

Report for Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel – Monday 11 November 2024

New provider of integrated community-based care (ICBC)

People in Bath and North East Somerset, as well as those living in Swindon and Wiltshire, will soon receive more health and social care in or near their homes, in a more joined-up and streamlined way.

HCRG Care Group has been appointed to lead an innovative new community-based care partnership with the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector, that will transform the care and support that people get to help them with their health and wellbeing at every stage of their lives.

Traditional community services – such as nursing, therapy and personal care – will be enhanced as they become part of new integrated neighbourhood teams, working across homes, care homes, clinics, schools and community centres to bring more personalised support to local people.

Among the benefits local people can expect to see will be:

- A single place or front door to get community-based care, help and support. The new front door will be fully accessible to all, and be available in a face-to-face location, as well as online and over the phone.
- At least £7 million a year will be invested in partnerships with VCSE providers to build community capacity to provide early help and support within communities from the end of 2027.
- Inappropriately located or outdated buildings will also be refurbished or phased out.
- Transforming the way that people access care will also reduce the pressure on GP practices and hospitals, which are seeing more people with health problems that could be effectively treated closer to home.

The new model of community-based care will see patients being cared for safely outside of hospital, minimising the need for an admission and helping to keep people at home wherever possible.

Total funding for the services is £144 million per year, with HCRG Care Group supporting up-front investment to deliver changes more quickly.

The ICB worked in partnership with Bath and North East Somerset Council, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council to commission HCRG Care Group, which operated its first NHS service in BSW in 2006, and has since delivered more than 200 community services, and employed more than 1,300 NHS staff.

HCRG Care Group has previously been rated as both good and outstanding by healthcare regulator the Care Quality Commission for services provided in the local area.

Joint Chief Executive appointed to lead region's three acute trusts

A new Joint Chief Executive Officer has been appointed to lead the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.

Cara Charles-Barks, who is the current Chief Executive Officer at the Royal United Hospital in Bath, will take up the new position from Friday 1 November.

This appointment follows a decision by the boards of each of the three trusts earlier in the year to establish a group model to deliver better outcomes for local people.

Before joining the team at the RUH, Cara had previously been Chief Executive Officer at Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.

She has also been listed as one of the top 50 Chief Executives working in the NHS on five separate occasions.

The new group model is a collaboration between the three existing trusts, and not a formal merger.

Each trust will remain a separate organisation, and continue reporting to its own dedicated executive team and board.

Sue Harriman, Chief Executive Officer, Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board, said: "Cara's appointment is excellent news for our three hardworking acute hospitals and our wider health and care system.

"True collaboration adds real value to patient care and all three hospital trusts have a unique role to play in strengthening the support that local people and communities count on at every stage of their lives.

"Under Cara's expert leadership, our hospitals will be stronger together and I look forward to seeing the benefits of these new arrangements over the coming years."

[Update on learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence](#)

Following co-production events with local stakeholders, the ICB has agreed the five pillars that make up the overall approach to learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence. These are:

- Identifying need
- Understanding need
- Meeting need
- Maintaining need (keeping well)
- Escalating need

The ICB has previously updated the committee on the new LDAND mental health unit being built in Bristol, as well as the Partnership in Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project. Both of these continue to progress well.

As part of the overall implementation plan, colleagues are working with primary care to ensure that at least 75 per cent of the local population on the learning disabilities register receive an annual health check and corresponding health plan.

At month five, 26.8 per cent of patients in Bath and North East Somerset who are on the learning disabilities register have received their annual health check, which is higher than the quarter two target of 25 per cent.

Another target in the implementation plan relates to the number of people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence in an inpatient setting, which is currently higher than expected. Colleagues are working closely with partners to support safe discharges from hospital through a weekly practice forum.

The main focus at this current time is the new keyworker service, which involves helping people with a learning disability or autism and their families to navigate the local health and care system.

Keyworkers provide young people and their families with the confidence and support to understand what help is available now and in the future.

Further information on the keyworker service is included as Appendix B.

Public asked to help shape new ten-year plan

Patients, families and staff working across the NHS have been invited to have their say on a new ten-year plan that will aim to revolutionise the entire health and care service.

Wes Streeting MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, announced details of the new plan on Monday 21 October.

He said: "When I was diagnosed with kidney cancer, the NHS saved my life, as it has for so many people across our country.

"Today the NHS is going through the worst crisis in its history. But while the NHS is broken, it's not beaten. Together, we can fix it.

"We need your ideas to help turn the NHS around. Our 10 Year Health Plan will transform the NHS to make it fit for the future, and it will have patients' and staff's fingerprints all over it.

"I urge everyone to go to www.change.nhs.uk today and help us build a health service fit for the future."

The new Change NHS website allows people to submit their ideas and feedback, and also provides details of upcoming in-person engagement events.

Wes Streeting is expected to publish the new ten-year plan in full in the spring of next year. Find out more at www.change.nhs.uk.