

HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

Subject Heading:

Draft NHS System Strategy and Outline
Commissioning Intentions

Board Lead:

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following themes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

☐	The wider determinants of health • Increase employment of people with health problems or disabilities • Develop the Council and NHS Trusts as anchor institutions that consciously seek to maximise the health and wellbeing benefit to residents of everything they do. • Prevent homelessness and minimise the harm caused to those affected, particularly rough sleepers and consequent impacts on the health and social care system.										
☐	Lifestyles and behaviours • The prevention of obesity • Further reduce the prevalence of smoking across the borough and particularly in disadvantaged communities and by vulnerable groups • Strengthen early years providers, schools and colleges as health improving settings										
☐	The communities and places we live in • Realising the benefits of regeneration for the health of local residents and the health and social care services available to them • Targeted multidisciplinary working with people who, because of their life experiences, currently make frequent contact with a range of statutory services that are unable to fully resolve their underlying problem.										
☒	Local health and social care services • Development of integrated health, housing and social care services at locality level.										
☒	BHR Integrated Care Partnership Board Transformation Board <table border="0"> <tr> <td>• Older people and frailty and end of life</td><td>Cancer</td></tr> <tr> <td>• Long term conditions</td><td>Primary Care</td></tr> <tr> <td>• Children and young people</td><td>Accident and Emergency Delivery Board</td></tr> <tr> <td>• Mental health</td><td>Transforming Care Programme Board</td></tr> <tr> <td>• Planned Care</td><td></td></tr> </table>	• Older people and frailty and end of life	Cancer	• Long term conditions	Primary Care	• Children and young people	Accident and Emergency Delivery Board	• Mental health	Transforming Care Programme Board	• Planned Care	
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SUMMARY

The ICB has been working in line with national planning guidance to complete the 'foundational stage' of the NHS medium-term planning process. This culminates at the end of September with the dissemination to providers of **outline commissioning intentions for 2026/27**.

The package of materials issued to providers on 30 September to meet the requirements of the planning process included a **refreshed system strategy** and **data and evidence pack**; which were intended to accompany the commissioning intentions.

In the next stage of the planning process the system strategy will progress towards approval via the ICB Board and ICP Committee; and NHS organisations in NEL will be asked to reflect on strategies and plans that have been refreshed in the initial stage, and then work together to develop outputs which are submitted to NHS England for validation:

- Strategic commissioning plans covering a 5 year period
- Integrated delivery plans covering a 5 year period
- Detailed templates covering activity, performance, financial and workforce information for the initial year (2026/27)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the documents at the completion of the initial phase of the NHS planning round
2. Comment on the approach expressing a view on the following:
 - (i) Does the strategy cover the core aspects we should emphasise as a system and is anything critical missing?
 - (ii) In what ways can we fully utilise an Outcomes and Equity framework in our system?
 - (iii) What are the collaborative ways of working we want to hold onto as a whole system to deliver our new strategy?
 - (iv) Given the status as precursors to the final strategic commissioning plans, are there any important concerns or initial input you have regarding the commission intentions?

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The ICB has been working in line with national planning guidance to complete the 'foundational stage' of the medium-term planning process. This culminates at the end of September with the dissemination to providers of outline commissioning intentions for 2026/27.



- 1.2 The ICB has developed a suite of products to sit alongside the commissioning intentions to create overall clarity on priorities and expectations for the period ahead. These materials consist of:
- **A data and evidence pack**, collating and presenting a range of evidence to support the medium-term planning process. This is an evolving product which will continue to develop in order to create a common evidence base to support system planning. This has been issued to providers to support their planning processes and for feedback on coverage and appropriateness of the data.
 - **A draft of a refreshed system strategy** for North East London, which has been developed with engagement from a range of partners. The strategy sets out key priorities for the system in the context of the population health challenges we face and the evolving national policy context. This has been issued to providers for ongoing feedback and engagement with the aim of agreeing a final version in November. A copy of the draft strategy is attached at [Appendix A](#).
 - **A comprehensive set of commissioning intentions** for the period ahead, covering all of the key commissioning areas overseen by the ICB and framed within the context of an over-arching commissioning plan. Each commissioning area has produced a detailed plan along with a headline summary of key priorities. This has been issued to providers to inform planning and contracting arrangements for the period ahead. A copy of the headline commissioning intentions is attached at [Appendix B](#).
 - **A summary of proposed commissioning changes** which will impact on contracting arrangements for 2026/27. The purpose of this is to give providers the required 6 months notice of contractual changes in line with guidance. This has been issued as formal contractual notices on a provider specific basis alongside the wider commissioning plans.
- 1.3 The package of materials was issued to providers on 30 September in order to meet contractual timeframes and the requirements of the planning process. The evidence pack and system strategy will be subject to ongoing development, and the commissioning intentions will be developed into more detailed commissioning plans as part of the next stage of the planning process.
- 1.4 In the subsequent developmental stage of the medium term planning process NHS organisations are asked to reflect on the strategies and plans that have been refreshed in the initial stage, and then work together to develop:
- Strategic commissioning plans covering a 5 year period
 - Integrated delivery plans covering a 5 year period



- Detailed templates covering activity, performance, financial and workforce information for the initial year

1.5 The exact requirements will be confirmed with the publication of national planning guidance expected later in November.

2. Proposal and Issues

2.1 At this point in the process the ICB is engaging with partners across the system to help inform how the planning document are developed and help with system alignment.

2.2 While the funding resource allocation for 2026/29 and the final planning guidance has not yet been confirmed, and that means the national objectives are still subject to clarification, it means we have the opportunity to collect feedback that will inform the next stage of the process.

2.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board and ICB Sub-Committee is therefore being asked to comment on the approach expressing a view on the following:

- (i) Does the strategy cover the core aspects we should emphasise as a system and is anything critical missing?
- (ii) In what ways can we fully utilise an Outcomes and Equity framework in our system?
- (iii) What are the collaborative ways of working we want to hold onto as a whole system to deliver our new strategy?
- (iv) Given the status as precursors to the final strategic commissioning plans, are there any important concerns or initial input you have regarding the commission intentions?

3 Approval process and timeline

3.1 The system strategy is following an ICB and system approval path via:

ICB Board – 25 September 2025

ICB Population Health Improvement Committee – 1 October 2025

ICB Board on 27th November

ICP Committee on 8th January 2026

3.2 The indicative national timeline for medium term planning activities is:

Publication of the planning framework guidance and clarification of planning outputs – November

Development of integrated commissioning, operational, financial and workforce plans – November

System triangulation and regional dialogue – December

Full plan submission – end of December

Regional assurance process – January

Full plan acceptance – February



IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

4.1 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The assessment of health needs will use JSNAs as a source of information and commissioners will use this alongside the data and evidence pack.

4.2 Health and Wellbeing Strategy

NHS organisations have been informed that separate guidance will be released in relation to the Better Care Fund for 2026/27 and that planning for the BCF will be for one year only pending a more fundamental reform of BCF priorities starting 2027/28.

4.3 Financial Implications

In this planning round the NHS resource allocations for 2026 to 2029 (3 year) will be confirmed alongside the release of the final planning guidance. The ICB finance team are attempting to estimate the cost of the commissioning intentions at the present time and, based on what we expect to receive in 2026/27 and the month to date 2025/26 position, make a conclusion on whether the NEL system will continue to be in deficit next year.

4.4 Legal Implications

No legal issues raised.

4.5 Risk Management

It is important for the ICB and NHS organisations to comply with the NHS medium term planning process as well as make the most effective use of resources as out disposal.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix A - Draft NEL System Strategy
- Appendix B - Outline Commissioning Intentions
- Planning framework for the NHS in England, Version 1, 10th September 2025 ([NHS England » Planning framework for the NHS in England](#))
- NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future, 3rd July 2025 ([10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future - GOV.UK](#))



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LONDON BOROUGH

- Update on the draft Model ICB Blueprint and progress on the future NHS Operating Model, 29th May 2025 ([NHS England » Update on the draft Model ICB Blueprint and progress on the future NHS Operating Model](#))