

# Working on your behalf

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Impact report

# Ten ways we have made an impact

The NHS Confederation is the membership body that brings together, supports and speaks for the whole healthcare system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We promote collaboration and partnership working as the key to improving population health, delivering high-quality care and reducing health inequalities.

The last year has stretched the health and care system to its limit. Throughout the year, we have focused on supporting you to respond to immediate challenges and to look ahead to the next phase. We have been your voice in public and your advocate behind the scenes, lobbying for the changes you have requested.

Our networks have worked throughout the year to represent, support and connect members on specific issues and areas of concern.

Here are just some of the key areas in which we have supported you this year.

## 01 COVID-19 response

COVID-19 has been the single biggest challenge facing our members and we have been one of the most prominent national voices making the case for the issues that have mattered most to you. We successfully made the case for Plan B measures to be reintroduced in late 2021.

## 03 Legislative reforms

We have been at the heart of the debate on the most significant set of legislative reforms to the NHS for a decade. We have represented members' views in the health and care bill and made a powerful case for checks and balances on the proposed new powers of direction over the NHS for the health and social care secretary.

## 02 Funding and community services

Our public intervention with NHS Providers, alongside our separate lobbying on capital funding, helped to secure a more favourable revenue and capital settlement in the Spending Review for most parts of the system. We also influenced the case for an end to the uncertainty on H2 finances. Our continued support for community services helped lead to discharge-to-assess funding being extended until March 2022.

## 04 Support to ICSs

No national organisation has done more to support the development of integrated care systems (ICSs). We have influenced the ICS design framework and other key guidance, and our report in January 2022 set out a compelling vision for the future of integrated care, shaped by the views of ICS leaders. Our ICS Network continues to go from strength to strength.

## 05 Primary care

We have reinforced the importance of primary care at scale as a key enabler, driving changes to the PCN contract in light of the pandemic. Our regular reports and national conference in November 2021 put the future of primary care centre stage. We also successfully lobbied NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI), with partners, for the temporary suspension of the Investment and Impact Fund and Quality and Outcome Framework.

## 06 Elective care backlog

In various events and reports and through our work with the Prime Minister's implementation unit, we have made the case for whole-system changes to tackle the elective backlog, calling for a more inclusive approach that avoids exacerbating health inequalities.

## 07 Workforce

Through events and support for workforce directors and leads in wellbeing; OD; education and skills; recruitment and reward, we have provided spaces for our members to share ideas and learning. Working with our members, we have influenced changes to recruitment and regulatory processes that have helped them to get new recruits started in work more quickly.

## 08 Mental health

Our influential report examined the impact of the pandemic on children and young people's mental health, the services that support them, and how local systems are working in new ways to confront the issues before them. Co-produced with service users, we delivered our borderline personality disorder webinars, bringing together over 500 mental health staff for solutions-focused discussions on how to deliver improvements.

## 09 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

We led a high-profile commission that identified ways to increase chair and non-executive director diversity in the NHS, while we have supported ICS chairs and non-executive directors to develop the insight and expertise to provide effective leadership and challenge on the health inequalities agenda. Our women leaders, BME and LGBTQ+ networks continue to provide invaluable support across the NHS.

## 10 Social care

We have successfully led the Health for Care Coalition of 15 national health organisations, which have made the case for extra funding and support for social care, with the government finally bringing forward reform proposals in 2021. The Cavendish Coalition, which we chair, influenced the government to place social care workers on the shortage occupation list.

# We have represented you

As well as informing the health and care bill, here are just a few of the ways our networks have represented members' views, concerns and expert knowledge to influence change.

## Acute Network

- ✓ We have contributed to the elective recovery plans, in discussion with government, contributing to the planning process and gaining additional funding.
- ✓ We represented provider voices throughout workforce discussions with national policymakers, including on mandatory vaccinations and getting social workers listed on the government's shortage occupation list.

## Community Network (Hosted by the NHS Confederation and NHS Providers)

- ✓ We campaigned to help ensure funding for discharge to assess was extended to the second half of 2021/22, and we continue to push for it to become permanent.
- ✓ We put on the national policy agenda the need for a pay uplift for NHS staff working in services commissioned through public health contracts, and we continue to press for a permanent solution.

## EDI networks

- ✓ On behalf of the Health and Care Women Leaders Network, we responded to the consultation calling for development of a clear strategy for women's health. Our response was informed by our reports on the impact of COVID-19 on the female health and care workforce.
- ✓ LGBTQ+ Leaders Network members contributed their experience and expertise to the government's conversion therapy consultation. We created a compelling narrative of how conversion therapy affects healthcare professionals and submitted quality evidence to influence the consultation.

## Mental Health Network

- ✓ The Mental Health Network's Housing Forum held a summit with key decision-makers to influence transformative change in how housing is integrated into the mental health pathway, and outcomes for patients and service users is improved.
- ✓ We met with Amanda Pritchard to represent the needs of our members, and highlight the importance of keeping mental health at the top of her priority list.

## ICS Network

- ✓ We developed constructive relationships with the Department of Health and Social Care and NHSEI, working closely on issues such as system regulation and the integration white paper.
- ✓ We secured regular meetings for ICS chairs with Health Minister Edward Argar, exploring a number of key issues including social care reform and ensuring he took on board members' concerns.

## NHS Clinical Commissioners

- ✓ We made the case for continuing clinical leadership in new ICS structures, now adopted in ICS design guidance, and worked with members to acknowledge their contribution and set out learnings for ICSs in our CCG legacy report.
- ✓ We worked with NHS England, the Local Government Association and ADASS, as well as NHSCC nurse forum members, to produce a Continuing Healthcare report calling for a change in policy.

## PCN Network and Primary Care Federation Network

- ✓ We lobbied NHSEI to secure additional funding for PCN management and leadership.
- ✓ We influenced NHSEI to delay the transfer of the PCN extended access contract to alleviate workload pressures.

Since joining the NHS Confed I have been able to contribute to discussions with senior members of NHSEI, CQC and other parts of the NHS like ambulance trusts. I feel the voice of primary care and GP federations are being heard as a result."

**Julia Griffith, Business Director**  
Bath and North East Somerset Enhanced Medical Services  
Primary Care Federation Network Member

# We have connected you

Here are just some of the ways our network members have connected with their peers, as well as regional and national leaders, to discuss shared challenges and solutions.

✓ Our **Acute Network** connected leaders to learn from each other and discuss challenges and solutions around provider collaboration.

✓ **Community Network** members have been presented with opportunities to shape and engage with national policy, including webinars with NHSEI and NHS Digital policy discussions.

✓ Chairs of NHS **mental health trusts** met with several NHSEI leaders to debate how to improve access to and quality of offender healthcare.

✓ Through **NHS Clinical Commissioners**, we provided a support offer to members looking for new ICS roles and enabled one-to-one legal advice on finding and applying for future roles.

✓ Our **diversity and inclusion** partners programme supported 60 member organisations and systems to improve their equality performance, in line with the NHS People Plan.

✓ Our first national **ICS Network** conference delivered a unique opportunity for 250 ICS leaders to come together to discuss shared challenges.

✓ We provided a safe space for **ICS Network** members to raise issues and have open conversations with peers and key national decision-makers, speaking out on their behalf when appropriate.

✓ The **Mental Health Network** formed the Mental Health and Learning Disabilities/Autism System Group, to give members who work in this area a space to share good practice, discuss concerns and receive support.

✓ Collective membership of our three **EDI networks** for women leaders, LGBTQ+ leaders and BME leaders increased to over 3,000. Connecting members through events, masterclasses, tweet chats and campaigns, and sharing learning through podcasts, blogs, videos and key reports.

✓ We launched our new **Primary Care Hub** app, connecting over 1,000 members and providing a safe space to share ideas, learn and understand the wider health and care system.

✓ Through our **Acute Network** we brought together leaders who are interested in working together at place level in a peer support forum.

✓ **NHS Clinical Commissioners** led the HR and OD forum taskforce group, enabling NHSEI HR and OD leads to engage with members on issues concerning the transition to ICSs.

✓ We connected more than 1,000 **primary care** professionals through our PCN and Primary Care Federation networks, bringing together colleagues across national and regional forums.

✓ The **Community Network** held regular meetings for chairs of community health service providers to discuss the challenges they face and potential solutions.



The ability to connect with peers and focus in on key topics has proven invaluable. I'd just like to thank the Mental Health Network for your generous and diligent work, offering informed stimulus to us all in these often lonely roles."

**Jeremy Vanes, Chair**  
Black Country Healthcare NHS FT



# We have supported you

All our networks have helped members to digest emerging and existing issues through summary briefings, tools and resources, learning events, regular communications or sharing good practice. Here are highlights of some of the more specific ways our networks have supported you.

## Acute Network

- ✓ Through a series of roundtables, we supported ambulance trusts and ambulance commissioners in developing guidance on how ambulance services should be commissioned by ICSs.
- ✓ Our networks for providers have supported leaders to engage with the Care Quality Commission on their experiences of the inspection process.

## NHS Clinical Commissioners

- ✓ NHSCC members have had access to national events, roundtables and meetings to help influence policy across health and social care.
- ✓ Through forum meetings, members have been able to regularly discuss and disseminate local and national issues and share solutions.

## Mental Health Network

- ✓ Our Digital Forum published a guide to help people working in mental health to build their digital confidence and skills. This toolkit focused on the role digital can have in enhancing the experience, access and outcomes of individuals using mental health services.
- ✓ Through the Mental Health Economics Collective, we published a report for policy makers highlighting the systemic challenges facing the mental health sector, and offered solutions and practical cost savings.

## PCN Network and Primary Care Federation Network

- ✓ We provided more than 100 concise sense-making documents within 24 hours of national guidance and policy being released, to support primary care leaders to work at pace.
- ✓ We showcased the achievements of primary care during the COVID-19 pandemic to address criticism over reduced access and face-to-face appointments.

## ICS Network

- ✓ We established forums for communications and engagement leads, and finance directors, allowing leaders to meet, exchange ideas and influence issues including ICS branding and system finance policy.
- ✓ We worked jointly with the LGA and NHS Providers to deliver a full ICS peer support programme, including workshops, mentoring and peer reviews on progress.

## Community Network

(Hosted by the NHS Confederation and NHS Providers)

- ✓ We have helped wider stakeholders to understand what community services are, what they do, and their value as part of the COVID-19 response.
- ✓ We worked with NHSEI on a webinar and blog series on urgent community response standards to inform providers of community services on upcoming changes, help them to prepare, and share best practice and learning.

## EDI networks

- ✓ We led national EDI campaigns to build unity and amplify voices, including Black History Month, Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Week, Pride season, International Women's Day, LGBTQ+ History Month and Disability History Month.
- ✓ We developed a programme of health inequalities improvement seminars for chairs and non-executives on provider boards within ICSs, to help lead stronger NHS action on health inequalities.

The partners programme is the best in class for supporting development, understanding and embedding of equality, diversity and inclusion. It offers unparalleled support to HR and EDI leads.”

**Jagtar Singh, Chair**  
Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

# About us

The NHS Confederation is the membership organisation that brings together, supports and speaks for the whole healthcare system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The members we represent employ 1.5 million staff, care for more than 1 million patients a day and control £150 billion of public expenditure. We promote collaboration and partnership working as the key to improving population health, delivering high-quality care and reducing health inequalities.

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18 Smith Square  
Westminster  
London SW1P 3HZ

020 7799 6666  
[www.nhsconfed.org](http://www.nhsconfed.org)  
@NHSConfed

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