

WIRRAL PLACE BASED PARTNERSHIP BOARD**9th FEBRUARY 2023**

REPORT TITLE:	NHS 2023/24 PRIORITIES AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE
REPORT OF:	PLACE DIRECTOR (WIRRAL), NHS CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

REPORT SUMMARY

On 23rd December 2022, NHS England published the priorities and operational planning guidance for 2023/24. This paper outlines the key messages from this guidance and the actions being taken to support the planning and contract round 2023/24.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that the Place Based Partnership Board:

- (1) Notes the NHS priorities and planning guidance for 2023/24.
- (2) Supports the work that is underway to develop a Wirral response as part of the planning for 2023/24 and beyond.
- (3) Receives an update on this work at future meetings, including a Wirral Place Health and Care Delivery Plan when this is completed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The NHS 2023/24 Priorities and Operational Planning Guidance sets out what the NHS is being asked to deliver over the next two years. This will therefore influence what the NHS does with partners in Wirral as a place. It is important that the Wirral Place Based Partnership Board is aware of this guidance as it will influence the refresh of the Wirral Health and Care Delivery Plan, which the Board will be asked to approve. The Wirral Health and Care Delivery Plan will include national, Cheshire and Merseyside and local priorities and will set out our intentions as a Place around system recovery, operational delivery and transformation.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The priorities and operational planning guidance describe how the NHS will respond to the Mandate given by His Majesty's Government. The NHS is therefore required to respond to this guidance, working with wider partners to produce delivery plans for 2023/24 and beyond. There are no other viable options other than to engage in the planning process.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 On 23rd December 2022, NHS England published the priorities and operational planning guidance for 2023/24. NHS England is asking systems to focus on the following tasks for 2023/24:

- Prioritise recovering core services and productivity.
- Return to delivering the key ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan (LTP)
- Continue transforming the NHS for the future.

- 3.1.2 The guidance includes 32 national objectives against the first two priorities, covering 12 areas of the NHS, which are set out in Appendix 1 of this report. These objectives will form the basis for how NHS England will assess the performance of the NHS alongside the local priorities set by systems. The annex to the guidance also sets out the most critical, evidence-based actions that will support delivery – actions that each Integrated Care Board (ICB) will be expected to feature in their plans.

3.2 Recovering core services and productivity

- 3.2.1 To improve patient safety, outcomes and experience the NHS is being asked to focus on:

- improving ambulance response and A&E waiting times

- reducing elective long waits and cancer backlogs, and improving performance against the core diagnostic standard
- making it easier for people to access primary care services, particularly general practice.

3.2.2 Recovering productivity and improving whole system flow are critical to achieving these objectives. Essential actions set out in the planning guidance include:

- reducing ambulance handovers, bed occupancy and outpatient follow-ups relative to first appointments.
- increasing day case rates and theatre utilisation
- moving to self-referral for many community services where GP intervention is not clinically necessary
- increasing use of community pharmacies.

Action is also required to increase capacity in beds, intermediate care, diagnostics, ambulance services and the permanent workforce. These actions will be supported by specific investments, including those jointly with local authorities to improve discharge.

3.2.3 The NHS workforce is key to delivering these objectives. The planning guidance sets out an “immediate collective challenge” to improve staff retention and attendance through a systematic focus on all elements of the NHS People Promise.

3.2.4 The planning guidance reaffirms that, as the NHS delivers on these objectives, there must be a concomitant focus on narrowing health inequalities in access, outcomes and experience, including across services for children and young people. There also remains the commitment to maintaining quality and safety in NHS services, particularly in maternity services.

3.2.5 The planning guidance also confirms the important role of the NHS in supporting the wider economy. The actions of the NHS to support the physical and mental wellbeing of people will support more people return to work.

3.3 Delivering the key NHS Long Term Plan ambitions and transforming the NHS

3.3.1 The guidance reaffirms the commitment to the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan ambitions. These include core commitments to improve mental health services and services for people with a learning disability and autistic people.

3.3.2 Prevention and the effective management of long-term conditions are key to improving population health and curbing the ever-increasing demand for healthcare services. The planning guidance sets out the intention of NHS England to work with integrated care systems (ICSs) to continue to support delivery of the primary and secondary prevention priorities set out in the NHS

Long Term Plan.

- 3.3.3 To deliver the key tasks for 2023/24 and the ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan the workforce needs to be put on a sustainable footing. The guidance commits NHS England to leading the development of a NHS Long Term Workforce Plan and His Majesty's Government has committed to its publication in Spring 2023.
- 3.3.4 The long-term sustainability of health and social care also depends on having the right digital foundations. The guidance sets out the intention of NHS England to continue to work with systems to level up digital infrastructure and drive greater connectivity- this includes development of a 'digital first' option for the public and further development of and integration with the NHS App to help patients identify their needs, manage their health and get the right care in the right setting.
- 3.3.5 Transformation needs to be accompanied by continuous improvement. Successful improvement approaches are abundant across the NHS but they are far from universal. The guidance sets out the intention of NHS England to develop a national improvement offer to complement local transformation work.

3.4 Local empowerment and accountability

- 3.4.1 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are best placed to understand population needs and are expected to agree specific local objectives that complement the national NHS objectives. As set out in Operating Framework, NHS England will continue to support the local NHS [integrated care boards (ICBs) and providers] to deliver their objectives and publish information on progress against the key objectives set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.
- 3.4.2 Alongside this greater local determination, greater transparency and assurance will strengthen accountability, drawing on the review of ICS oversight and governance that the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt is leading. NHS England will update the NHS Oversight Framework and work with ICBs to ensure oversight and performance management arrangements within their ICS area are proportionate and streamlined.

3.5 Next steps

- 3.5.1 ICBs have been asked to work with their system partners to develop plans to meet the national objectives set out in this guidance and the local priorities set by systems. To assist them in this, the annex identifies the most critical, evidence-based actions that systems and NHS providers are asked to take to deliver these objectives. These are based on what systems and providers have already demonstrated makes the most difference to patient outcomes, experience, access and safety. These evidence-based actions are grouped into 14 areas:

- Urgent and Emergency Care

- Primary Care
- Community Health Services
- Elective Care
- Cancer
- Diagnostics
- Maternity
- Use of Resources
- Mental Health
- Learning Disability and Autism
- Population Health including prevention and health inequalities
- Workforce
- System working
- Digital Maturity

3.5.2 For 2023/24 the NHS is being asked to work with partners to produce two interrelated plans – an Operational Plan and a Joint Forward Plan. Appendix 2 shows the relationships between the two plans and the timelines associated with them.

3.5.3 The Operational Plan should be triangulated across activity, workforce and finance, and signed off by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside and partner trust and foundation trust boards before the end of March 2023. NHS England has separately set out the requirements for plan submission. The production of the Operational Plan is linked to the agreement of contracts with providers for 2023/24.

3.5.4 The Joint Forward Plan (JFP) will need to be developed through engagement with partners. This will include working with the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (HCP) to reflect system strategy and priorities in the JFP. The JFP will therefore be a shared delivery plan for the HCP Strategy, place-based Health and Wellbeing strategies and universal NHS commitments. It will include specific objectives, trajectories and milestones. The plan will also describe the approach and response to consultation with partners. Health and Wellbeing Boards must be involved and must include a statement of their opinion of final JFP. The JFP will be reviewed and updated annually.

3.5.5 Anticipating the publication of the planning guidance, a series of workshops have been established in Wirral by the Place Director to support the place response. These workshops have been held on/set for 9th December 2022, 20th January 2023, 17th February 2023 and 10th March 2023. They involve all NHS provider trusts, primary care, Wirral Council (adult health and care, children and young people's services and public health), Healthwatch Wirral and the voluntary community faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE). The purpose of these workshops is to support a Wirral response to the planning round 2023/24 that is cognisant of national and Cheshire and Merseyside priorities and deliverables but also includes borough priorities.

3.5.6 These workshops will complement work through the Strategy and Transformation Group, Finance Investment and Resources Group and other

system meetings to produce a refresh of the Wirral Health and Care Delivery Plan for 2023/24. Whilst this process is being led by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside it will be conducted in partnership and collaboration with key stakeholders in Wirral. As the Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board will receive a final version of the JFP, the Operational Plan and Wirral Health and Care Delivery Plan will come to the Wirral Place Based Partnership Board for approval.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Autumn Statement 2022 announced an extra £3.3 bn in both 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the NHS. NHS England has issued two-year revenue allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25. At national level, total Integrated Care Board (ICB) allocations [including COVID-19 and Elective Recovery Funding (ERF)] are flat in real terms with additional funding available to expand capacity. National funding including increases by 3.2% in 2023/24 and 2.2% in 2024/25. This assumes efficiency of 3% nationally. NHS Cheshire and Merseyside must find additional efficiencies as part of its trajectory towards distance from target.

4.2 The financial guidance has confirmed the continuation of the NHS element of the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund. This will continue on a “fair shares” basis. This will reduce the NHS allocation for Wirral as a place, which was adjusted in 2022/23 to reflect the challenge the system faced regarding the numbers of people not meeting the criteria to reside in inpatient settings.

4.3 Core ICB capital allocations for 2022/23 to 2024/25 have already been published and remain the foundation of capital planning for future years. Capital allocations will be topped-up by £300 million nationally, with this funding prioritised for systems that deliver agreed budgets in 2022/23.

4.4 The contract default between ICBs and providers for most planned elective care (ordinary, day and outpatient procedures and first appointments but not follow-ups) will be to pay unit prices for activity delivered. System and provider activity targets will be agreed through planning as part of allocating ERF on a fair shares basis to systems. NHS England will cover additional costs where systems exceed agreed activity levels. It is likely that these elective recovery targets will be challenging.

4.5 ICBs and NHS primary and secondary care providers are expected to work together to plan and deliver a balanced net system financial position in collaboration with other ICS partners. Further details will be set out in the revenue finance and contracting guidance for 2023/24, which will make the implications for Cheshire and Merseyside and for Wirral clearer.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 No additional resource is available to support the production of the Operational Plan and Joint Forward Plan, these will be developed using existing resources. The Operational Plan will set out detail on the activity, workforce and financial resources required to deliver the set priorities and objectives.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 NHS Cheshire and Merseyside is developing a risk framework for application in each of the nine places. This will reflect the risks emerging from the delivery of operational plans in 2023/24. The Wirral Place Based Partnership Board will also be receiving a report on this at a future meeting.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The Wirral response to the Operational Plan and Joint Forward Plan is being developed through engagement of key stakeholders as described in the paper. Formal public consultation is required only where proposed changes constitute major service change as defined in guidance.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside have a legal requirement to make sure their policies, and the way they carry out their work, do not discriminate against anyone. The business of these groups will be conducted with an awareness of the general duty requirements and place equality considerations. No Equality Impact Assessment is required for this report. Any associated actions may need an EIA.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Wirral Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside are committed to carrying out their work in an environmentally responsible manner.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Community Wealth Building in Wirral focusses on partnerships and collaboration. These partnerships are led by Wirral Council with external partners and stakeholders, including residents. NHS Cheshire and Merseyside will support the Council in community wealth building by ensuring health and care organisations in the borough have a focus on reducing health inequalities and contribute to the development of a resilient and inclusive economy for Wirral.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 National NHS Objectives 2023/24
- Appendix 2 Planning Requirements and Relationships

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NHS England, *The NHS Long Term Plan*, 7th January 2019, [NHS Long Term Plan » The NHS Long Term Plan](#)

NHS England, *2023/24 Priorities and Operational Planning Guidance*, 23rd December 2022, [NHS England » 2023/24 priorities and operational planning guidance](#)

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date