



# Update



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## ICS update - 9 July 2021

This bulletin provides an update from the Integrated Care System (ICS) in the North East and North Cumbria regarding our latest information and plans to care for patients, staff and our communities. The Integrated Care System is led by Alan Foster, executive lead. If you have any questions or would like us to send vital information to partners through this bulletin, please contact us [here](#).

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## Message from Alan Foster



### Picture across the region

Health and care organisations across the region remain very busy and this is particularly the case for our emergency departments, many of which are back seeing as many patients as they did before the pandemic. And across primary care, appointments and attendances are higher than they were before the pandemic too. This has been coupled with rising Covid-19 admissions, with numbers rising across the region, which makes things even more challenging for us all.

We know that one of the biggest challenges facing us currently is the large number of

staff having to isolate or take time off due to Covid exposure. This is an issue we're acutely aware of across the system and we're working very closely to try and look at ways of collectively mitigating the impact of this.

As ever, our priority is to ensure the safety of our patients and support our staff through these challenging times. I'd like to thank all of our frontline teams for their continued hard work and remind everyone that our [staff wellbeing hub](#) is on hand to support health and care staff across our region.

We have been ramping up our messaging on [social media](#), reminding the public to #DoYourBit and help us keep our emergency departments free for serious emergencies, with advertising targeted around key dates such as the Euro football tournament.

### **Vaccine update**

There are huge efforts across the region to get as many people vaccinated as possible and this continues to be our best defence against the virus and our route back to some normality. We have now delivered over 3.6 million vaccines across the region, a tremendous achievement.

There's lots of local targeted work as we push to ensure that all adults have been offered a vaccination by 19th July. Walk in sites continue to open up across the region to make it more convenient than ever before for people to get their vaccine and there is a continued focus on ensuring that people book and attend their second jab to ensure maximum protection from the Delta variant of the virus.

Earlier this week, the government set out their latest guidance for appointments of a second dose of the vaccine to be brought forward from 12 to eight weeks for the remaining people in all cohorts who have yet to receive their second dose. You can read more detail in [this letter](#) from NHS England and NHS Improvement.

### **COVID restrictions**

Earlier this week the Prime Minister announced details of changes to COVID-19 restrictions, should they ease as planned on the 19th July. These changes mean we will all have to learn to live with COVID, but we all must do so responsibly, given the increase in cases across region and pressures we are all under.

We know that measures such as hands, face, space are effective at reducing transmission and our region's directors of public health have issued [this statement](#), encouraging us all to continue to exercise these and all other precautions where appropriate to help protect you and others around you as well. We know this will be

increasingly challenging for healthcare settings especially and the impact of this is under constant review by all of us across the region.

### **Engagement sessions**

Myself and Sir Liam Donaldson continued our engagement sessions with partners across each of our ICP areas to explore how we can continue to build on the already excellent work underway to further integrate health and care across the region.

Following our first session in North Cumbria, we joined colleagues in the Central ICP area and we would like to thank those who took the time to meet with us. We will be joining colleagues in the North and Tees ICP areas in the coming weeks as we look to ensure our future system working enables us to improve the health and wellbeing of all our communities.

### **Workforce update**

Across the region, we are focusing on some key areas where we are working together to ensure a strong and sustainable workforce for the future - building on the priorities set out in the national People Plan and what we know matters to our communities and workforce locally and at scale.

Clearly the focus over the past year has been on dealing with the immediate issues we faced in light of the pandemic where our ability to collaborate and innovate enabled us to support our workforce and care for our patients during this unprecedented time.

As we now embark on our recovery, I thought it be worth highlighting some key areas of progress agreed recently by our ICS Workforce Transformation Board - led by Ken Bremner (chief executive of South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust) – which will drive forward our workforce plans now and in the future. Just to recap – the workforce programme has set the following key priority areas. Each area has a senior responsible officer (SRO):

- Growing our workforce for the future. This includes recruiting, training and keep our people, and welcoming back colleagues who want to return to work with us. Senior responsible officer, Dave Gallagher
- Improving the health and well-being of our workforce. Senior responsible officer Morven Smith
- Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion for all: Ensuring that all members of our workforce belong, that there is equality for all and embedding a compassionate and inclusive culture. Senior responsible officer, Lisa Crichton-Jones

- System development and leadership: Improving our system leadership capacity and culture while nurturing talent across our region. Senior responsible officer, Clive Spencer
- Workforce re-design: Developing new ways of working and capturing innovation. Senior responsible officer, Rachel Baillie-Smith

There are also workforce and SRO leads for each of the four integrated care partnership (ICP) areas who work closely with us to drive forward and design plans locally. Our stakeholder engagement forum includes professional leads, clinical colleagues, trade unions, staff networks and wider system partners who come together to advise, influence, shape and discuss the work of the workforce board.

The Workforce Board, which met early this month, agreed a series of key actions within each of the priority areas which you can view in more detail [here](#).

COVID-19 has exposed many of the inequalities that exist in society, communities and our workplaces. Last year we launched our [collective promise](#) which sets out how we will better support people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. We are also engaging across all our staff networks to ensure that they are supported to make an impact within their own organisations. Staff networks across the region represent people from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities or long-term health conditions and staff from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

The Workforce Board has also been assessing how we perform against [Workforce Race Equality Standards \(WRES\)](#) which are a requirement for all NHS organisations – identifying areas of good practice but also where we need to improve.

Some organisations in our area have been recognised for their good practice in indicators such as equal opportunities for career progression and promotion, and staff not experiencing discrimination at work from their manager, team leader or colleague. Areas for improvement in some organisations included indicators such as likelihood of being appointed to posts, harassment, bullying and abuse from staff and discrimination from a manager, team leader or colleague. Areas I know we are all passionate about addressing.

### **NHS birthday**

Monday marked the 73rd anniversary of the NHS, which offered us the chance to pay tribute to our amazing health and care workforce and those who have supported us during our most challenging year ever.

As you know, everyone continues to work around the clock, stepping up in ways we

have never seen before and it was important we continue to acknowledge the phenomenal efforts of everyone who continues to keep our communities safe. From our doctors, nurses and care workers; to our volunteers who selflessly give their time, your efforts are greatly appreciated by us all. Thank you.

Best wishes,

Alan

**Alan Foster is the executive lead for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System**

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## Other news and updates

**The R number in the UK:** The latest reproduction number (R) and growth rate of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK can be found here on [GOV.UK](#).

**Public Health England dashboard:** The Public Health England (PHE) dashboard can be found [here](#). Daily reporting includes deaths that have occurred in all settings where there has been a positive COVID-19 test, including hospitals, care homes and the wider community. The report also includes case rates per 100,000 resident population at lower-tier local authority level.

**COVID-19 surveillance reports:** A link to the weekly COVID-19 report, monitoring COVID-19 activity, and other seasonal respiratory illnesses can be found [here](#).

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North of England Commissioning Support Unit

[NHC-TR.NENCCOVID19@NHS.net](mailto:NHC-TR.NENCCOVID19@NHS.net)

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