



North Central London
Health and Care
Integrated Care System



Highlights of our Annual Report 2024/25



August 2025

Introduction

Our 2024/25 Annual Report demonstrates the breadth and depth of the work North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) has led and delivered over the year, and the impact this is having on improving health and care services and experiences for our patients and residents.

2024/25 has been a year of progress and learning for NCL ICB as we continue to shape services around the needs of our communities while preparing for a period of major transformation across the NHS. We're proud of all the projects and improvements that have been delivered, and the strength of the partnerships that have helped us achieve these successes.

We have also, despite a challenging financial environment, supported the North Central London Integrated Care System (ICS) to achieve a balanced budget again in 2024/25, for the third year in a row. As a result, the ICS has received additional funding which we are investing in improving services and patient experiences.

This brief summary highlights some of our achievements – for full details, please see our [Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25](#).

Highlights of 2024/25

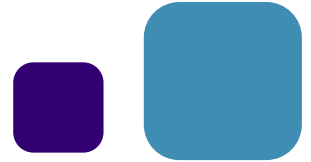
Longer, healthier lives

Over the year we have focused on delivering our Population Health and Integrated Care Strategy, tackling the inequalities that we know affect so many of our residents, and helping more people in our five boroughs to live longer, healthier lives. We've launched a new online [NCL Outcomes Framework dashboard](#) to share data demonstrating the progress we are making to improve the lives of people in north central London.

Getting the best start in life

Last year, we ran a major public consultation on proposed changes to improve maternity and neonatal services for everyone across NCL as part of our [Start Well Programme](#).

Following an analysis of all the evidence, this year we developed a business case setting out the future of maternity and neonatal services. This was approved in March 2025, and we are now working with affected NHS trusts on implementation.



Primary care services

Despite year-on-year increases in demand, GP practices in NCL provided a high percentage of same day appointments, performing above national average. They also consistently met the national expectation that 90% of primary care appointments are booked within two weeks.

We were proud that NCL was selected as one of seven ICBs nationally to participate in the national Primary Care Network Test Site programme, which is looking at new ways of working to close the capacity gap in general practice.

We have continued to invest in improving primary care facilities, including opening the state-of-the-art new Welbourne Health Centre in Tottenham.

Our Your Local Health Team campaign is helping local residents find out how best to get the care they need and how to stay well. This includes encouraging more use of local pharmacies, the NHS App, 111, and getting vaccinated.

Mental health services

We have made significant improvements in patients being able to stay locally for adult acute mental health inpatient care – this is a huge benefit to patients and their friends and families as it means they can retain their support networks. In 2024/25, we reduced inappropriate ‘out of area’ acute mental health admissions to zero.

Another important step during 2024/25 was joining the new national single point of access (111) for clinical support 24 hours a day for people in mental health crisis.



Urgent and emergency care

More people attended our A&Es in 2024/25, with a year-on-year increase of 2.2% across NCL up to the latest available data at the time of reporting. When combined with sustained increases in patients needing more intensive care, monitoring and specialised treatment, delays in discharges, and patients with more complex social needs with stretched community care capacity, this all led to the A&E four-hour performance remaining below the 76% target.

Ambulance handover waits at NCL sites were also high during 2024/25 and there was an increase in handovers longer than 15 minutes as well as longer than 30 minutes, when compared to 2023/24.

One of the ways we hope to improve performance is via a new system initiative to manage winter pressures – the Integrated Care Coordination Hub hosted by London Ambulance Service. Bringing together a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians, the hub aims to support patients whose care could be managed closer to home, and to use alternative care pathways to minimise unnecessary ambulance dispatches.

Cancer care

We are proud that NCL has had the best one-year cancer survival rate in England for the last six years, and we also have the highest five-year survival rate for patients diagnosed in 2016. We attribute this success to the outstanding collaborative efforts within the NCL system, where primary care plays a key role in identifying potential cancers early and referring patients into excellent treatment pathways in secondary care.

However, there are areas where NCL's performance on survival rates could be improved, particularly in oesophageal and breast cancer. We are committed to addressing these gaps. Additionally, there is more work to be done in providing ongoing practical and psychological support for people living with cancer, as well as improving the speed of cancer diagnoses.

Work and health support

We were really pleased that NCL was chosen to take part in the WorkWell pilot, an initiative jointly sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health and Social Care. Over the 18 month pilot, we plan to support at least 3,000 local people with health conditions or disabilities to find, stay in, or return to, work. We successfully met our six-month target of 900 people starting the WorkWell programme.



Listening to our communities

In summer 2024, we launched NCL's Community Voices Panel which is made up of over 1,000 local residents reflecting the diversity of our population, including people of different ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds.

The panel is a valuable way for us to understand what influences peoples' wellbeing, how they experience local services, and their opinions on key policies and issues. Members of the panel are invited to complete a quarterly online survey, and to take part in other opportunities, such as focus groups. Their insights help us shape services, address challenges, and improve care across NCL. We invited the panel to contribute to the government's consultation on 'Change NHS: a health service fit for the future' and we welcomed the opportunity to contribute our ICB organisational response too.

A neighbourhood approach

NHS England (NHSE) recently put together a package of case studies to shine a light on progress towards how we deliver health in a more localised ('neighbourhood') way. It was great to see NCL highlighted as an example of good practice for the work we have been doing to make sure all residents can benefit from fair and consistent services by developing a 'core offer'.

NCL's new Integrated Neighbourhood Teams will be connected with our existing Borough Partnerships and will maximise wellbeing and keeping people well, focusing on outreach and identifying conditions that can be treated early, halting progression of ill health conditions and risk factors, and providing coordinated care, particularly when tackling complex and long-term conditions.



Changes ahead

In March 2025 we heard the announcement that all ICBs need to reduce their operational spend by 50% next year as part of the significant changes planned to the whole NHS. This news, coupled with the increasing demand for health and care services, has further sharpened our mission to improve the health and wellbeing of our local residents. We have developed three strategic priorities to help us deliver this as follows.

Knowing our population – better understanding of the lives of our residents through data, insight, and dialogue and working with them to co-produce solutions.

Developing our approach to strategic commissioning – planning, investing, and contracting health services to support best value and integration, reduce inequalities, and improve lives now and for the future.

Delivering the neighbourhood model – better supporting people with multiple and complex needs, creating multi-disciplinary integrated teams at local neighbourhood level to deliver proactive and person-centred care.

We believe NCL ICB is in a strong position – our population health strategy and delivery plan are up and running, we have expertise in commissioning, and we have borough partnerships in place as well as Integrated Neighbourhood Teams proving their value.

However, we see collaboration as an important way to achieve the savings required and to strengthen our ability to deliver the greater focus on strategic commissioning by ICBs. So we recently announced that we are going to merge with North West London ICB – a step which will give us both the scale and capacity to lead transformational changes to benefit our communities.

Finally, many thanks to all our colleagues across North Central London Integrated Care System for your commitment to delivering high-quality, compassionate care. Your efforts are helping us build a stronger, more responsive health and care system now and for the future.