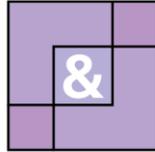


Cheshire & Merseyside  
Health & Care Partnership



# Primary Care Transformation Cheshire and Merseyside

## Stakeholder Briefing March 2019

This stakeholder briefing has been developed to give an oversight of investment in Primary Care across Cheshire and Merseyside



"Be the reason someone gets better care today"

## Introduction

Since the last primary care transformation bulletin, NHS England have launched the [NHS Long Term Plan](#). The plan sets out a series of aspirations for the health service and fundamentally redefines how we will deliver care to our population.

Primary care runs throughout the 136 pages of the plan and it is encouraging that many of themes within the plan are in line with what is being planned and delivered across Cheshire and Merseyside.

With their specialist knowledge of the areas they serve and the patients they care for, GPs and their wider multidisciplinary teams, like general practice nurses, clinical pharmacists and health care assistants, are best placed to improve the health and wellbeing of residents. But general practice has also faced challenges in recent years, with difficulty in some areas recruiting and retaining enough staff to meet rising and increasingly complex caseloads.

### To ensure a strong future for primary care, the NHS Long Term Plan will:

Increase investment in primary and community care by £4.5bn a year by 2023/24, to ensure that staff and services are available close to people's homes.

Deliver 5,000 GPs, alongside other roles such as pharmacists, counsellors, physios and nurse practitioners, to ensure that GPs' skills are focused on where they can best help patients

Support GPs and their teams to work more closely with colleagues in other practices across an area, so that they can offer better access and more services and proactive care for patients.

Help practices embrace new digital-first services, providing convenient access to care and advice, in a way that is safe and provides fairness for all kinds of GP practices.



**Find out more:**  
**[www.longtermplan.nhs.uk](http://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk)**  
**Join the conversation:**  
**#NHSLongTermPlan**

In response to this challenge, GPs and their teams are increasingly coming together with other practices to form primary care networks, which can employ a greater variety of professionals to provide a wider range of services for patients.

Over the last few months and the months ahead we will be continuing to support GPs and their teams to develop these networks further, working with hospitals, community teams, social care and voluntary services, to help people stay well and better manage their own conditions.

This will be backed by increased funding that was invested in initiatives to help practices to better manage their workload, expand their workforce with roles such as clinical pharmacists and improve access to services for patients between 2016 and 2018.

Here in our fourth update, we update you on the progress of primary care transformation that is taking place across the Cheshire & Merseyside Health & Care Partnership as we strive to deliver more quality care to patients, closer to home.

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## **Deal to expand GP services to deliver NHS Long Term Plan welcomed by local health and care leaders**

A new five-year contract for general practice across England will see billions of additional investment for improved access to family doctors, expanded services at local practices and longer appointments for patients who need them.

The new GP contract has been welcomed by health and care leaders in Cheshire and Merseyside, who said it would accelerate work already underway to sustain and transform primary care.

The extra investment will increase the numbers of staff working in general practice and look to increase the numbers of pharmacists, physiotherapists, paramedics, physician associates and social prescribing support workers in general practice. The contract will also see neighbouring practices working together as primary care networks, with multi-disciplinary teams working alongside other community services.

Examples of work already underway to transform primary care in Cheshire and Merseyside:

- NHS England (Cheshire & Merseyside) is making available an additional £180,000 investment, alongside Health Education England funding, to support practices to employ physician associates and embed their roles in general practice. The aim is to have at least an additional 30 physician associates working in general practice by April 2019.
- Working with training practices in Wirral to pilot rotating trainee physician associates and hospital doctors (foundation year 2 (F2)) so that each get a mix of primary and secondary care experience.
- Early in development are plans to implement a rotating paramedic scheme in Sefton and Halton, with the overall aim to enable more paramedics to work in primary care.
- Plans to substantially increase the number of clinical pharmacists working in general practice. Funding for 75 Clinical Pharmacists have been approved across Cheshire and Merseyside via the NHS England Clinical Pharmacists in General Practice programme. NHS South Sefton CCG, NHS Southport & Formby CCG and NHS Warrington CCG have achieved 100% clinical pharmacist coverage in their areas through the programme.

## Practices of the future

### Middlewood group of practices, Eastern Cheshire

Schoolhouse Surgery in Disley, Eastern Cheshire, is part of the Middlewood group of practices serving just over 32,000 patients. After seeing a rise in demand for their services, the practices are joining together to become part of the emerging primary care network. The network is looking at how they could change the way they deliver care for their community to ensure they could offer a flexible and versatile service to patients. They work very closely with health and social care colleagues from other NHS organisations and Cheshire East Council.

Working collaboratively has allowed the network to employ staff, like pharmacists and physiotherapists who work across all four practices seeing patients which in turn frees up GP time to see those patients with the most urgent need. They include a physician associate (PA) – a new healthcare role in general practice in England – who can work alongside GPs and the wider medical team to diagnose and treat patients. PA Alex Facey joined the network in March 2018 and works alongside doctors to support patients. He performs many different roles across the practices, including regular care home visits, providing proactive care to residents to help reduce hospital admissions, seeing urgent cases in the GP surgery and doing home visits. All roles help to free up GP time to see other patients.

Dr Andrew Maurice, GP Partner at the Schoolhouse Surgery and member of the Middlewood group of practices, said: “Working together through a primary care network will allow us the freedom and versatility to offer more services for our local population and is encouraging and motivating primary care in our area.

“Working in a multi-disciplinary team of doctors, nurses, social care workers, pharmacists and physician associates has brought more optimism to our practices and in the future, will allow us to care for our patients closer to home, offering continuity and personalised care.”

A video explaining the work of Middlewood group of practice can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/E-S5As686E4>.

Find about more about the work of physician associate Alex Facey in this video clip: [https://youtu.be/RdVstRbC\\_EA](https://youtu.be/RdVstRbC_EA).

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## Funding secured to bring 30 new physician associates into general practice by April 2019

The extra investment announced in the NHS Long Term Plan to increase the clinical workforce in general practice will become a reality in Cheshire and Merseyside, with plans to appoint 30 new physician associates (PAs) into general practice by April 2019.

NHS England (Cheshire & Merseyside) is investing £180,000 alongside Health Education England funding, to support practices to employ physician associates and embed their roles in general practice.

To support this work, the primary care team alongside colleagues from Health Education England (HEE), hosted a networking event in Liverpool for local practices and soon-to-be qualified physician associates in February.

It offered the opportunity for practices to meet PAs and find out more about the role and what they can offer to the general practice team.

Professor of Primary Care and writer of the PA curriculum Dr Jim Parle presented at the event. Jim has been instrumental in developing the role of PA's within a primary care setting and as a GP himself believes wholeheartedly of the value that PAs can bring to general practice.

To find out more about a day in the life of a PA click [here](#).

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## Care navigators help support patients get to the right service faster

GP practices across Cheshire and Merseyside are rolling out a new scheme to help support and guide patients to access the most appropriate service for their need.

This scheme is often called care navigation, but the role is sometimes also known as a patient advisor or care coordinator. General practice receptionists and admin staff have been given specialist training to help them direct patients to the right health professional first time.

The scheme is designed to help give patients choice, offering them support and guiding them to the right information about other health care professionals who have the expertise to deal with a range of health and care illnesses and injuries.

Care navigation allows front line staff to provide patients with more information about local health and wellbeing services, both within and outside of primary care, in a safe, effective way. It means that patients will find it easier to get a GP appointment when they need one.

When a patient contacts the practice, the care navigator will ask for a brief outline of the problem, this isn't about being intrusive, it is aimed to allow the care navigator to identify the patient's need and provide information about services in the practice, other NHS providers and the wider care and support sector.

Where appropriate, they will direct the patient to these services.

Click [here](#) to view a video produced in partnership with and partly funded by Healthwatch Wirral CIC and Primary Care Wirral to show patients exactly what the care navigation team does.

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## Primary Care Networks

In Cheshire and Merseyside during 2018/19 we have invested £4 million to help groups of general practices develop as primary care networks (PCNs) and plan to invest a further £2 million next year.

This has included bespoke funding for at least 47 PCNs serving approximately 2 million patients, who have successfully bid for investment in projects including support with engagement, governance and contracting.

All PCNs and practices have benefitted from 'do it once' activities that have been funded across Cheshire and Merseyside, including legal advice, events and networking opportunities. In addition, there is shared support available for some PCNs, including project management and organisational development support.

Additional work was undertaken to determine how networks that did not receive direct funding this year could be supported.

Dedicated NHS England support "buddies" are aligned to each successful primary care network across the area and are providing support, help and advice to networks

through mobilisation of their plans. These buddies are also supporting practices/networks that did not receive funding by working closely with CCG colleagues and practice staff.

By June 2019 every practice will be part of a geographically based network working collaboratively with other practices and wider services in the community. This will help primary care to be more sustainable, currently in Cheshire and Merseyside we have a small number of practices that are not currently identified as being part of a defined network and work is ongoing to support those areas.

The vital role to be played by primary care networks features heavily within the NHS Long Term Plan and is also a critical factor in the reformed GP Contract.

Dedicated investment of £4.5b has been identified to support the development of primary care networks, this additional funding will support those networks already formed across Cheshire and Merseyside to build upon their foundations and forge forwards with developing and delivering plans for Integrated Care Systems. This funding will also support those areas that didn't receive funding as part of the PCN Development Programme in 2018/19 in starting to establish their position.

The introduction of a national network direct enhanced service (DES) contract backed by financial investments will be supported by a network agreement. The network agreement sets out the collective rights and obligations of the PCN as well as how it will partner with non-GP practice stakeholders.

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## Online consultation

Almost £2 million is being invested in practices across Cheshire and Merseyside as part of a national programme to help them offer online services to patients.

New digital services will include web information and apps which allow patients to explain their symptoms online and receive a response from a practice or be directed to the most appropriate service to meet their need.

In Cheshire and Merseyside, at least 716,172 patients are now able to access online services through the 85 practices who are currently offering them. This number is increasing each month as more practices have their online consultation software installed.

Local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) must ensure that at least 75% of practices offer online consultations by March 2020.

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## International GP recruitment (IGPR)

NHS England is supporting family doctors who work in European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Australia to come and work in England.

The international recruitment programme offers lots of support for doctors including a relocation package and support, support to find a suitable practice placement, ongoing training and education and an exciting career path and opportunity to specialise.

Locally work is ongoing to successfully deliver the international GP recruitment scheme across Cheshire and Merseyside.

We are pleased to have our first recruit in place and working in Abercromby Medical Centre in Liverpool and have another three recruits in the pipeline to join us in the coming months.

The Cheshire and Merseyside IGPR prospectus is live and on the NHS England website. You can view and download a copy [here](#).

### Social media campaign

NHS England's national team has recently launched a new international social media campaign using sites such as Facebook and Instagram which aims to target and attract general practice doctors to the UK.

The campaign is uniquely tailored to different countries and will build on a successful mini-campaign run at the end of last year which saw a significant increase in interest from potential GPs

### Recruitment from Australia

NHS England announced the launch of a recruitment campaign from Australia at the RCGP conference in October.

We are now actively recruiting Australian doctors, or UK doctors working in Australia, through the programme and two recruitment agencies have been appointed to actively market opportunities in Australia. Since the announcement, we have received over 60 enquiries through the central mailbox.

## Sharing on screen

NHS England and the General Medical Council (GMC) have organised a series of video conferences for all international GPs joining the NHS in England, whether they are considering applying, have started the application process or are already working in England.

The sessions will use real-life situations to discuss the complexities of the NHS, the role of the GP and practical application of GMC guidance. The lunchtime sessions run until 3 July 2019 covering different themes.

The GMC also runs a free half-day Welcome to UK practice programme for any doctor new to the UK.

For more information contact [alexio.gardiner@gmc-uk.org](mailto:alexio.gardiner@gmc-uk.org).

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## Further Information

We hope this information has been useful and would like to let you know that we will continue to keep you regularly updated about our work to sustain and transform primary care services in Cheshire and Merseyside.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact: Glenn Coleman, NHS England (Cheshire and Merseyside) Head of Primary Care and Programme Director General Practice Forward View on [glenn.coleman@nhs.net](mailto:glenn.coleman@nhs.net).