

ICB updates for Wiltshire Area Board – October 2024

New provider of integrated community-based care

People in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire will receive more health and social care in or near their homes, in a more joined-up and streamlined way.

HCRG Care Group has been appointed to lead an innovative new community-based care partnership with the NHS, local authorities and charities that will transform the care and support that people get to help them with their health and wellbeing at every stage of their lives.

Traditional community services such as nursing, therapy and personal care will be enhanced as they become part of new integrated neighbourhood teams, working across homes, care homes, clinics, schools and community centres to bring more personalised support to local people.

The aim is to build on the services that are valued by patients and their loved ones, as well as giving people more support in living healthier lives.

Among the benefits local people can expect to see will be:

- A single place or front door to get community-based care, help and support. The new front door will be fully accessible to all, and be available in a face-to-face location, as well as online and over the phone.
- At least £7m a year will be invested in partnerships with VCSE providers to build community capacity to provide early help and support within communities from the end of 2027.
- Inappropriately located or outdated buildings will also be refurbished or phased out.
- Transforming the way that people access care will also reduce the pressure on GP practices and hospitals, which are seeing more people with health problems that could be effectively treated closer to home.

Local NHS invests millions to help patients get diagnostic care closer to home

Tens of thousands of patients living in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire requiring diagnostic care can now access the services they need sooner and closer to home thanks to a multimillion pound investment by the local NHS.

A £14 million cash injection has enabled three new community diagnostic centres to open across the region, with each of the sites providing the type of diagnostics that once would have only taken place inside a hospital.

Having services such as ultrasounds, echocardiograms and MRI scans based in the community means people awaiting diagnosis, including those with symptoms that could be cancer, can be seen quicker and begin any required treatment sooner.

The first centre opened at the Sulis Hospital in Bath in March 2023, and was followed in March and April of this year by two new sites, with one based at the West Swindon Health Centre and the other at Salisbury Centre Health Clinic.

Eligible groups encouraged to get vaccinated against flu and Covid-19

The second phase of the winter vaccination programme has begun for those in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire.

Vaccinations against flu and Covid-19 are now available for people aged 65 and over, those with a weakened immune system, carers, care home residents and front-line workers in social care and health care.

Following the initial launch last month, inviting pregnant women and children for their flu vaccinations, from Thursday 3 October anyone eligible for vaccinations can book online at www.nhs.uk, by downloading the NHS App, or by calling 119.

In addition, the NHS will be sending out invitations to those eligible to get their jabs, while GP practices and other local NHS services will also be contacting people to offer the vaccines.

These vaccinations provide vital protection, helping to prevent serious illnesses and reduce hospital admissions during the busy winter months.

ICB Non-Executive Director to join mental health trust

Paul Miller, Non-Executive Director at Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board, has been named as the new Chair of Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust.

Paul will step down from his role at BSW ICB at the end of October 2024 to take up the role of Chair at the mental health, learning disability and autism provider on 1 November 2024.

He has been a non-executive director since the establishment of the integrated care board in July 2022.

Stephanie Elsy, BSW ICB Chair, said: "We are very grateful for Paul's active support in the first two years of our ICB.

"This has been a pivotal time as we have developed the first integrated care plan that outlines the priority areas that we need to tackle to bring the most benefit to local people."

Independent investigation of the NHS published

In July 2024, the newly appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting MP, commissioned Lord Darzi to conduct an immediate and independent investigation of the NHS.

Lord Darzi's report has now been published and provides an expert understanding of the current performance of the NHS across England, as well as the challenges facing the whole health and care system.

Within the report, Lord Darzi used the most recent data and intelligence to assess:

- Patient access to health and care
- The quality of health and care being provided
- The overall performance of the health and care system

People can read the full report online at www.gov.uk, while alternative formats can be requested by sending an email to darzi2024evidence@dhsc.gov.uk.

Busy summer for urgent and emergency care services

Emergency departments in the NHS experienced the busiest summer on record, with around 6.8 million people coming forward for urgent care during June, July and August.

In total, 6,776,150 people attended an emergency department in England during the three-month period, which is an increase of more than 240,000 when compared to the previous year.

Local emergency teams also had a very busy summer, with the region's three hospitals – the Royal United Hospital in Bath, the Great Western Hospital in Swindon and Salisbury District Hospital – seeing a combined attendance of 79,787.

The busiest month of the summer came in July, when the combined attendances for each of the three hospitals totalled more than 27,000.

Professor Sir Stephen Powis, NHS National Medical Director, said: "The NHS has just come out of the busiest summer on record for A&Es across the country, and preparations are already under way for what is expected to be an extremely difficult winter."