

Working on your behalf

Progress report

April – September 2022

How we are making an impact

Concerns over the rising cost of living, record waiting lists and changes at the top of government have dominated national attention over the last six months. During this time of political and economic upheaval, we have focused on providing members with much-needed certainty, using our influence, convening power and support programmes to respond to your needs, raise your concerns and act on your insights.

In this report, we explore some of the ways the NHS Confederation and our networks have supported, represented and connected you over this time.

01

Influencing legislative reforms

We had a demonstrable impact on the Health and Social Care Act, with success on limiting the Secretary of State's powers and ensuring mental health representation on integrated care boards. We also influenced policy guidance underpinning the reforms, including on integrated care strategies, as well as high-profile policy reviews such as the Fuller Stocktake, Mental Health Act, wider integration work, and the emerging commissioning framework.

02

Spotlighting the cost of living

As the cost-of-living crisis started to escalate, we sounded alarm on members' concerns over rising energy prices and the impact of fuel poverty on health outcomes, services and inequalities. Several organisations across the health sector and beyond amplified our message, resulting in action by the government to implement an energy price cap guarantee.

03

Pushing for discharge funding

In the run up to the mini budget, we worked with other leading health and care organisations to urge the government to reinstate and extend discharge to access funding ahead of winter or risk a health emergency. Following our interventions, the government announced a £500 million Adult Social Care Discharge Fund. We continue to press for the rapid release of this vital funding.

04

Securing pensions reform

In July, NHS Employers, which is part of the NHS Confederation, implored the Chancellor to take action on the NHS Pensions Scheme to help tackle waiting lists. It came in response to deep concerns among employers about the effect the inflationary environment is having on pension tax, and the impact on NHS care. As a result in September, the then health and social care secretary, Thérèse Coffey, announced significant changes to pension rules in line with our asks.

07

Influencing regulation and oversight

A priority for the first half of this year has been making the case for more autonomy for local leaders, with fewer national targets. Our report led by Professor Sir Chris Ham described a new operating model for the NHS, and we have directly informed the development of NHS England's resulting new operating model as well as shaping the updated NHS Oversight Framework.

10

Integrating primary care

We were actively involved in the engagement and development process for the Fuller Stocktake on integrating primary care, with our full range of members and networks taking part in workstreams, steering groups and acting as a 'critical friend'. The watershed report includes many of the key principles our members shared with us.

05

Financing the NHS and showing its economic value

Our inflation analysis with the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) reversed perceptions of the NHS having a record amount of funding, revealing that the NHS has had a real-terms budget cut of between £4 - 9.4 billion this year. Our analysis with Carnall Farrar quantified the positive relationship between increased NHS spending, improved health outcomes and improved productivity, stating that every pound invested in the NHS gives £4 back to the economy.

08

Engaging with the COVID-19 inquiry

Our early engagement with the COVID-19 inquiry enabled us to influence its terms of reference (ToRs). As a result, the TORs are more representative of the efforts and pressures on the whole system, and a focus on communication with the service will now be explored. Our July report set out our view on the situation facing the NHS when the pandemic began, how events unfurled and core considerations for the inquiry.

06

Shaping the Messenger leadership review

Published in June, the Messenger Review was the central opportunity for influencing policy that will dictate leadership development in the NHS this year. Many of its recommendations reflected what we highlighted as members' key areas for improvement: greater structure and consistency in leadership development; improving diversity in senior leadership; emphasis on rewarding collaboration; and more support to leaders who take on challenging roles.

09

Supporting ICSs' fourth purpose

Our work, reach and reputation on the relationship between the health and economic and social development meant we were invited to lead the development of NHSE's work to define integrated care systems' (ICS) fourth purpose. Through our engagement, we ensured that members' views and wider partners' ideas were taken into account. We were pleased to see this reflected in NHSE's decision to fund a select number of ICSs within every region to work on this activity.

We are representing you

Throughout the NHS Confederation, we continue to represent members' views, concerns and expert knowledge to influence change.

Our ICS Network has engaged with the new team at the Department of Health and Social Care, as well as opposition health spokespeople, to set out what integrated care systems are achieving and the challenges they face.

Our BME Leadership Network published *Shattered Hopes* in June, which highlighted the experiences of racism among senior health leaders and called for better processes to support future and current leaders.


Our Community Network, hosted with NHS Providers, highlighted the impact of care backlogs for community services nationally. We continue to raise the need for support to address care backlogs with national stakeholders.

We wrote to the Secretary of State expressing deep concerns about the decision to exclude trans people from the ban on so-called conversion therapy, and outlining our commitment to putting an end to harmful conversion practices against all LGBTQIA+ people.

Following a survey of Community Network members, alongside NHS Providers we raised the issue of high petrol prices and their impact on community services, as well as wider cost-of-living pressures.

We published recommendations for health and care systems across the UK following research into the unequal impact of COVID-19 on people with protected characteristics, such as BME communities, people with disabilities, older and younger people.

Our Community Network has engaged in discussions on the intermediate care review, sharing feedback from members and best practice examples



Member concerns have helped to shape our influencing work around the new NHS England operating framework

We are helping acute providers to understand how to deal with fragile services this winter, building on our engagement with members on the challenges and risks to patient safety.

Our Mental Health Network has contributed to parliamentary inquiries and calls for evidence including the government's ten-year mental health and wellbeing plan, the consultation on banning conversion therapy, and the Mental Health Act reform.

We unveiled our new Primary Care Network in April 2022, bringing together our former PCN Network and Primary Care Federation Network with other primary care providers as a powerful new voice for primary care.

We influenced NHS England's direction to local commissioners to make capital funding available through integrated care boards to improve primary care technology.

On behalf of community providers, our Community Network engaged in discussions with NHS England on the NHS Long Term Plan refresh and the intermediate care review, sharing feedback from members and best practice examples.

We have worked closely with members and NHSX teams to influence the Digital Health and Care Plan and Data Strategies, highlighting the variation in digital maturity, legacy IT systems and the importance of interoperability.

As a member of the Mental Health Policy Group, the Mental Health Network has continued to influence government policy based on members' concerns, including publishing a manifesto for the new Prime Minister.

Our primary care reference group continues to act as a sounding board and source of intelligence to inform our public position on key issues as well as current and future policy on primary care.

Member concerns have helped to shape our influencing work around the new NHS England operating framework and we continue to influence the CQC on its developing system regulatory framework.

We are connecting you

Members are embracing the opportunities we provide to connect with their peers, as well as regional and national leaders, to discuss shared challenges and solutions.

Our Mental Health Network holds weekly meetings for mental health trust chairs for peer-to-peer learning and to connect them with other leaders, including from the voluntary sector and the CQC.

Through our ICS Network we have established a number of forums supporting chief executives, chairs and executive teams to encourage peer learning and support, information sharing and to provide opportunities to influence guidance and approaches.

We brought together over 6,000 people from health, care and beyond for NHS ConfedExpo. Delivered with NHS England, the event provided a unique space to share, learn and reconnect following the pandemic.


The Health and Care Women Leaders Network continues to grow its women's networks, with more than 60 organisations now part of it.

Ambulance and system leaders came together through the Community Network to share challenges, explore solutions and share good practice in urgent and emergency care standards.

Our Primary Care Network's nurse clinical directors met with several national primary care leaders to help shape and engage with national policy development.

Our Chairs Network has met three times in the past six months to focus on the cost of living, and children and young people.

Primary care nurse clinical directors met with primary care leaders to help shape national policy development



Ambulance and system leaders came together to share challenges, explore solutions and share good practice

We convened a stakeholder reference group across our Acute Network membership to support NHS England with the development of the urgent and emergency care strategy.

Delegates came together across NHS ConfedExpo to discuss equality, diversity and inclusion, with sessions on actions to reduce healthcare inequalities, achieving diverse boards, inclusion in leadership and a powerful session on racism.

A dedicated roundtable event with Community Network members directly informed the CQC's evolving approach to regulation.

Members across our networks came together in July to discuss children and young people, focusing specifically on prevention and early intervention.

The September meeting of our Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Systems group covered the importance of partnership working in developing children and young people's mental health support across systems.

Our ICS Network has further developed our offer to integrated care partnerships (ICPs), working with colleagues at the Local Government Association and are facilitating connections with ICP and integrated care board chairs to ensure a joined-up approach to ICP strategies.

We continue to hold regular Community Network meetings alongside NHS Providers, which bring together leaders from across community services to share their thinking on key issues.

We hosted the launch event of Dr Claire Fuller's national stocktake report on how systems work with primary care.

Our Mental Health Network launched a new Learning Disabilities Forum to support providers working in this area, and hold monthly meetings of the Independent Sector Mental Health Group.

We are supporting you

Our membership support continues across learning events and development programmes, in addition to our regular briefings, tools and resources on emerging and existing issues.

The Community Network has surveyed members on their role and voice within integrated care systems (ICSs) to provide support to and facilitate discussions with ICS leaders.

The first module of our refreshed Diversity in Health and Care Partners programme took place in September, with 48 organisations taking part this year to gain support to create more inclusive workplace cultures.

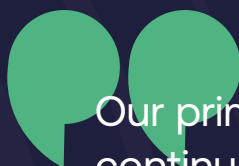
Through our Acute Network we have established learning spaces and action learning sets to support emerging policy and practice around provider collaboration and place-based leadership

A roundtable event from our Mental Health Network brought together people with lived experience of learning disabilities to help make equality and inclusion a reality for people with learning disabilities. It resulted in a briefing containing practical tips for commissioners.

Our Leading Integration Peer Support programme, run jointly with the Local Government Association and NHS Providers, continues to offer peer support at system, place and neighbourhood.

The Health and Care LGBTQ+ Leaders Network and Mental Health Network launched an LGBTQ+ Inclusion Framework, providing practical support for health and care leaders to create inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ staff and service users.

Our First-Time Chief Executives Programme continues to support senior leaders embarking on their first NHS chief executive role, providing peer support and opportunities to come together to discuss key issues.



Our primary care member app continues to create a secure and safe space for primary care members to share ideas, documents, get feedback and host discussions

Our Mental Health Network brought together people with lived experience to help make equality and inclusion a reality for people with learning disabilities

Our Primary Care Network continues to support primary care network (PCN) development through the PCN managers forum, hosting monthly meetings.

Our ICS Network launched a new leadership development programme, Connected Leadership, in partnership with the Forward Institute, to support chief executives and chairs in integrated care systems as they cultivate their own leadership styles.

Our Mental Health Network hosts an aspiring nurse directors forum to develop mental health nurse directors of the future, through masterclasses and one-to-one support.

As part of the award-winning Tale of 3 Cities project, our Mental Health Network hosted a webinar on borderline personality disorder and other co-morbidities to help service providers make the right considerations when caring for people.

The Community Network has engaged with key NHS England stakeholders on national data for the sector, commented on the publication of urgent community response (UCR) data in national performance statistics and published a video on the benefits to the system of UCR services.

We are building our offer for non-executive directors of both integrated care boards and provider organisations, delivering help and support on governance, hot topics and longer-term ambitions through peer support and expert speakers.

Our primary care member app continues to create a secure and safe space for primary care members to share ideas, documents, get feedback and host discussions.

Our Acute Network has worked with Proud2beOps to convene meetings to support operations leads across the country on issues such as pensions.

After hearing views that primary care was considered 'too complex,' we met with system partners at all levels to help them understand more.

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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