

Improving health and care together

2025/26



About us

The health and care system **has changed**.

More than ever, **integration** and **partnership working** are crucial to the delivery and **improvement** of health and care services.

As the membership body for the whole healthcare system, we are **uniquely placed** to bring together, support and **influence** on behalf of leaders and organisations across the sector.

The members we **represent** employ over 1.5 million staff, care for more than 1 million patients a day and control £150 billion of public expenditure.

We are the **voice** of healthcare leaders.

We are the **NHS Confederation**.

Find out more at www.nhsconfed.org

Why be part of the NHS Confederation?

Join a supportive learning and improvement community that ensures your insights, views and needs are heard at the highest levels.

We support leaders to **innovate** and **transform**, helping them to **improve** the NHS and the nation's health and wellbeing.

We **join the dots** between different parts of the health and care system and we connect members and partners to **share learning** and **develop solutions** to common challenges.



We connect
members and partners to share learning and develop solutions



At the sharp end of **influencing** the government and its national bodies, we provide a **strong national voice** to secure the conditions members need to succeed.

As a member, you tap into a **community of support** across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Whatever part of the health and care sector you are in, there's a place for you at the NHS Confederation. Benefit from:

Improvement support

Specialist programmes and consultancy services to advance leadership capability and embed quality improvement approaches across the NHS.

Behind-the-scenes insight

Informative bulletins and digital communities, which keep leaders up to date on the latest developments.

Influence and impact

Private roundtables, original policy research and relationships with policymakers exert influence over the key issues affecting health and care.

Unrivalled networking

Our programme of conferences, webinars, masterclasses and dinners support members to make connections.

Profile and shared learning

Our powerful voice in the media, popular podcast and practical case studies profile members' views, experiences and innovations.

Practical peer support

Bespoke spaces for peer learning and collaboration, equipping members with practical tools and skills to implement immediately.

Leadership development

Practical programmes for first-time provider trust chief executives and aspiring mental health nurse directors, as well as networks championing equality, diversity and inclusion.

Member-led networks

Our influential networks represent members, act as their public voice and connect them with others in their sector and the wider system.

Working on behalf of our members

The NHS Confederation is the only membership body that represents the whole health system. We are uniquely placed to provide both specialist support to individual parts of the system as well as offering a range of system-wide programmes.

Our support to members comes through two routes:

- 1** Influencing the government and its national bodies on the issues that matter most to you.
- 2** The wide range of improvement, leadership development and other forms of peer-to-peer support that we offer.

Influencing on your behalf

Since our significant programme of work in the run-up to last year's General Election, including **publishing a manifesto representing members' views**, we have hit the ground running, **establishing strong relationships with ministers, advisers and other policymakers**.

We are closely involved in many of the working groups that have been established to **help develop the government's ten-year health plan**. We are using these channels, and other opportunities, to **make the case for the changes** that you want to see if the government is to deliver its transformational shifts.

With a comprehensive Spending Review coming up this year, we continue to **influence the government** on the need for more capital investment and reform of the capital regime – both of which continue to impede our members in improving productivity.

And we are **advocating for changes** to the regulatory and performance management culture that we believe stifles local leaders. The reduction in national targets and greater devolution of funding and control that we helped to secure in the 2025/26 Planning Guidance was a welcome first step. But we need the government to go further if it is to truly empower local leaders, hand them more autonomy and reduce needless micromanagement.

Finally, we also continue to **work side by side with our social care counterparts** to encourage the government to deliver long-term funding, reform and greater support for our sister sector. This will not only help to reduce pressure on local health services but also provide the care and support that hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people are missing out on.

The key priorities to support our members

We regularly engage our members on what our priorities should be and there is consensus about the transformational shifts required. So, our five priorities for 2025/26 are:



Hospital to community

We will support more outcomes-focused, integrated design and delivery of services, alongside incentives to enable investment outside of hospitals.



Put the NHS on a sustainable footing

We will continue to make the case for the fundamental areas of support and reform that are needed to help the NHS deliver on the constitutional standards and to deliver higher public satisfaction.



Treatment to prevention

We will support the most impactful early interventions on self-reported health and wider determinants to reduce disparity in healthy life expectancy.



Deliver a strategy for national health and prosperity

We will continue to advocate for a truly cross-departmental, outcomes-focused, approach to NHS reform.



Analogue to digital

We will support systems to build digital maturity and interoperability that will best deliver improved access, personalisation and sustainability.

Our support

As an NHS Confederation member you have access to a wider range of support and resources than ever before, regardless of which network you belong to.

Beyond your network

We encourage you to look beyond your 'home' networks at the many resources, events, conferences, webinars and member briefings available to you across the NHS Confederation.

Find them on our [website](#) and in our regular bulletins, so that you and your colleagues can make the most of your membership.

Within your network

Within your home networks, to keep you abreast of new developments, members have the benefit of inside information and updates via apps and WhatsApp groups, bulletins and other channels.

We know how much members value the peer-to-peer support you receive from those in similar roles and organisations, whether you are a chair, chief executive, director, non-executive director, senior manager or clinician. This takes place via regular online meetings, webinars and face-to-face events and conferences, including the annual NHS ConfedExpo conference, which we know members find hugely beneficial.

You will find more detail about the support you can expect from our networks later in this brochure.

NHS Employers

NHS Employers, part of the NHS Confederation, continues to support all provider NHS organisations in England to improve workforce and employment practice. Our networks with chief people officers and their teams provide a space to shape policy implementation and delivery and facilitate the sharing of workforce and OD expertise and best practice.

Our satisfaction survey results showed that over 90 per cent of our members either agree or strongly agree that our networks have benefited them.

We keep members up to date with the latest workforce news and a range of practical tools and resources on topics such as job evaluation, reward, recruitment practice, staff wellbeing, widening participation and the use of medical associate professional roles.

You can visit NHS Employers at www.nhsemployer.org

Leadership and improvement

At the NHS Confederation, we believe that the NHS has the potential for a stronger and more sustainable future if we invest properly in leadership development and improvement.

This is why we have further developed our leadership and improvement work as part of our member offer, using our unique position as convenor of leaders across the whole health system to support our members in a more focused and practical way.

The Hewitt Review published in 2023 recommended that integrated care systems (ICSs) become ‘self-improving systems’. This means giving everyone working in systems the autonomy to develop their own strategies to address local needs and priorities. Our aim is to support all system leaders in achieving this.

Focus on development

We are taking advantage of the renewed national focus on NHS improvement and development of leaders and leadership, by helping to build a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Many systems are embracing this approach and mindset, and our aim is to support them in this.

Our approach blends peer learning with many practical resources, publications, podcasts and events, helping to develop learning and improvement approaches and helping leaders to connect and share their local experience.

In addition to long-standing programmes such as our first-time chief executive programme, we have partnered with the Health Foundation and Q Community to deliver our learning and improving across systems peer learning programme, for senior leaders across systems. We have also recently launched our health inequalities leadership development programme for non-executive directors, our digital ICS programme, our diversity in health and care leaders programme, as well as our new community of practice (COP) for neighbourhood health.

Examples of our growing leadership and improvement offer

- **Learning and improving across systems:** our partnership with the Health Foundation and the Q community to systems to boost their capability to learn and improve collaboratively.
- **Improvement across primary and secondary care:** our hub containing tools, guidance, templates and tips to support improvement in organisations working across the interface between primary and secondary care.
- **Neighbourhood health community of practice:** Action Learning Sets for health and care leaders who play a role in the development of neighbourhood health in community care.
- **Digital ICS Programme:** supporting all integrated care board (ICB) and integrated care system (ICS) leaders to better harness digital transformation to enable delivery of system ambitions.
- **First-Time Chief Executives Programme:** supporting new provider trust chief executives with a peer support and learning programme.
- **Tackling Inequalities Leadership Programme:** practical support for EDI directors and senior responsible officers delivering strategic workforce and health equity programmes and interventions.
- **Primary Care Leadership Development:** bespoke programmes of training, development, infrastructure and support for primary care leaders to help them develop their plans and priorities.
- **Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme:** supporting health and care organisations to create more inclusive workplace cultures, where difference is welcomed and celebrated.
- **Aspiring Mental Health Nurse Directors Programme:** run by the Mental Health Network and the National Mental Health and Learning Disability Nurse Directors Forum, this course is for mental health nurses looking to take their next career step.
- **Health Inequalities NEDs Leadership Development Programme:** helping ICB chairs and non-executive directors (NEDs) to create the right culture, leadership and governance to tackle inequalities.

A full list of our specific offers are listed under the [Leadership and Improvement](https://www.nhsconfed.org) section of our website (www.nhsconfed.org).

Partnerships and equality

We equip leaders to improve patient outcomes, harnessing the benefits of a diverse workforce to achieve lasting change.

We do this through **practical, evidence-based approaches** in three areas:

- **Equity** - empowering members to lead through community and workforce engagement.
- **Leadership** - supporting members to build a diverse leadership.
- **Accountability** - a clear and effective system of accountability.

Our work, known as the Tackling Inequalities Programme, complements national, regional and local strategies on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and health inequalities.

Offering practical guidance, insightful resources and opportunities to connect, we support members to promote diverse recruitment, to have confidence in those with lived experience, to develop their workforces and build an inclusive leadership pipeline for the future.



**Loudly
making
the case**

for increased
support and
inclusion of different
groups.

We influence

We offer regular networking, development and **vital peer support** to over 6,000 members and allies via our three diverse leadership networks, supporting leaders from marginalised backgrounds to speak up on national issues.

We foster **collaborative working and sharing innovation** to make change happen. Linking to NHS Long Term Workforce Plan and NHS EDI Improvement Plan, with the ambition of creating a sense of belonging, our Diversity in Health and Care Partners Programme supports over 40 organisations to tackle inequalities in the workplace.

We **gather insights from staff and leaders** across the healthcare system on key issues, including our sector-wide Health and Care LGBTQ+ Leaders Network Survey. With over 540 network members responding, we gained a clearer picture of LGBTQ+ staff experience to inform the development of policies and initiatives to promote inclusion and support.

We use **insights into the experiences of colleagues and patients** to drive improvements in staff experience and care through impactful initiatives such as our BME Leadership Network's anti-racism conference; Black History Month lecture on an anti-racist model for building healthy communities; our LGBT+ History Month event celebrating LGBTQ+ inclusion past, present and future; and our Disability History Month campaign and Disability Summit supporting the creation of disability inclusive workplaces.

We hold space for leaders' personal and professional development, **contributing to a rich pool of diverse talent** within the healthcare system.

We raise awareness on behalf of the diverse NHS workforce, loudly **making the case for increased support and inclusion** of different groups and influencing key policy updates such as the NHS England Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan.

We support improvement

We **forge partnerships and convene collaborative projects** with members to support and enhance patient care, championing innovative population-health-focused solutions. Our collaborative project in Redbridge, North London, using the NHS Confederation's Five Step Improvement Model has resulted in improved primary prevention; a productivity increase in primary care; efficiencies across the system; and has directly improved the lives of 3,000 patients living with cardiovascular disease.

We keep members up to date with the latest **guidance and good practice on tackling inequality** for staff and patients within their organisations, including our report Action for Equality in Wales and Northern Ireland: The Time is Now, developed by our Health and Care Women Leaders Network; our Investment Not a Drain briefing and our BME Leadership Network's report Excellence Through Equality: Anti-Racism as a Quality Improvement Tool.

Via our Tackling Inequalities Leadership Programme, we **support and enhance the existing skills of leaders** who are working strategically to tackle inequality for those using and working within health and care organisations.

We **facilitate safe spaces for over 440 staff network leads** through our three diverse leadership 'network of networks', providing a platform for shared learning and collaboration on tackling healthcare and workforce inequalities at organisational level.

We connect and support our members to tackle inequality through an **extensive events programme**, allowing them to share insights, thought leadership and guidance across over 40 sessions annually.



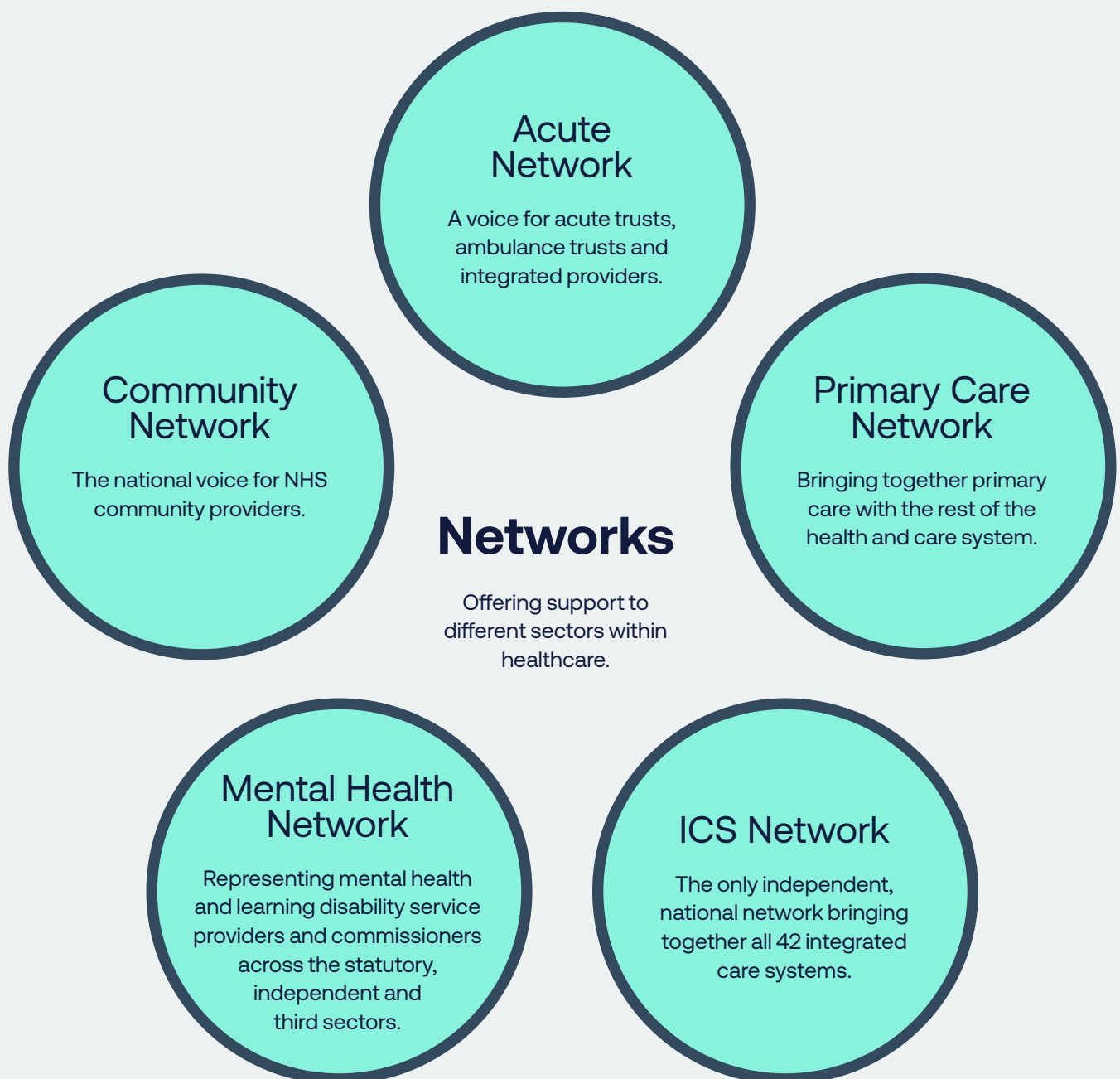
"I highly recommend joining the BME Leadership Network, a vital platform empowering NHS black and minority ethnic (BME) leaders. It enhances your voice, fosters support, and contributes to the inclusivity and responsiveness of NHS organisations to diverse community needs."

Bernadette Thompson OBE, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Access sector-specific support

Members working in a specific sector will have particular issues and challenges they may want support to address.

So, in addition to our system-wide support, members benefit from networks and activities dedicated to their part of the healthcare system.



Acute Network

We are a national voice for acute trusts, ambulance services and integrated providers, supporting them by influencing national policy, sharing best practice and engaging with leaders across the health and social care system.

We work with the government, regulators, national bodies, media and the wider NHS, and we support leaders in their roles at place level and within systems.

We provide a platform for collaborative working, sharing good practice and innovative thinking for solutions to the current pressures and challenges faced in acute care at both individual and organisational levels.

We influence

As we feed into the **development and implementation of the ten-year plan**, we are engaging extensively to ensure the needs of our acute members are heard and understood. In addition, we have programmes of work focused on the government's three major shifts and what they mean for the services that you deliver.

We ensure the concerns, challenges and views of our members are heard at a strategic and national level to help **drive policy change and directives** to support the recovery. We focus on highlighting and communicating the current climate in acute care and influencing national policymaking and legislation, both in direct discussion with policymakers and through the media.

We host a range of roundtables and engagement sessions to allow leaders to share their views, experience and points of concerns that we can use to **lobby for change**. This includes a bespoke channel for clinical leaders to feed into our influencing work on issues that matter most to them.

We celebrate members' work and actively seek out opportunities to tell positive stories through the media, as well as raising concerns where appropriate, helping policymakers and the public to **understand the challenges faced by acute and ambulance providers**.

We **connect members with other parts of the system** and help to ensure that the role of all types of acute NHS providers is understood and accounted for in all system discussions.

Our newly formed advisory board is made up of chief executives in the acute sector and helps to underpin our activities on members' behalf, giving direction and oversight. We talk to members on a daily basis and make sure their **insights are turned into action**.



We
connect
members
with other parts
of the system

We support improvement

Our popular **peer learning and support programme** for first-time provider chief executives has now benefited more than 100 chief executives, the vast majority of whom are acute sector leaders. We will be recruiting the next cohort this spring and welcome expressions of interest.

We create spaces to debate and spark innovation to support new ways of working at organisation, place and system level. Our forums meet regularly to help leaders think through and address challenging and complex issues. They include dedicated spaces for chief executives, operational leaders and acute clinical leaders.

Through our interface improvement development programmes and associated learning hub, we provide **targeted, practical improvement support** to assist members to work more effectively across the interface between sectors, including primary care and mental health.

Our **peer learning sets and roundtable discussions** link members' senior teams with peers across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, creating safe spaces for them to discuss issues outside of their normal circles and offering an opportunity to share best practice and learn from each other.

We identify, showcase and spread good practice across our membership and the wider health and care system through our growing **library of improvement insights**.

We also deliver a programme of wider **work to support non-executive directors**, including events, newsletters and best practice publications. Our Non-Executive Leaders Network meets bi-monthly and offers a chance to connect with chairs and non-executive leaders in other parts of the country to discuss challenges and learn from guest speakers.



“The NHS Confederation’s work on improving population health and reducing health inequalities will help us develop greater focus on prevention and ensure residents receive the right care.”

Joshua Poole, Transformation Lead – Clinical Service Integration Lead, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

The year ahead at a glance

When	Development programmes and policy influencing	Overview	Benefits
March	Board session on social and political insight (a two-part series)	Bespoke board sessions for acute providers on strategic political contexts, dilemmas and opportunities , with NHS Confederation chief executive Matthew Taylor. A space to collectively reflect on local actions.	✓ Understand how the national context impacts local settings. ✓ Reflect on findings and explore opportunities. ✓ Explore the impact and implications of challenges. ✓ Gain a shared understanding.
March	Health economic partnerships webinar series	NHS trusts are central to boosting productivity, addressing inequalities, spreading opportunity and restoring pride to local areas. This series looks at the local growth agenda , the role of acute trusts and how they can influence local leaders .	✓ Understand the local economy and whole-system partnerships. ✓ Reimagine how to work with universities, colleges and schools. ✓ Embed health on the high street. ✓ Understand what devolution means for the NHS.
April	Valuing patient time	This programme provides practical support to help trusts reduce deconditioning for patients in hospital and provide care closer to home for people in end-of-life care .	✓ Improve patient care and outcomes. ✓ Invest in care closer to patients' preferred setting. ✓ Improve patient flow and discharge in hospital. ✓ Improve funding models for social needs.
April	The Evolve Collaborative: Turning healthcare insights into action	A new nationwide collaborative dedicated to improving patient outcomes through the power of data . Delivered in partnership with Beamtree, the collaborative puts timely analytics in your hands . Powered by an incisive data platform and supported by peer-learning communities , the initiative will evolve how you make decisions.	✓ Access timely information, benchmarked against peers and with facilitated learning communities. ✓ Review and analyse metrics and benefit from predictive analytics features. ✓ Collaborate with peers through learning communities to drive improvements.



When	Development programmes and policy influencing	Overview	Benefits
April	Targets and performance in acute hospitals	This work programme aims to better understand the flow and regulation of performance targets in acute hospitals.	✓ Influence policy decisions on performance targets. ✓ Improve recognition and understanding of value/non-value targets. ✓ Reduce bureaucracy and duplication.
May	Mental Health and Acute Improvement Collaborative	Bringing mental health and acute providers together, this programme will support effective working across systems to improve care and experience for patients with mental health needs who attend acute A&E services .	✓ Create a system-recommended change process to improve care and experience for patients. ✓ Reduce long waits for patients with mental health needs. ✓ Provide better integrated services to patients. ✓ Provide direct improvement support to teams with local challenges.
June	Primary and acute improvement sprints	Building on the success of our Primary and Secondary Care Collaborative, these sprints will focus on reducing bureaucracy across sectors and collectively implementing improvements.	✓ Reduce delays and duplication and improve patient experience. ✓ Build on the national red-tape challenge to improve cross-sector working. ✓ Make better use of resources and cut waste.
June	Operational leadership and administration	With significant cuts and challenges to non-clinical roles – especially administrative roles – we will work with members to raise awareness of the value of these functions as well as the challenges, support and investment needed .	✓ Understand the operational and administrative role in managing demand, capacity and targets. ✓ Delve deeper into the role non-clinical staff play in elective recovery and patient flow. ✓ Discover processes and good practice that support effective planning and accessibility for patients through administrative functions.

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When	Development programmes and policy influencing	Overview	Benefits
July	First-Time Chief Executives Programme	Designed for senior leaders embarking on their first NHS chief executive role , our programme provides peer support and an opportunity for new executives to discuss key issues and shared challenges.	✓ Form connections with peers and access a range of opportunities to develop and learn. ✓ Connect with national decision-makers and key influencers to understand the wider system, national priorities and political context. ✓ Learn from and collaborate with peers, sharing experiences and concerns.
July	Elective recovery: surgical focus	This research project will take a focused look at the role of innovation and improvement in elective recovery , including the challenges in meeting the ambitious targets of the elective recovery plan, with a particular focus on surgical elective pathways .	✓ Improve patient care, outcomes and pathways. ✓ Shape pathways and practice. ✓ Influence policy and develop practical solutions to elective challenges.
July	Urgent and emergency care: attendance and access	This project will describe and advocate for whole-system actions and collaboration on steps to help reduce unnecessary attendance and access to A&E .	✓ Work with partners across the system to uncover levers that support urgent and emergency care recovery. ✓ Improve patient care, outcomes and pathways. ✓ Spread and amplify good practice. ✓ Reduce waits and improve access to right services.
August	Winter pressures: what is needed	Every winter is a significant challenge, yet there are opportunities and support that could reduce this. We will work with members to develop practical solutions and to shape policy .	✓ Feed into whole-system recommendations to improve winter pressures. ✓ Raise understanding of patterns, trends and analysis of the reality of winter. ✓ Develop practical long-term solutions and share good practice. ✓ Raise awareness of the barriers and challenges to implementation.

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When	Development programmes and policy influencing	Overview	Benefits
October	Elective recovery: outpatient focus	We will work with members on outpatient recovery , providing advice and guidance.	✓ Improve patient care, outcomes and pathways. ✓ Shape pathways and practice. ✓ Influence policy and develop practical solutions to elective challenges.
October	Urgent and emergency care: patient flow and bed capacity	Understanding, describing and advocating for whole-system actions and collaboration on steps to improve discharge and early transfer of patients in hospital.	✓ Work with partners across the system to uncover levers that support urgent and emergency care recovery. ✓ Improve patient care, outcomes and pathways. ✓ Spread, increase and amplify good practice. ✓ Reduce waits for patients and access to right services.
November	Empowering patients in decision-making	This project will raise understanding of the progress and impact of empowering patients through providing greater choice and control .	✓ Understand from patients and the public what they need to manage their healthcare needs. ✓ Understand the value and impact of patient-initiated care and follow-up options. ✓ Delve into the role of digital technology and information for patient care/decision-making.

Continue reading for information on our engagement forums and networks.

Our engagement forums and networks

Frequency	Title	Context	Benefits
Quarterly	Chief Executives' Advisory Group (chaired by the NHS Confederation's vice-chair)	Chatham House advisory group for acute chief executives to form collective action and recommendations on what matters to you , turning conversation to action.	✓ A confidential space to collaborate and work collectively on priority areas. ✓ Work alongside peers to discuss, share and understand challenges, successes and future planning. ✓ Connect acute vision to wider system context and opportunities to drive policy change.
Quarterly	Group Models Forum	Group model structures are in over a third of NHS trusts. This forum will work with group model leaders to collaborate on best practice, share learning and recommend standard working models , as well as review own working practices with peers.	✓ Build on the findings of our report on shared leadership. ✓ Influence and shape policy on group model working practices. ✓ Learn from and collaborate with peers. ✓ Tap into wider improvement opportunities through this group.
Bi-monthly	Acute Clinical Reference Group (chaired by Dr Chris Pickering)	Patient safety, risk and clinical outcomes are important factors that need to be included in policymaking decisions. This group enables members with clinical expertise to influence how we engage with government and national policymakers , as well as learn from each other.	✓ Ensure the clinical voice is included in decision-making. ✓ Advocate on behalf of clinical leaders. ✓ Learn from and collaborate with peers. ✓ Tap into wider improvement opportunities through this group. ✓ Amplify diverse clinical leaders' voices, experiences and recommendations in improvement and shaping outcomes.



Frequency	Title	Context	Benefits
Bi-monthly	Senior Operational Leaders Forum	This forum provides the opportunity for senior leaders to influence national policy, provide input to decision-making as well as learn from their peers . It enables priority areas and concerns for members to be escalated and used to advocate the right changes needed.	✓ Ensure the operational management voice is included in decision-making. ✓ Advocate on behalf of operational leaders and shape policy decisions based on what is really happening. ✓ Learn from and collaborate with peers to share learning and challenges. ✓ Connect to wider improvement opportunities through this group.
Monthly	Mission Delivery Unit	This forum provides a direct connection with civil servants from the No.10 Delivery Unit on current health policy matters and provides members with the opportunity to provide feedback, insight and suggestions on a wide range of topics.	✓ Shape national health policy. ✓ Connect with national decision-makers to ensure the voice of acute members is acted on. ✓ Collaborate with peers and share experiences and concerns.
Bespoke	Acute Chief Executives: In conversation with Matthew Taylor	One-to-one opportunity to connect with Matthew Taylor, NHS Confederation chief executive, to gain insight into the latest national and political developments . This is also a space to share what matters to you, highlight issues, concerns and recommendations.	✓ A confidential space to share concerns and provide feedback. ✓ Connect acute vision into wider system context and opportunities to drive policy change. ✓ Share strategic thinking, vision and how it links to national context.

Community Network

We are the national voice of NHS community providers. Hosted by the NHS Confederation and NHS Providers, we support trusts and not-for-profit organisations providing NHS community health services to deliver high-quality care by influencing national policy, sharing good practice and promoting a vision of integrated care in the community.

Our vision is to be an effective network for all trusts and not-for-profit organisations providing NHS community health services, championing, supporting and influencing their role in the health and care system.

We influence

We represent the **views of NHS community services providers** to decisionmakers, stakeholders and the media, giving profile to members' achievements and voice to their concerns.

We shape the national policy debate to raise the profile of the **pivotal role community services play** in delivering high-quality, integrated care and delivering the government's key shifts of providing more care closer to home, moving from treatment to prevention and from analogue to digital

We provide a **voice for community providers** as they deal with significant operational pressures, including pushing for support to tackle backlogs of care in both adult and children's services.

We **promote the role of community services within ICSs** and ensure community providers have a strong voice as systems develop, and we share learning to support local solutions.

We continue to **call for equitable and transparent funding and resource** for the community sector, including capital investment needed for estates and digital solutions to improve productivity.

We use the significant combined media and social media profiles of both the NHS Confederation and NHS Providers to **celebrate and explain the immense value and breadth of community health services**, including through our annual #CelebratingCommunityServices campaign.



Helping community services

find their place and maximise their value in new models of care

We support improvement

Through our regular newsletters and member events, we ensure leaders of community providers are informed about national policy developments and given **opportunities to share their insights and shape emerging policy**.

We support community services to improve by **sharing best practice** and **innovation** across the sector.

We help community services find their place and **maximise their value in new models of care**, particularly supporting community providers in their role in systems and in new integrated ways of neighbourhood working.

We host **regular networking events** for community provider leaders, alongside bespoke meetings focused on specific issues facing the community sector.

We play an important role in **connecting community providers with all parts of the system**, and we ensure community providers are linked up through forums including our national Chairs Network, Integrated Neighbourhood Working community practices and sector-wide forums and work.

Our Care Closer to Home conference in April will bring together primary and community leaders to **discover innovative solutions to challenges**, connect and share best practice, and drive improvement within the sector.



“As a leader, the NHS Confederation’s work in highlighting the vital role that community health services play in the health and care system is vital, and for Care Plus Group, membership is essential. Membership provides a wide range of benefits including a space to build connections, learn from peers and amplify our voices.”

Jane Miller, Chief Executive, Care Plus Group

Integrated Care Systems Network

We are the only independent, national network bringing together all 42 integrated care systems (ICSs).

We support them to achieve their four core purposes and we do this by helping ICS leaders – from both integrated care boards (ICB) and integrated care partnerships (ICPs) – to exchange ideas, share experiences and challenges, and provide peer support.

We give our members a voice through our government influencing, policy work, media appearances and our work on key health and care developments. We work closely with key partners such as the Local Government Association (LGA), reinforcing the role of ICSs as a partnership of equals.



We provide
an independent
national voice
for ICSs

We influence

We **influence national debate** on behalf of members through our parliamentary engagement programme including meetings, briefings and roundtables to influence key decision-makers. We provide a national voice for ICS leaders on key issues including system oversight, CQC assessments, local devolution and capital and payment mechanisms, as well as inputting directly into several of the ten-year plan working groups.

We have **constructive working relationships with national bodies** such as the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and the Care Quality Commission, as well as through our partnership arrangements with organisations such as the Local Government Association, the Health Foundation Q Community and Richmond Group.

We ensure members are kept up to date on news and announcements via our website and our fortnightly ICS Leaders Bulletin. We provide instant updates through our active and engaged digital communities, which we use to share intelligence and **seek real-time member feedback** to support our influencing activities.

We provide an **independent national voice for ICSs** through the media, national events and our engagement with ministers and other national decision-makers. We make a positive case in support of system working, demonstrating the difference integration makes and how it can lead to better outcomes for the populations ICSs serve.

We **provide a unique opportunity for all ICS leaders** to come together to share challenges, ideas and to network together for peer learning, including through our annual ICS Network Conference. We bring together leaders in their fields to share and discuss the main topics affecting our ICS members and provide a safe space for discussion and debate.

We **publish our research findings on major national issues affecting systems**, to help support our influencing work. This year we have published reports around capital funding and NHS payment mechanisms, alongside our annual State of Integrated Care Systems report. We are leading projects around specialised commissioning, the development of place and neighbourhood leadership and commissioning in the context of system working.

We support improvement

We have successfully delivered the first year of our work in partnership with the Health Foundation and Q Community to **deliver a new programme of peer learning** for ICS leaders, focusing on system improvement. The partnership brings the improvement expertise of the Health Foundation and the networks and relationships of the NHS Confederation together with Q's membership community of over 5,000 people, collaborating to improve the safety and quality of care.

We support ICB board members to **improve and grow their leadership skills** to deliver improvement across their services, with a range of programmes to support ICS board members and leaders in their roles. We have completed our pilot Connected Leadership programme this year and are currently working with NHS England to better understand the support ICS leaders need going forward. This insight will help design and create leadership programmes for the future.

We have recently launched **a new programme for NEDs and chairs** to support their work around health inequalities. We have continued to run our quarterly ICB NED forum and our Joint ICB and Provider Chair and NED forum. We also support ICSs with the move to a digital strategic approach, through our ICS Digital Leaders Programme and we work closely with the Confed's Primary Care Network to support ICB directors of primary care and PC partner members.

We provide **opportunities for ICS leaders to connect to share improvement ideas**, insights and best practice with their peers through our regular network meetings, our forums, national conference and webinar programme. We support leaders to contribute to key national discussions around issues including CQC assessments and system oversight. We actively help leaders to share best practice from within their system, in the media and with other systems.

We work on thematic areas identified as priorities by our members, **providing thought leadership and practical support**. Topics include system improvement, place-based working, workforce, health and care inequalities, and digital and innovation. We work with a diverse range of external partners to ensure that ICSs benefit from a broad pool of relevant expertise and experience.



"I really value being a member of the ICS Network. It's really important to be able to work with people doing similar jobs in different parts of the country. It's a personal level of support and it's a professional level of support, which allows you to exchange good ideas and tackle wicked issues together."

Rob Webster, Chief Executive, West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Mental Health Network

We represent mental health and learning disability service providers and commissioners from across the statutory, independent and third sectors. We work with the government, arm's-length bodies, experts-by-experience, the media and the wider NHS to promote excellence in mental health services and the importance of good mental health for all.

With 100 per cent of mental health trusts in membership, alongside major independent care providers and key national charities, we help shape and challenge national policy and legislation affecting our members, make sense of the broader political and policy environment, and provide up-to-date news and analysis.

We influence

Through our membership of the Mental Health Policy Group, **our members' voices are heard at the highest levels** in engagements with NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care, ensuring the entire sector has a say on national decision-making. This includes communicating the demand and pressures mental health services are under.

We work as part of the Mental Health Economics Collaborative to undertake detailed research and in-depth economic evaluations of innovative mental health services and **influence the future direction of policy and practice**. This includes our analysis on the economic impact of mental ill health.

We continue to represent and work with members as a partner in NHS England's Mental Health Act (MHA) quality improvement programme. **We amplify and share the learnings** from a programme aiming to ensure that people detained under the MHA

in participating services, and the people who support them, feel that they have an equitable partnership with those providing their hospital care, and that care is inclusive of their diverse characteristics and needs.

We work with the wider sector to ensure the government remains committed to improving mental health services, **our collaborative voice was key** in retaining the Mental Health Investment Standard, which has been a vital tool in starting to address the high level of unmet need.

We ensure stakeholders understand **the importance of all parts of our membership** in contributing to the mental health sector ecosystem. We have done this through the publication of our explainer, The Role of the Independent Sector in Mental Health and Learning Disability Services, which highlighted the benefits and innovation our independent sector members bring.



Our collaborative voice

was key in retaining the Mental Health Investment Standard

We support improvement

Our **dedicated member forums** provide peer networking, support and learning on the issues that matter. Members can access our digital mental health, housing, learning disability, and medical directors' forums. They can also join regular peer-to-peer networking sessions with NHS chairs, independent sector leads, VCSE leads, and mental health and learning disability system leads.

The **next generation of leaders is supported** through our Aspiring Mental Health Nurse Directors' professional development programme.

Our annual conference and exhibition is an opportunity to join senior mental health leaders and key decision-makers to **hear from the sector's most influential speakers** on issues such as workforce, learning disabilities and children and young people.

We **support members to improve services on the ground** through our joint project with the Royal College of Psychiatrists on reducing out-of-area-placements; our work with the NHS Confederation's Acute Network on the mental health and A&E interface; and for services for young people with complex emotional needs.

Our **anti-racism work supports members with improvement** through a robust anti-racism framework that we deliver and embed in all our workstreams. Members are spotlighted through blogs and case studies for anti-racism training and programmes. We also partner with organisations that are tackling health inequalities, especially race and ethnicity.

Our regular reports, briefings, webinars and toolkits are designed to share learning within the sector and **focus on topics that are most critical to the running of members' organisations**.



“Being a part of a vibrant network of peers allows me to stay on top of important developments in our sector, learn from those doing exciting things, and turn to colleagues for advice and support when needed.”

**Evelyn Asante-Mensah OBE, Chief Executive,
Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust**

Primary Care Network

We are the only national network bringing together primary care with the rest of the health and care system, supporting, connecting and empowering members to drive change and improve patient outcomes.

Our vision is for an empowered, connected and respected primary care system that is robust, resilient and has a thriving future; a primary care system that operates at all layers of scale, starting closest to the community and working upwards, collaborating with relevant partners to deliver the right care at the right time with the right team.

We work with government, regulators, national bodies, media and the wider NHS, and we support primary care leaders in their roles at neighbourhood, place and system level. Through influencing national policy, sharing best practice and engaging with primary care leaders, we ensure primary care is a powerful voice for change.



**We
strengthen**

the voice of primary
care in and across
the health and care
system

We influence

Through our strong relationships with NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and other key national stakeholders **we strengthen the voice of primary care in and across the health and care system**. We provide a platform for our members to showcase their achievements, gain national recognition and directly influence the future model of care.

We ensure members' views and insights are an **integral part of national and political policy decisions**, lobbying decision-makers on key issues that matter to members. In 2025/26 this will include ensuring members' needs are recognised in discussions about the future of primary care and the role it should play in delivering on the three shifts to a community-based, data-driven, prevention-focused model of care.

A clear focus for us is supporting the government's shift of bringing care closer to home. From conferences and webinars to private roundtables and ministerial visits, we understand that the shift from hospital to primary and community-based care requires action at every level, and **through our members we will demonstrate how to make this a reality**.

Our **powerful voice gives members a national platform** with widespread media coverage and reach, bringing to light the challenges members are facing, celebrating their success and how they are working across organisational boundaries.

Through our ICB primary care partner members and ICB directors of primary care forums, we provide **a line of sight between system, place and neighbourhood, across commissioning and provision**. We create the space to think strategically about new models of care, transformational commissioning and how to build stronger partnerships between commissioners and providers.

We support improvement

As the only national network that brings the whole of primary care together with the rest of the system, we provide the **space to connect, reflect and innovate with peers**. We are the place where the different conversations can happen, where ideas can be listened to, tested and shared.

With community pharmacy, optometry, dentistry and audiology represented within our membership, **we support greater integration and new ways of working** within primary care, as well as with the rest of the system.

We support primary care leaders through thought-leadership articles, blogs and case studies on **topics spanning the breadth of primary care**. We also run leadership development workshops, conferences and programmes. Participants tell us they feel more empowered and confident to challenge and initiate change, and have greater confidence, motivation and job satisfaction.

We host a range of webinars, facilitate peer learning groups and high-profile national events with leaders **to share learning across primary care**. We support our members to get involved in national conversations.

We bring members the latest information through our **comprehensive briefings, analysis, bulletins and advice**.

We provide **targeted improvement support for members on key issues**, including working with our Acute Network on a programme to improve the interface between primary and secondary care through a series of webinars, learning sessions, toolkits and policy influencing opportunities.



The Primary Care Network has been a driving force in empowering primary care to thrive, fostering collaboration and innovation that transforms local healthcare delivery. Together, we're shaping a more resilient, connected, and forward-thinking primary care landscape that puts people first.

Rakesh Marwaha, Chief Executive, Erewash Primary Care Network

Meet the team

Our board of trustees



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Adebowale CBE**
Chair



'Foluke Ajayi
Vice-Chair and Chief
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Foundation Trust



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Collaborative PCN, Surrey
Heartlands



Jonathan Patton
Trustee representing
Northern Ireland



Nanda Ratnavel
Chair, Audit and Risk
Committee and Member,
Finance and Operations
Committee



Emma Woollett
Chair, Subsidiary Board and
Independent Trustee

Meet the team

Our executive team



Matthew Taylor
Chief Executive,
NHS Confederation



Danny Mortimer
Chief Executive,
NHS Employers and
Deputy Chief Executive,
NHS Confederation



Sarah Walter
Director,
ICS Network



Joan Saddler OBE
Director of Partnerships
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Rebecca Gray
Director,
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Ruth Rankine
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Primary Care Network



Rory Deighton
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Heather Moorhead
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Darren Hughes
Director,
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