



**North East London  
Health & Care  
Partnership**

# **Summary North East London (NEL) Joint Forward Plan 2024 - 2025**

**July 2024**



# Background

The Joint Forward Plan explains how health and care organisations across north east London will work together to enable you and your family to get the care that you need. Covering aspects such as physical care, like seeing your GP, getting hospital treatment or care at home. The plan also includes mental health care that might be needed when you struggling or having a crisis. These elements are all encompassed in what we call our Joint Forward Plan.

The plan will also spell out who will take the lead in getting you the help and care you need.

The Joint Forward Plan is required by law for all integrated care boards across the country and we haven't come up with this plan by ourselves. We have engaged with our local population through our Big Conversation, and we've talked to lots of people and organisations involved in caring for our population (GPs, hospital doctors, councils, Healthwatch and local charities) to agree our plan as the way forward to improve the health of everyone who lives here.

After publishing the first Joint Forward Plan in 2023, we will be reviewing the plan each year to make sure it's tackling the long-standing local issues we face, as well as the new things we're bound to face as more people come to live here. This is the first refresh of the plan for 2024-2025.

We will continue to be asking for your views every step of the way.

# Introduction

The Joint Forward Plan describes how the local NHS and our partners (Local Councils, charities, voluntary groups and others) plan to improve the health and care of local people for the next five years.

We can't simply keep doing what we do now. More and more people are moving into our area, and we continue to have some of the worst pockets of poor health, and the longest waits to see GPs or get treatment in hospitals and A&E in London. North east London needs to adapt and improve to meet the needs of our growing and changing population.

Our residents also have some of the highest rates in the country for child and adult obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Many are living in poor or insecure housing and in low-income families which lead to poorer health.

That's why local doctors, hospitals, Councils, voluntary groups and community services such as mental health, must work better and smarter to use the limited money and staff available to us to improve things for everyone. This document tells you how we plan to do that and we're also being honest about the things that need to happen for our plan to work.

# Challenges and Opportunities

We need a completely new approach to how we work as an integrated care system to tackle the challenges we face today as well as securing our sustainability for the future. Our Integrated Care Strategy highlights that a shift in focus to prevention will be critical for improving the health of our population and tackling inequalities – helping people to take better care of themselves before they get sick and then need to rely on the NHS and others. If we don't do this, we'll never be able to afford to properly care for you and your families in the future.

## **Improving how we work**

We've improved the way we work together to plan and deliver health and social care so we can get more for our money, and so we can focus on prevention and on earlier diagnosis and better care in the right place. This means a new approach to everything from emergency care in hospitals to looking after people with ongoing health issues, from GPs and mental health to those needing tests and more routine operations.

Different parts of our local health and care 'system' have been working hard to tackle most of these things for years, and we are now working together around one joint plan to take forward the changes we have all agreed. So, what are we doing?

# Our priorities (1/5)

## **Urgent and emergency care**

We are focusing our projects towards achieving four main outcomes, these are to strengthen provision and access to alternative pathways, optimise flow through hospitals, utilise population health management to keep people well in their local community and to establish ways of working and new services to ensure we have system wide sustainable plans.

This part of our plan continues to rely on securing the funding we need, getting to grips with the different ways this care is delivered across our area now, and continuing to make it as easy as possible for residents to know how and where to get the care they need.

## **Community health services**

The community collaborative are establishing numerous community Improvement Networks using a partnership approach involving residents, carers and our clinicians to bring together best practice, drive change and implement innovation within our communities.

This part of our plan relies on us getting the funding, solving some of the privacy issues around sharing records and attracting new staff and/or training local people.

## **GPs and pharmacists**

Further investment in digital technology will continue so people can more easily get help from their GP, including remote appointments, helping some GP practices to improve levels of care and their quality ratings. We are also redefining how pharmacy, optometry and dentistry services might be better delivered in the future across integrated systems.

This part of our plan relies on us being able to fund some of the technological changes we want to make, collaborating with local partners, and on everyone involved participating in our plan and making the necessary changes.

# Our priorities (2/5)

## Operations and tests

We continue bring down waiting times for people currently on lists for an operation. The opening of new centres across areas will support people to get faster ultrasound and CT scans and tests for cancer and other conditions. We continue to increase the number of operations taking place in our hospitals' theatres and working hard to bring all our services up to the same high standard for all our residents.

This part of our plan relies on us being able to recruit more staff, expand some operating theatres and improve our technology to help quicker decision making.

## Cancer

We are working to improve cancer outcomes and reducing inequalities for local people. Our aim is that everyone has equal access to better cancer services so that we help to prevent cancer, spot cancer sooner, provide the right treatment at the right time and to support people and families affected by cancer

This part of our plan relies on solving the continuing staffing challenges at local hospitals which impacts the amount of tests that can be undertaken and reviewed.

# Our priorities (3/5)

## **Maternity**

We are now part way through our delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services (2023 – 2026). What this means for our local services is that they focus on listening to and working with women and their families with compassion, supporting our workforce alongside a culture of learning and safety. This will be done whilst continuing to ensure all women are offered dedicated care throughout their pregnancy, with a specific focus on women in deprived areas.

This part of our plan relies on us recruiting, training and retaining more maternity staff and being able to fund more research into the future demands on our maternity services so we have the right service in place for women now and in the years to come.

## **Babies, children and young people**

In our hospitals, we are focusing on improving the speed and access to planned care, diabetes, allergy and addressing urgent and emergency care needs for babies, children and young people. In the community, the focus is on how we work together in integrated care child health pilots, as well as increasing capacity in areas such as childrens community nursing and improving children's community waiting times. We will also support the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) inspection readiness group prepare for Ofsted inspections.

Our plans rely on recruiting more staff and on more funding to care better for those children with special needs.

# Our priorities (4/5)

## **Long term conditions**

As well as continuing to establish seven day a week services for everyone with symptoms of a mini stroke, we will be focussing on prevention and better care for those with Type 2 diabetes and improving our heart failure care services right across the area. We will also work on primary care long term condition prevention and early identification as well as improving care co-ordination and equal access to service.

As with many of our programmes, this new ways of working will rely on us having enough staff for the new roles and teams and getting the funding we need to support everyone working in health and care locally to sign up to our plan.

## **Mental health, Learning Disabilities and Autism**

A key programme of work concerns developing roles for those with 'lived experience leadership' in order for them to be experts by experience who can support, as equal partners, the improvements and innovations needed across our mental health, learning disability and neuro-development services. We will continue to work towards shorter waits in A&E for people with mental health needs and to employ more support workers.

There continue to be high rates of staff vacancies that need to be tackled and we are building a stronger network, making sure that we bring together everyone that works in mental health to be as coordinated as possible to plan and deliver the very best care for children and people who need help.



# Our priorities (5/5)

## Employment and workforce

We will continue to investigate and scope workforce productivity improvements, linked to this we aim to develop a NEL Health and Social Care workforce that will reflect our diverse communities. We will ensure that our staff have access to the right support to develop the skills needed to deliver the health and care services of the future. We will use apprenticeships to promote inclusion and provide opportunities for our local population develop health and care careers in NEL.

Our plans rely on funding to bring in the extra staff we need and also on keeping the staff we have – many are suffering from ‘burn out’ as a result of the pandemic and the constant pressure they are under.

## Health inequalities

Health inequalities exist between NEL and the rest of the country but also between our places and communities. These inequalities are avoidable and drive poorer outcomes for our population. We want to give our local people improved access, experience and outcomes across NEL. To do this we have made reducing health inequalities a cross-cutting theme that is embedded within all of our programmes and services within places and across NEL – everyone has a role to play.

Once again, we need the funding and the staff with the right skills and expertise to put our plans in place.

## Our seven Places

Local plans, developed around the needs of local population, has been developed at each of our Place-based Partnership, focusing on health inequalities and physical and mental health and well-being.

# North east London – improving all the time

Our system has been changing rapidly over recent years, including the inception of provider collaboratives, the launch of seven place-based partnerships, the merger of seven CCGs followed by the creation of the statutory integrated care board and integrated care partnership in July 2022.

As we continue to evolve part of our aim must be to continue getting the very best value for every pound we spend and supporting our staff in a productive way. Coordination, collaboration and integration between our system partners needs to occur in order for us all to align and move in the right direction toward creating measurable and meaningful impacts for our local population. Our Joint Forward Plan will continue to be updated as the years go by because we need to both forward plan alongside adapting to new challenges such as the predicted population increases we will see in north east London.

We continue to involve local people as much as possible in everything we do. That's why system partners will be coming to you to ask for your help and ideas as we work together to improve the health and lives of everyone across our area.

For more information about who we are and how we are working with our partners to improve health and care for people across north east London, click [here](#).