



# Newsletter

Autumn 2024



The Primary Care Collaborative is a combined voice for dentistry, general practice, optometry, and pharmacy, working together to improve people's health across the North East and North Cumbria. The PCC will act together to solve problems, influence decisions, and share good ideas.

## Welcome

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It's been a busy few months for us, with much achieved and lots planned, which you can see below.

We were horrified to witness the summer rioting that affected many of our cities and was a big cause for concern for our teams across NENC – particularly those staff from minority ethnic backgrounds. Our services simply couldn't function without these colleagues, and it was heartening to see teams and communities come together in the face of adversity. We also got feedback that some messages from ICB and NHSE colleagues didn't reach all corners of primary care, and so we have agreed that the PCC will be copied into future communications so that we can cascade out to our wider membership.

It has also been a very eventful few months with the election of a new government and appointment of a new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. Wes Streeting has said that he is "totally up for system leaders, chief executives, primary care leaders, telling me what we need to do at the centre, to enable them to do the job that they need to do for patients." Let's hold him to that! It was very encouraging to hear Mr Streeting talk about dentists in his first few days in the Cabinet, and also his decision to make a visit to general practice his very first in the role.

Lord Darzi has published his [rapid review into the NHS](#). We have been digesting his findings and will soon publish our response on our new website: [www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk](http://www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk).

When we began work to create the Primary Care Collaborative we were keen to ensure that a strong Primary Care voice would be heard within the ICB, helping to shape and influence decisions that affect our teams. There have been some encouraging signs that this is starting to happen, with invitations to join the ICB's System Leaders Group, the NHSE Peer Ambassador Programme, the Living and Ageing Well partnership, and ICS People Groups. Without the Collaborative we would not be in this position, taking our place at the table, and there will be opportunities for our wider members to get involved in future.

Since our last newsletter was published, our governance has been finalised and full representation is now in place, including two additional co-opted clinical members. We decided to appoint co-chairs, one to be clinical, and Fiona Adamson from Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP Federation, and Dr Aamir Munir from Valens PCN were the successful candidates. As we are still a new organisation we decided to review this governance again in six months, so please drop us a line with any comments. We are also supporting the re-launch of the NENC Clinical Directors' Forum so if you are a PCN CD, please look out for your invite.

## Autumn engagement event

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We decided reluctantly not to run anything during school holidays, but we look forward to seeing you in October for our next online engagement event, held via Teams and open to all. If you'd like to attend, email us at [necsu.primarycarecollabnenc@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.primarycarecollabnenc@nhs.net) for an invite.

In addition, look out for your opportunity to review the proposed Workforce Strategy themes, and learn more about Population health management support opportunities coming soon.





## Our Priorities

The work to establish our priorities was done by our Board members engaging with colleagues to identify the topics that most mattered to them. We did this via a facilitated workshop with board members submitting ideas to discuss on the day and the group voting for priority areas, Dragons' Den style.

Our approach to this process was informed by two key principles:

- To give careful consideration to how any action would impact the health of our population.
- To ensure all four pillars were represented across the priorities.

The table below captures the priorities we agreed, and which priorities apply specifically to which of the four pillars of our Collaborative. We were keen to follow-up on our previous work around Population Health Management (coming soon) and Pharmacy First. In addition, we were all keen on the idea of supporting primary care leaders of the future to develop, and the idea of a Primary Care Conference to share ideas, showcase great initiatives and generate a sense of pride in everything that our teams achieve. This will run in 2025.

Our most ambitious objective is to work on every priority shown here, but we realise that limited resources may prevent this in the short-term.

## Population Health Management

Primary Care Pillars	NENC Primary Care Collaborative priority area							
	Access to Summary Care Records for PC	Fully Utilise PHM across GP and POD	PC Conference	Dentistry-Addressing Health Inequalities	Leadership Pipeline for PC	Making Every Contact Count and Reasonable Adjustments	Increase numbers of Pharmacy First referrals	CVD Detection strategy for Optometry
General Practice								
Pharmacy								
Optometry								
Dentistry								

Our goal is to create and deliver a strategy that helps primary care to do the best possible job in caring for the NENC population.



## Workforce strategy update

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Michael Tait, Principal Consultant at North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) is leading on the development of a workforce strategy for primary care, commissioned by the ICB from the Collaborative. Here, he gives us an overview of how the work is progressing.

“Throughout early summer, we have engaged with a range of key stakeholders, as identified through our discussions with PCC and ICB colleagues. To date we have carried out 19 interviews with 23 individuals, gathering valuable insight. As well as helping us understand the challenges facing primary care, this process has highlighted the significant need for a considered, ambitious, long-term primary care workforce strategy. All stakeholders have stressed how important the development of a strategy will be in delivering the best quality care and impacts for the NENC population.

### **Moving Forward**

The scoping phase of the work has ignited real interest and excitement that NENC are committed to strategic workforce development. The interviews have generated a massive amount of information and themes are emerging, which we will use to progress discussions and development.

To create a common purpose and ownership of the final strategy, we plan to deliver a series of engagements with primary care and ICB colleagues, exploring the emergent themes from the scoping exercise, and opportunities to improve workforce supply, experience and retention.



In conversation with...

## Matt Brown

Matt Brown has been Managing Director of the North East and North Cumbria Provider Collaborative since early 2022. He kindly agreed to share his unique insight as a leader as we proceed through the first year of our Primary Care Collaborative journey.

Representing a total of 11 NHS Foundation Trusts, with 80,000 staff serving 2.3 million people, the NENC Provider Collaborative has gained valuable experience and insight since its beginnings in the dark early days of the pandemic. The Trusts already had a long history of collaboration, but in 2020 those relationships were formalised out of necessity, as Matt explains:

*“During the early stages of Covid, it was recognised that our Foundation Trusts needed to do more together; there was a new urgency there. Demand for PPE, unified comms messages, the vaccine programme - all these factors added greater impetus to work more closely together.”*

One exciting development currently in the pipeline for Matt and the Provider Collaborative is a new medicines manufacturing centre, to be built in Seaton Delaval. Alongside that, Matt and his team are developing new clinical and infrastructure strategies, and pushing on with digital opportunities, on which Matt says:

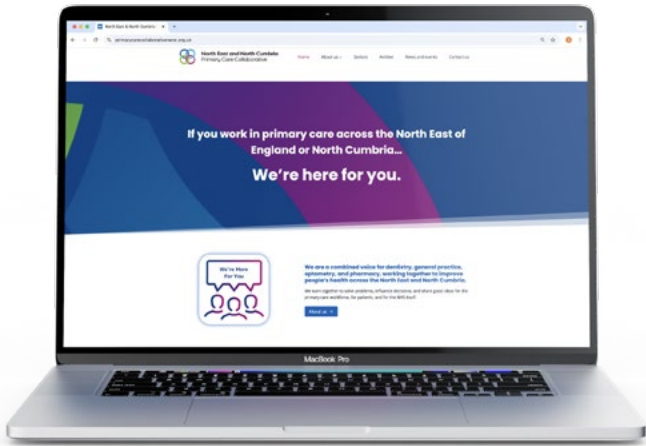
*“Digital opportunities are enormous for us this year. Of course, we have the Great North Care Record, which has successfully brought the Trusts together, and now we’re looking to capitalise on the digital clinical systems that help staff work across different organisations.”*

*Another area we’d really like to look at this year is working across primary and secondary care to make sure we’ve got good pathways in place, specifically between optometry, dental and GP colleagues. This is an area I can potentially envision us working with the Primary Care Collaborative on, exploring the sticking points within our pathways, how we improve them, and how we utilise collective resource.”*

Collaborative work is about harnessing momentum, making and building on connections, and staying receptive to new thinking. Comparing the two Collaboratives’ work, Matt says:

*“Although the Primary Care Collaborative has far more individual organisations to unite, and outputs will be very different, the core principle is the same. There are things that every organisation in a Collaborative will have to do, but that doesn’t mean they necessarily need to do them together, or that it would make sense for them to do so. And actually, that’s fine. What matters is that our aspirations remain immensely high. We’re setting an exceptionally high bar for our patients and communities. Being good isn’t good enough. Our collective action should drive us to delivering exceptional patient care and staff support. That’s my driver.”*

You can read the full version of this interview at [www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk](http://www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk)



## New website now live!

Our website is now up and running so you can check in anytime for the latest Primary Care Collaborative news, events and more.

[www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk](http://www.primarycarecollaborativenenc.org.uk)

## ICB Primary Care Strategy and Delivery Sub-Committee

We had positive interactions at the ICB Primary Care Strategy and Delivery Sub-Committee meeting at the start of August. An update on our work so far was well-received. ICB representatives expressed interest in the work we will be doing together on workforce and digital strategies. One key objective is to ensure our outputs are joined up and work is not being duplicated, for example our planned next steps for population health management support.

## Stay in touch

If you have news you'd like to share in the next issue, drop us an email: [necsu.primarycarecollabnenc@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.primarycarecollabnenc@nhs.net)

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To stay in touch between issues, join our dedicated Primary Care Collaborative WhatsApp group. Simply scan the QR code.

