



**Delivering quality health and care
services in Cheshire and
Merseyside.**

**Our Workforce Strategy.
2019 -2024**

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Foreword by Karen Howell, SRO for People

Welcome to the People Strategy for the Health and Care Partnership in Cheshire and Merseyside. I hope that this document will provide an overview of some of the staffing challenges facing our health and social care system and describes the actions that are being taken collectively to address these, to ensure that we have a sustainable workforce for the future and that health and social care are regarded as excellent career choices.

We know that we have an ageing workforce across both health and social care with more than 58% of our staff being over the age of 44 and less than 5% of our workforce being aged under 25.

We recognise that the majority of our staff consistently go above and beyond what is required of them and deliver outstanding care for our communities, irrespective of what part of the service they work in. Many of our staff are also carers and have to balance the needs of their families and dependents with managing challenging roles. In addition we must acknowledge the work of our volunteers and the faith sector that assist services and patients and support their communities.

However, we know that we face an increasing demand for our services as a result of changing demographics and we must also address significant financial shortages across our health and social care economy. To do this, we need to transform how we work to provide the best care we can. Our workforce needs to be at the heart of this transformation and be engaged and supported through any changes and we will do this in partnership with our trade unions and professional organisations and all of the partners across Cheshire and Merseyside.

In June 2019, the interim NHS People Plan was published which set out its priorities and focus for the future and accordingly the Cheshire and Merseyside workforce strategy has been refreshed to ensure alignment between the national and local approach.

This people strategy sets out what we want to achieve, not only now but also for the future.

Karen Howell
SRO – Workforce
Co-Chair Cheshire and Merseyside LWAB
CEO Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust



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Introduction

This strategy starts to describe how we can support our staff, volunteers and carers to cope with the changes in demand, the pressures facing each town or place and ensure that they feel empowered, valued, developed, trusted and motivated to move towards the future, embracing change and the introduction of technology and digital advancement.

Whilst it is a statement often overused, the people who work in and support the health and care system really are our most valuable asset, but they must be appreciated for the difficult and challenging roles that they all undertake, irrespective of their post title, their qualification, their grade or the colour of their uniform.

In Cheshire and Merseyside we aim to recruit people into health and care roles, making careers attractive and encouraging a wider range of people to consider working within this sector. We aim to retain the highly skilled and committed staff we already have, by enabling flexible careers and new ways of working, having supportive employment models and ensuring that we have the right skills, competencies and equipment to allow staff to do their jobs. All staff across the health and care system are important to us and we recognise that our employees are supported by a huge number of unpaid volunteers and carers and our plans will help to ensure that they too are appropriately developed and trained. We also need to recognise and respect that many of our staff are carers themselves and that this puts additional pressure on individuals who work in our services. But our local people strategy can only be delivered if we work in partnership with our staff, carers, volunteers, communities and our partners in Trade Unions and professional organisations.

Health and social care services need to change to provide a safe and sustainable system that is fit for the future. The three priority areas for the Health and Care Partnership are:

- Delivering care more efficiently
- Improving the quality of care
- Improving the health and care of the population

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To achieve these priorities this we need to change the way we work. We will have new teams, new roles, and we will need to work across organisations and places. Many staff will work outside of hospitals, in communities-where people live and work. This strategy does not replace the need for individual organisations to have in place their own strategies and plans but rather focuses on those areas that we can do better together.

In 2018 it was determined that there were 6 main priorities to ensure across Cheshire and Merseyside has a workforce fit for the future:

1. Creating a sustainable supply of staff (paid and unpaid)
2. Up-skilling and re-skilling staff to work in an integrated system with different competencies / new roles
3. Promoting staff health and wellbeing and maximise the time staff are in work
4. New ways of working
5. Multiple models of employment and engagement
6. Leadership and talent management

The NHS Interim People Plan

The interim NHS People Plan published in June 2019 states that we need different people in different professions working in different ways. We also need to address the cultural changes that are necessary to build a workforce that befits a world-class 21st century healthcare system. We need to promote positive cultures, build a pipeline of compassionate and engaging leaders and make the NHS an agile, inclusive and modern employer if we are to attract and retain the people we need to deliver our plans.

We also need to transform the way our entire workforce, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals (AHPs), pharmacists, healthcare scientists, dentists, non-clinical professions, social workers in the NHS, commissioners, non-executives and volunteers, work together. Work will be much more multidisciplinary, people will be able to have less linear careers, and technology will enable our people to work to their full potential as routine tasks (and some more complex ones) are automated.

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Improved technology will also mean that services are organised and delivered more efficiently, which will contribute to improved productivity.

The interim People Plan focuses on 5 areas and accordingly the themes within the Cheshire and Merseyside strategy have been reworded to ensure synergy between the 2 plans: The 5 key areas in the Interim People Plan are as follows:

- Making the NHS the best place to work
- Improving our leadership culture
- Addressing urgent workforce shortages in nursing
- Delivering 21st Century care
- A new operating model

Making the NHS the best place to work

The highly committed and dedicated people working for the NHS provide an extraordinary range of health and care services for patients and citizens. There is compelling evidence that the more engaged our people, the more effective and productive they are, and most importantly, the higher the quality of care they deliver to our patients.

To serve our patients and citizens in the best way possible we must improve the experience of our people. At every level we need to pay much greater attention to why many of them leave the NHS, taking decisive action in both the short and medium term to retain existing staff and attract more people to join.

In Cheshire and Merseyside:

We will make the most of the staff we currently have - we will ensure that our staff feel valued and respected and that they have the skills and competences needed and if they don't, we should give them the chance to learn new skills.

We will make sure that we can be flexible to meet staff needs, whilst also ensuring that we have safe staffing levels. We will respect those who have carer and other responsibilities and ensure that there is the necessary support to allow them to manage all of their responsibilities.

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We will do more to look after the health and wellbeing of staff and when they fall ill, we will treat them with dignity and respect. We will ensure that we have supportive systems and processes that can meet individual needs and when things do go wrong, we will learn from them and plan to ensure it doesn't happen again.

We will reduce the number of agency and locum staff and manage our temporary workforce appropriately.

We will make it easier for staff to move within and between organisations to develop their skills, gain exposure to new areas and share their experiences. We need staff to be able to work differently and experience best practice. We will create the option of rotational posts and rotational careers.

We will ensure that we have systems and processes in place to avoid staff having to repeat training and other recruitment processes should they move employer. We will have a consistent approach to statutory and mandatory training and development. We will, with the individuals consent, share Occupational Health information to avoid unnecessary tests. We will make the recruitment process a positive employee experience.

Improving our leadership culture

Our leaders play a key role in shaping the culture of NHS organisations. All NHS leaders, in both providers and commissioners, need to focus on developing a positive, inclusive and people-centred culture that engages and inspires all our people and with a clear focus on improvement and advancing equality of opportunity.

In Cheshire and Merseyside we will support our leaders and colleagues within the Human resource communities to tackle discrepant behaviour, to develop supportive and restorative practice and eliminate punitive practices.

Through the Talent, Leadership and Organisational Development lead we will support our future leaders, develop consistent change management approaches and embed positive behaviours and values.

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Addressing urgent workforce shortages in nursing

There are shortages across a wide range of NHS staff groups - doctors, including GPs and psychiatrists, paramedics, radiographers, genomic scientists and dentists, to name a few - that we are committed to addressing. However, the most urgent challenge is the current shortage of nurses, who are critical to delivering the 21st century care set out in the NHS Long Term Plan. We must act now to support and retain our existing nurses, significantly increase the number of newly qualified nurses joining the NHS, bring in nurses from abroad and ensure we make the most of the nurses we already have.

This interim Plan sets out the key actions required in the short and medium term to build the nursing workforce we need for the future.

In Cheshire and Merseyside:

We will encourage more people to work in health and social care - we will work with local partners, colleges, and higher education to develop new roles and new entry routes into carers and we will create more apprenticeship programmes. We will provide more high quality placements and listen and act upon what students tell us.

We will provide opportunities to up-skill appropriate staff to ensure that they can provide the specialist knowledge and skills that we need.

We will work with social care to develop integrated career pathways and ensure that carers and volunteers have access to training and know where to get appropriate support.

We will promote Cheshire and Merseyside as excellent places to work and live and develop an Employment Charter so that staff know what to expect from us.

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Delivering 21st century care

Over the next 10 years, health and care will change significantly. We have a roadmap in the NHS Long Term Plan which sets out a new service model for the 21st century: increasing care in the community; redesigning and reducing pressure on emergency hospital services; more personalised care; digitally enabled primary and outpatient care; and a focus on population health and reducing health inequalities. The NHS Long Term Plan also identifies areas where earlier diagnosis, new and integrated models of care, and better use of technology offer the potential to significantly improve population health and patient care. Together, these provide a major opportunity for a multi professional workforce to come together to deliver this 21st century care.

To deliver this vision and keep pace with advances in science and technology will require both continued growth in our workforce and its transformation to one that is more flexible and adaptive, has a different skill mix and - through changes in ways of working - has more time to provide care.

In Cheshire and Merseyside we will support the development of primary care hubs in the integration of primary care and community health services so that staff are working in different ways, with a greater focus on preventative care and establish much stronger links between health and social care. There will be new roles and significant changes to existing roles, requiring an increase in data science and digital skills, as technology and scientific innovation transform care pathways and clinical practice, and enable more efficient ways of working. Our people will need the skills, education and training to realise the potential of these exciting new roles; to extend their practice in current roles; and to work in multidisciplinary teams that facilitate more integrated, person-centred care.

A new operating model for workforce

The interim people plan sets out to ensure that the right workforce activities are undertaken at the optimal level - whether national, regional, system or organisational - with the expectation of an increasing role for integrated care systems (ICSs) as they develop.

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This interim Plan starts to set out how the principle of subsidiarity will apply to people-related functions by setting out what functions can potentially be carried out at which levels.

In Cheshire and Merseyside we will work with and influence Health Education England to plan, educate and develop our staff of the future. We will ensure that we can gather accurate information, produce effective organisational workforce plans, make sure that investment is tailored to the needs of Cheshire and Merseyside and ensure we are linked into any national initiatives and plans.

We will support the establishment of primary care hubs and enhanced training practices to put primary and community care at the core of our place based plans.

Aligning the health and social care workforce strategies:

The framework below has been developed by ADASS (North West) to support focused and targeted action to address the social care workforce challenges and aligns with the Cheshire and Merseyside strategy .

There are three core elements to the framework:

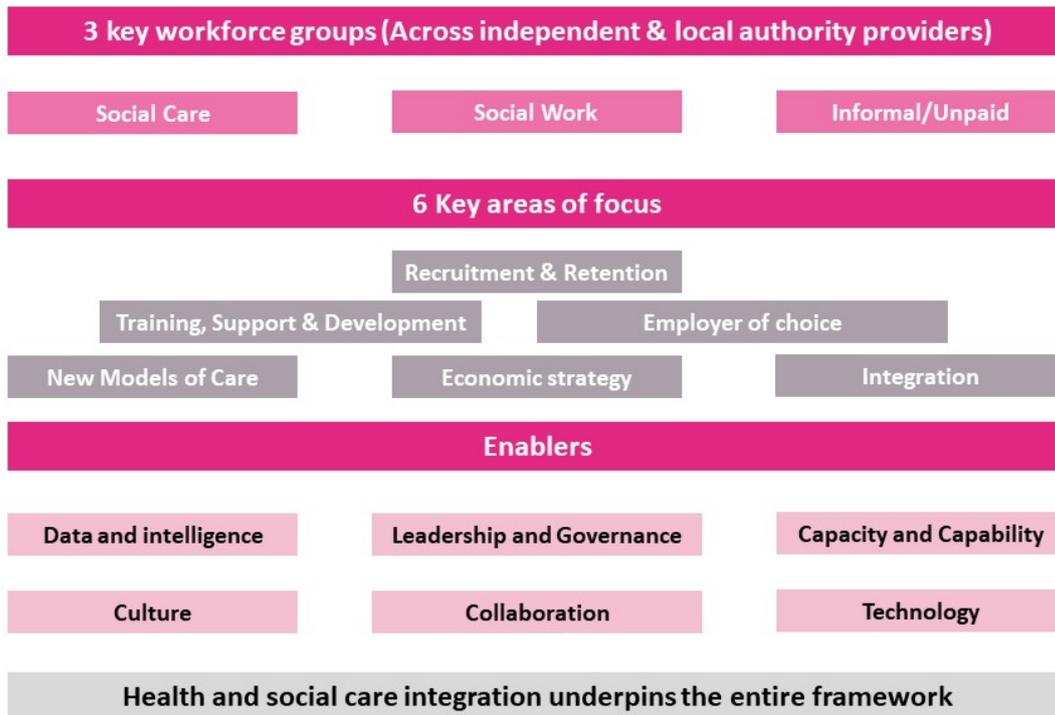
1. **The workforce groups that needs to be targeted** - these three areas have unique challenges but also some commonality and should be looked at through both lenses to maximise the opportunities.
2. **Six key areas of focus and action** - by focusing on these areas collective the North West and its component parts will be able to create pace, impact and be progressive
3. **Six enablers** - these are fundamental building blocks for success and focus and attention need to be paid to these. They have the power to supercharge the work and outcomes

It is also important to note that the whole framework is underpinned by a focus on health and social care integration.

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North West ADASS Workforce Action Framework



The key areas of focus are as follows:

Recruitment and Retention

Underpinning all areas of creating a world class workforce for the North West is ensuring that we are attracting the right people into the workforce and supporting them develop diverse and meaningful careers.

Training, Support and Development

Having opportunities to develop our skills, knowledge and experience is a fundamental need for all employees whether they want to progress in their careers or be the best they can be in their current role. This also ensures that we have employees who are constantly being challenged and developed in terms of the skills and ways of working.

Employer of choice

The sector gets a bad press with the worst cases hitting the headlines and the great work that is happening everyday going unnoticed. Ensuring that we support a positive image of social care and work to address the challenges is essential.

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New Models of Care

Looking to the future and considering the 'art of the possible' is going to be essential in order to set aspirational targets that help the workforce of today achieve its full potential.

Economic Strategy

Acknowledging the economic impact of the workforce and the contribution is essential if we are to move forward and create a different image of the workforce but also the ability to contribute to agendas such as inclusive growth and local regeneration.

Integration

Integration must be at the heart of all our thinking. Ensuring there is a focus on how a more integrated and collaborative workforce is developed will lead to better outcomes for all.

Summary and conclusion

This strategy is for health and social care across Cheshire and Merseyside. All partners have to be involved in making this a reality and we know that individual NHS organisations have already confirmed their support and that the plan aligns with those developed by North West ADASS.

In order to make this strategy a reality we will need to:

- Work together not in competition with each other
- Aim to do things better and more effectively
- Optimise resources by doing things better together
- Respect the contribution each organisation makes in improving the health and wellbeing of our communities
- Value the contribution of all our staff, volunteers and carers in improving the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve.

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