chandler, Chief Finance Officer
David Gallagher, Chief Contracting and Procurement Officer
Tom Hall, Local Authority Partner Member
Marc Hopkinson, Director of System Resilience (deputy for Jacqueline Myers, Chief Strategy Officer)
Professor Sir Pali Hungin, Independent Non-Executive Member
Professor Eileen Kaner, Independent Non-Executive Member
Dr Hilary Lloyd, Chief Nurse and AHP Officer
Dr Saira Malik, Primary Medical Services Partner Member
Dr Rajesh Nadkarni, Foundation Trust Partner Member
John Pearce, Local Authority Partner Member.
Dr Neil O'Brien, Chief Medical Officer
Claire Riley, Chief Corporate Services Officer
Dr Mike Smith Primary Medical Services Partner Member
David Stout, Independent Non-Executive Member

In Attendance: Deborah Cornell, Director of Corporate Governance and Board Secretary
Christopher Akers-Belcher, Healthwatch Representative
Lisa Taylor, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Representative
Toni Taylor, Board and Legal Services Officer (minutes)

AGM/2025/01 Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all attendees of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Annual General Meeting including members of the public both present in the room and joining online.

AGM/2025/02 Chairs Reflections

The Chair expressed his gratitude to everyone working in health and care across North East and North Cumbria for their commitment throughout the year and shared his key reflections.

10 Year Health Plan

In July, the Government launched the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England, this was published after annual report was approved by the Board and sets out NHS direction for the next decade: Three key shifts highlighted.

- Treatment to Prevention
- Hospital to Community
- Analogue to Digital

Efforts are underway to address these significant changes. Collaboration with Local Authority colleagues, along with the use of new technology and medications, will support this work.

It is important to provide safe, reliable, and high-quality care. By keeping this as our focus, we ensure continuous improvement—even if we can't always be the best, we can always strive to get better.

Patient Safety

A patient safety centre was proposed to collect incidents occurring across the 3 million population. However, with the introduction of new budgets, the plan may require reassessment and could result in a reduced infrastructure compared to the original vision.

The year ahead

During periods of change, our focus for the coming year is to continually improve, innovate, and base decisions on data, evidence, staff input, and those we serve.

AGM/2025/03 Chief Executive's Reflections

The Chief Executive observed that 2024-25 was characterised by substantial organisational changes, including the second major restructure within three years. A further significant restructuring is scheduled for the upcoming year as a result of National Policy directives.

The Chief Executive shared some key reflections and achievements during 2024-25.

Data from our area demonstrates that residents have poorer health outcomes, reduced life expectancy, and a greater incidence of chronic conditions compared to other regions.

In the region, approximately 20% of people experience anxiety and depression. The suicide rate per 100,000 individuals has shown a slight decrease. Alcohol-related admissions have decreased by 10%. The adult smoking rate is currently 11%, having dropped from 29% over the past twenty years, which amounts to a 62% reduction. Obesity rates have risen, particularly in areas with greater deprivation; this is highlighted as a priority for the clinical conditions strategy, with particular attention to children and young people.

Over the past year, we created our People and Culture Strategy. As the region's largest employer in health and social care, our organisational culture is central to safety, workforce experience, and supporting peak performance.

Cancer diagnoses and early detection have risen, with general practices offering more appointments. Annual surveys show strong contributions from GPs and staff, and some areas report 99% patient satisfaction. More pharmacies are involved in the Pharmacy First initiative, prescribing antibiotics and saving GPs time.

The Waiting Well initiative, acknowledged in the 10-year health plan, has facilitated preoperative preparation for nearly 1,500 patients by identifying individuals requiring additional support. As one of only three designated health and growth accelerator sites, this programme benefits from a £19 million investment aimed at supporting people to maintain their wellbeing and remain in employment.

AGM/2025/04 The Year Ahead 2024/25

Further changes are anticipated with the implementation of the 10 Year NHS Health Plan.

Addressing the £1 billion funding gap remains essential for achieving financial sustainability by 2028.

A planned cost reduction of £32.5 million is expected as the ICB's role continues to evolve. Despite substantial adjustments ahead, the ICB's strategic commissioning function will be maintained, supported by a robust operational foundation.

Staff participation in the flu vaccination programme is encouraged to promote comprehensive immunisation coverage.

AGM/2025/05 Performance and Improvement 2024/25

During 2024/25 the ICB worked with providers to mitigate key issues e.g. capacity, workforce challenges and surges in demand.

Key performance and highlights:

- 104+ week waits almost eliminated; 65+ week waits, substantially reduced
- Above national targets for 62-day and 28-day faster diagnosis standards for cancer
- **78.8%** of patients at A&E seen within 4 hours: better than national standard of 78%
- North East Ambulance Service **ranked first** for category one and two response times
- Our GP practices offer **1.65 million appointments** every month – the highest ever
- Urgent Community Response teams consistently **above 70%** threshold for seeing referrals within two hours
- Our dentists provided more urgent appointments – **109,000** in general

- practice and **14,000** in urgent access centres
- Community pharmacies now provide **60,000** Pharmacy First consultations and **8,000** for contraception every month
- **79%** of people on GP learning disability register had an annual health check
- **59,330** young people accessed mental health support (higher than previous year)
- **70%** of people on Talking Therapies pathway reported a reliable improvement in their wellness

AGM/2025/06 Review of Financial Performance 2024/25

For the year end 31 March 2025, the ICB delivered all of its statutory financial duties.

The wider NENC Integrated Care System (ICS) also delivered a slight surplus financial position overall.

- Expenditure did not exceed income.
- Surplus of £12.2m delivered on a budget of £8.1bn
- Less than 1% of resources were spent on ICB running costs.

The NENC ICB accounts were audited by Forvis Mazars.

Unqualified audit opinions received for the ICB for 2024/25

- Financial Statement Opinion – Unqualified
- Regularity Opinion – Unqualified
- No matters to report on annual report
- Value for Money arrangements – no significant weaknesses identified.

AGM/2025/07 Questions from the public

None received.

The Chair thanked the team for the preparation of the annual report and annual general meeting.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25 can be accessed under the publications section of the ICB website.

The AGM closed at 11:00