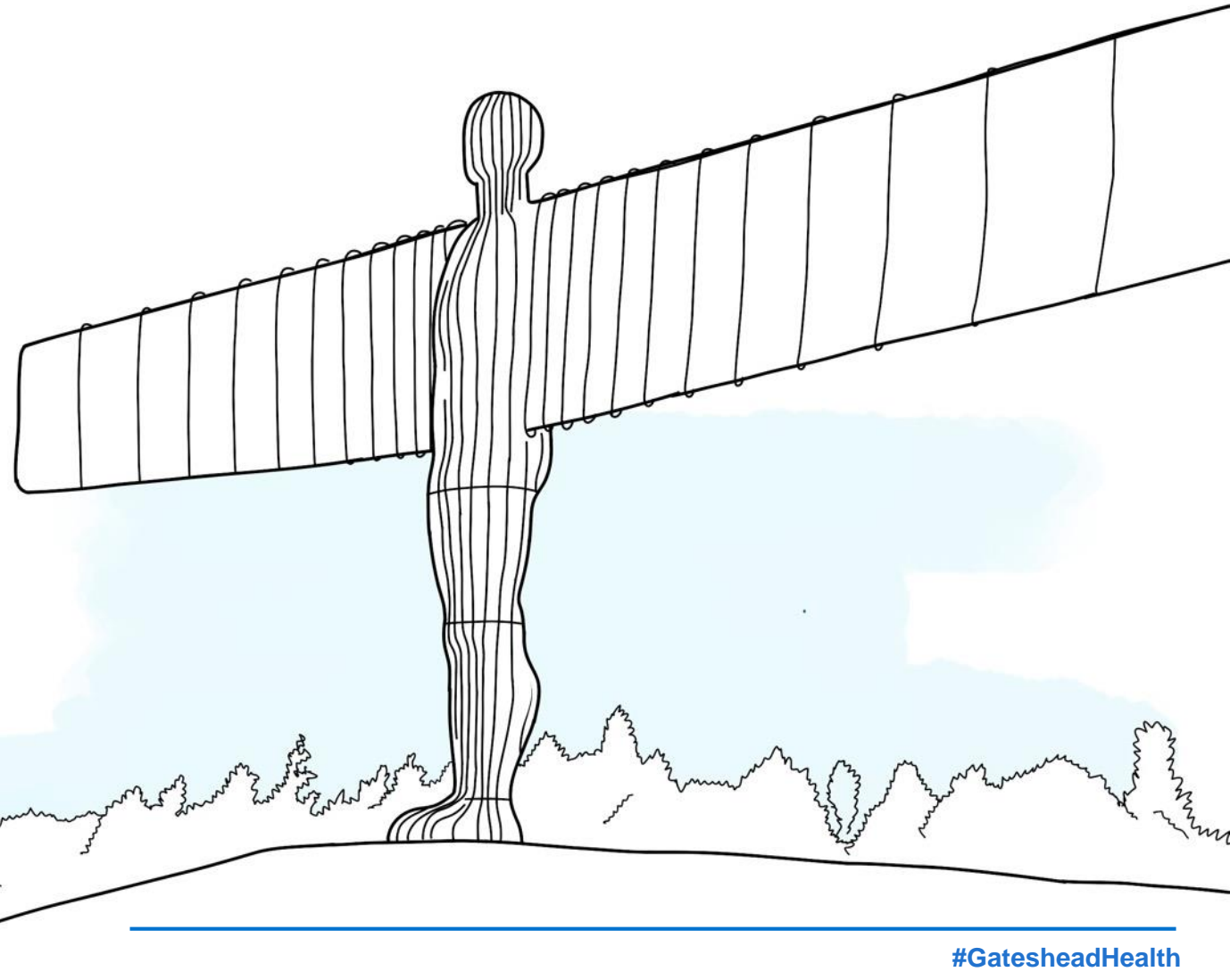


Gateshead Health – Corporate Strategy

2025 – 2030

September 2025



Foreword and content

An overview of our strategy

Our Corporate Strategy 2025-30 outlines our vision for the future of healthcare within Gateshead. It has been developed during a period of significant change both locally and nationally, and we are confident that it sets out the steps we will need to take to secure a sustainable future for our organisation and for the communities we serve.

We know that health outcomes for the residents of Gateshead differ greatly depending on where they live. A key focus for us over the next five years will be to close the gap in the most profound health variances across our communities, working collaboratively to support health prevention, improve access and reduce the time patients need to spend within the hospital environment.

We will focus on addressing the three shifts outlined within the Government’s Ten Year Health Plan, namely:

- Shifting care from hospitals to the community, with an emphasis on providing care closer to people’s homes including through neighbourhood health services;
- Preventing ill health, moving from a system which primarily treats sickness to one that focuses on prevention and shortening the amount of time people spend in ill-health; and

- Moving from analogue to digital, embracing new technologies and digital approaches to modernise the way we interact and provide services.

However, we cannot ignore the wider context in which we operate. Public satisfaction in the NHS is at an all time low and the NHS continues to face immense financial pressures. Our Trust, like many, will need to carefully balance ongoing cost constraints with rising demand for services, alongside the need to reform our services.

Throughout this, our priority will remain on the delivery of safe, high-quality care. We will build on our strengths in Women’s Health and Diagnostic services as well as collaborating with partners to ensure that collectively we are utilising our skills and resources in the right way to transform the way we design and deliver services across the region.

Delivering the level of change needed is going to require strong leadership along with time, energy and commitment from across the entire organisation. We are confident that our people can rise to the challenge to make our strategy a reality and secure a sustainable Gateshead’s future.

Alison Marshall &
Sir Paul Ennals[^]
Chair

Trudie Davies &
Sean Fenwick*
Chief Executive Officer

This document sets out our vision for the next five years which can be navigated using the sections below:

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[^]From 1st October 2025

*Acting CEO from August 2025

About us

Our Trust

Established in 2005, Gateshead Health was among the first Foundation Trusts in the country. We have consistently delivered the highest standards of care for our patients over the past 20 years.

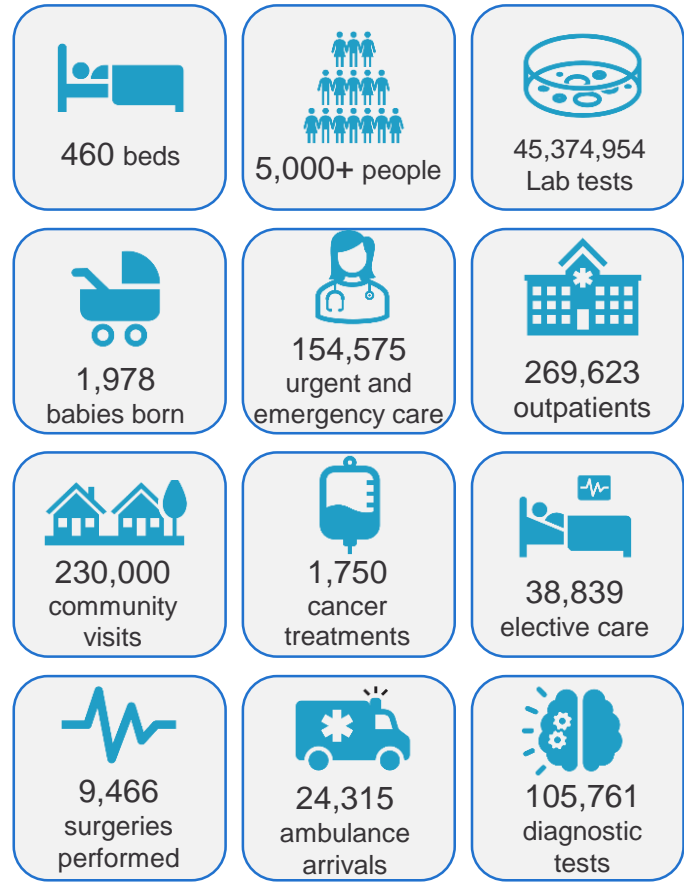
An integrated community provider, we provide a range of acute and community services to the population of Gateshead along with a number of specialist services to a wider population.

We deliver a wide range of screening services supported by our regional laboratory services.

Our main sites include Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Bensham Hospital, Metrocentre Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) and Blaydon Primary Care Centre, alongside a number of smaller community sites across Gateshead.

The Trust owns its subsidiary QE Facilities Limited. Established in 2014. QE Facilities provides a diverse offering including estates and facilities services, financial advisory, pharmacy, and logistics services across the region and beyond.

A year in numbers (2024/25)



Our Achievements

Since our last strategy we have achieved some amazing things. These include:

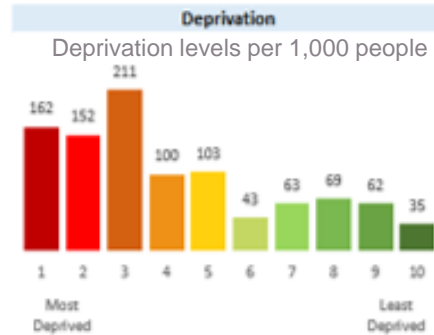
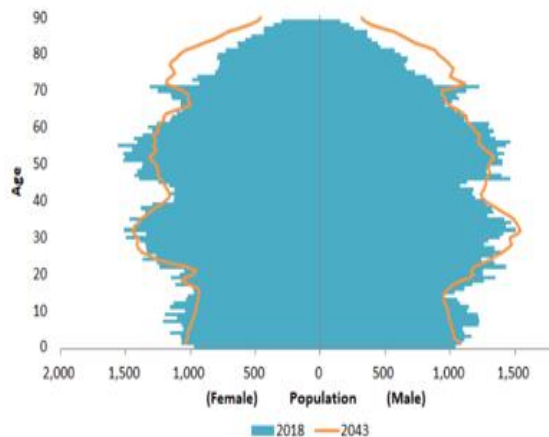
- Our **Maternity Services** were one of the first in the country to be rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with a number of areas of outstanding practice highlighted. We were also rated as the #1 Trust in the UK for maternity services in the CQC's national patient survey
- We opened our **Community Diagnostic Centre** at the Metrocentre, one of the UKs largest shopping centres services providing the community with advanced imaging, respiratory, and cardiac diagnostic services
- We were a **finalist for the HSJ Trust of the Year Award**, highlighting excellence in innovation, collaboration, and patient outcomes
- We were recognised at the **Northern Cancer Alliance Awards** for exceptional work by the Breast Care Nursing and Gynae-Oncology teams
- We ranked among **the top 10 performing units** for professional development in obstetrics and gynaecology by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
- We won the **HSJ Digital Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Award** for diabetes care, improving access through donated technology

The communities we serve

Gateshead has a population of around 199,100 living in 89,000 households, which is expected to increase by 2043 to 216,750.

The population is ageing: it is projected that by 2043 there will be an additional 12,316 people aged 65 or older, an increase of 29%. Alongside this, a decrease in the number of children and young people aged 0-15 is expected of around 3,529 or 10%.

Gateshead Population Projections between 2018 – 2043 (ONS)



Gateshead is the 47th most deprived local authority in England, out of 317 local authorities. Around 32,700 (16%) people in Gateshead live in one of the 10% most deprived areas of England. Extending that range further, nearly 62,600 (31%) live in the 20% most deprived areas. 2 in 5 children in Gateshead live in poverty.

47.6% of those in the most deprived areas have at least 1 long-term condition.

Healthy life expectancy is significantly lower than the England average with a significant gap in life expectancy between those living in the most and least deprived postcodes in Gateshead.

Lifestyle factors:

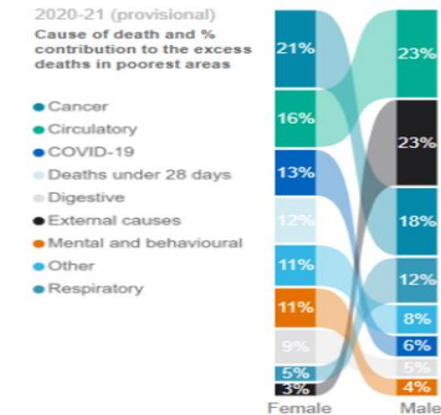
- 70% of adults in Gateshead have excess weight (England average 64%)
- There is an increasing rate of Type 2 diabetes in the adult population.
- Approx. 1 in 4 children in Reception are overweight or obese, rising to 2 in 5 in Year 6. This is worse than the national average
- The prevalence of smoking in adults is in line with the England average (9%), but varies significantly by deprivation and socioeconomic status
- The 2021 Balance North East report found that only 1 in 3 people were aware of the link between alcohol and cancer
- Admissions to the Trust for alcohol related conditions are among the highest in England
- Gateshead had the highest rate of hospital admissions due to stroke in the country (2022/23)

Impact on our services

In the North East and North Cumbria, people from the 1st deprivation centile have nearly twice the number of hospital admissions compared to people from the 10th centile

There is a clear link between levels of deprivation and the likelihood of poor health and preventable mortality.

Diseases that contribute most to the gap in life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas, by sex



In response, we know that we need to adapt and change the way we deliver services to better meet the needs of the population we serve.

The national context – NHS 10 Year Plan



The NHS 10 Year Plan ‘Fit for the Future’ was published by the Government on 3rd July 2025. The Plan sets out a transformative vision for healthcare in England.

The Plan builds on the findings of the independent investigation of the NHS in England completed by Lord Darzi in 2024.

The reforms set out in the 10 Year Plan focus on three ‘shifts’:

- **moving care from hospitals to communities:** focusing on providing more care outside of hospitals, with an emphasis on the development of ‘neighbourhood health centres’ and closing the gap on health inequalities – focusing on access and outcomes

- **moving from analogue to digital:** focusing on major expansion of the NHS App and greater use of AI and other technology
- **moving from sickness to prevention:** focusing more on preventing ill health than on treatment, including the wider determinants of health and factors that influence a person's need for care.



Five key enablers support delivery of the 10 Year Plan:

- The development of a new operating model - simplifying how the NHS operates; transforming how care is delivered; and, making the NHS more responsive to patients
- Introducing additional levels of transparency especially in relation to performance and quality of care
- Creating a new workforce model
- Development of a new innovation strategy
- Reforming NHS finances

What this means for us

For Gateshead Health as an integrated provider of acute and community services, working coterminously with local authority boundaries and primary care networks, the starting position for a move to integrated neighbourhood health is strong.

Our flagship Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) at the Metrocentre is an excellent example of where we have shifted services from hospital into the community.

We are actively working as part of the Great North Healthcare Alliance, the objectives of which include improving patient access and outcomes; reducing inequalities; maximising the workforce opportunities; pioneering digital and innovation – all of which align to the national ambitions. In addition, as clinical pathway work progresses across the Trusts this will ultimately support the 10 Year Plan ambition to enable hospitals to focus on providing world class specialist care to those who need it.

Perhaps the biggest challenge and transformation for the Trust, and indeed all healthcare providers, is the radical review of how care is delivered in the future and the funding flows that support this. Delivery of our 5 year strategy is key to how we achieve this.

Our strategic response

Our clinical and diagnostics services strategy

We want to provide the highest standards of care to our patients and communities. Continually striving for clinical excellence. This includes ensuring timely access to services and meeting operational performance standards.

Through our clinically led approach to leadership and decision making, we will look to improve access to services through transformation. Starting at the front door, we will streamline emergency care pathways to ensure our most unwell patients receive the care they need in a timely manner. Working with partners we will look at alternatives to admission for those not needing acute medical care. Where patients do need a hospital admission we will look to keep their stay with us as short as possible.

We will reduce our waiting times and improve equity of access. Increasing the use of digital technology, scheduling and robotics to enhance services for our patients.

We will make the best use of the resources we have available – focusing on productivity, reducing unwarranted variation and striving for the best clinical outcomes for our patients.

Planned actions in response to the national three shifts include:

Hospital to community

- Transforming services including reforming outpatients
- Building seamless and coordinated services
- Focus on integrated neighbourhood health
- Home First principles
- Maximising virtual wards / care

Sickness to prevention

- Screening and early diagnostics
- Focusing on health inequalities
- Ensuring equitable access
- Making every contact count
- Promoting positive health choices
- Working with partners

Analogue to digital

- Digital by default
- Using data, insights and intelligence inc. for population health management
- Maximising technology and systems inc. the use of robotics and artificial intelligence
- Focus on digital optimisation and interoperability including via our digital records programme

Quality

The provision of safe, high quality, compassionate care will always be our top priority. We want patients to feel valued, respected and heard, and their families and carers to feel supported. Implementing and learning from best practice will be key to this.

We have engaged with our partners and stakeholders to understand our future priorities which we will group under the headings of:

- Clinical effectiveness
- Patient safety
- Patient experience
- Staff experience

Innovation and research

In support of our priorities in this area, research improvement and learning will flow through every part of our organisation, informing practice and enhancing outcomes.

We know that research active organisations improve the quality of services and improve patient satisfaction. We want to grow our research and innovation capacity and capability to inform our models of care. This includes, for example, opening the Northern Centre for Breast Research in 2025.

Women's health

Building on the National Women's Health Strategy for England (2022) and Gateshead's Director of Public Health Report, Mind the Gap, partners across Gateshead have a collective ambition to improve access and outcomes for women and girls.

Our ambition is to lead the Northern Centre of Excellence for Women's Health. This builds on our reputation for delivering excellent Maternity and regional Gynaecology services and reflects our commitment to addressing long-standing inequalities in women's health outcomes.

Diagnostics

Accurate and timely diagnostics play a vital role in preventative health by improving early detection of illness. Our flagship Community Diagnostic Centre and regional pathology laboratory play a significant role in our ambition in this area.

Specialist services

We want to be a good partner and play our part in ensuring the people of Gateshead and beyond have access to specialist services when they need them. This means building connections across teams and supporting resilience across organisations.

Our strategic response

Our clinical and diagnostics services strategy - improving population health and narrowing the gap in health inequality

Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people. They are rooted deep within our society, and are widening, leading to disparate outcomes amongst our population.

This results in earlier deaths, lost years of healthy life, increased likelihood of multiple long-term conditions and intergenerational effects from traumatic experiences. All of these create significant demand for our services as well as broader implications and economic cost for society.

For example, within Gateshead we know:

- Premature mortality from cardiovascular disease is significantly worse in Gateshead than in England
- Prevalence of cancer diagnoses are increasing
- The (age-standardised) rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions in Gateshead is 841 per 100,000 population, significantly above the regional and England average.

Our aim is that the population we serve will live more years in good health, closing the gap in healthy life expectancy between people living in the most and least disadvantaged communities in Gateshead. We will do this through the provision of high-quality care as well as by playing our part in prevention.

To achieve this, we recognise the importance of developing strong links with the communities we serve and working collaboratively with our partners to ensure that we are not only responsive, but proactive in our approach to meeting current healthcare and community needs.

We will work to:

- Improve our understanding of the needs of people who use our services
- Support early diagnosis and treatment
- Focus on high risk groups - people with complex health and care needs who require support from multiple organisations; and
- Design services to meet the needs of populations.

Our focus

As part of our work to date on health inequalities, we have identified a number of priority areas in response to the needs of our population which include:

- **Making every contact count** – focusing on using interactions with people to support them in making positive changes to their physical and mental health and wellbeing
- **Health literacy** – supporting people to understand and use information in ways which promote and maintain good health” for themselves, their families and their communities
- **Reasonable adjustments** - making changes in our approach and provision to ensure that services are accessible to all
- **Equitable elective recovery** – with an emphasis on reducing time to treatment for patients and by preventing worsening health while awaiting treatment.

Neighbourhood Health

As an integrated provider of health services, we see ourselves playing a pivotal role in the future of neighbourhood health services. Tailoring our service offer to those who need it most.

We want to ensure patients are treated in the best place for them. Be that at home, in the community, at the hospital or in another organisation. This includes working alongside colleagues in social care to adopt a **home first** approach to care.

Working with partners our ambition is to play a leading role in the development of integrated neighbourhood health centres with a focus on the best outcomes for the population of Gateshead, starting with the places where health expectancy is lowest and repurposing existing estate.

We want to connect mental and physical health services, social care and organisations across the voluntary, community and social enterprise to ensure the people of Gateshead who need our services the most have access to them.

Our strategic response

A collaborative partner

We know that system partnerships and collaborative working are crucial to support the delivery of services to the communities that we serve along with delivery of our strategy and the national priorities. Front and centre to this work will be integrated neighbourhood health.

We have a strong history of joint working and have excellent relationships across the region and beyond.

Working as part of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Integrated Care System, the regional ten-year plan 'Better health and wellbeing for all' sets out how we will work together to reduce inequalities, improve experiences of our health and care services and improve the health and wellbeing of people living and working in the North East and North Cumbria by 2030 and beyond.

Our four key goals...



Longer & healthier lives

Reducing the gap between how long people live in the North East and North Cumbria compared to the rest of England



Fairer outcomes for all

As not everyone has the same opportunities to be healthy because of where they live, their income, education and employment



Better health & care services

Not just high-quality services but the same quality no matter where you live and who you are



Giving children and young people the best start in life

Enabling them to thrive, have great futures and improve lives for generations to come

Key elements of this work feed into our own strategy.

At Gateshead **PLACE**, we are committed to working with partners in the local authority, primary care, the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) and the voluntary, community & social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in an integrated way to achieve the ambitions set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy along with achieving our own ambitions and goals.

We will build on the work we led at Gateshead Place to co-design and co-produce a model of care for women's health hubs. Listening to service users about what matters to them and using the learning to scale up system wide transformation to improve access to services for the population we serve.

We want to work with Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) as our local mental health trust to improve access to services for the people of Gateshead.

We recognise that we play a significant role as an anchor institution at Place, with the ability to go beyond our role as a healthcare provider and large employer of the local population. This includes our broader responsibility for creating wider societal benefits, promoting health careers, creating jobs, tackling the climate emergency and reducing inequalities.

Under a single '**Community Promise**' framework we want to focus on improving people's lives, pushing the boundaries of what we can do as an NHS Trust by looking at how we can have an even larger impact for everyone who lives and works in the area and wider region.



With a focus on improving access to services through transformation we will look to be efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of our population.

We will enhance productivity by maximising the use of resources, optimising service delivery and utilising technology. We will empower our workforce to think innovatively and create an environment where working collaboratively is the norm.

Our strategic response

Great North Healthcare Alliance

Gateshead Health, The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT have been working together as the Great North Healthcare Alliance since January 2024.

The Alliance has changed ways of working across the four trusts, strengthening partnership between neighbouring organisations to drive better decision making for the benefit of patients, our people and external partners.

Our focus is to work together to deliver high quality, safe and reliable care to our population, with fairer outcomes for all and equal access regardless of geography.

Our aim is to leverage the best of each organisation for the benefit of all, building on the distinct strengths of each organisation.

We will work together to define our collective clinical strategy including outlining how services are located to make the best of our collective resources. This includes focusing on enabling rapid access to care, delivering positive experiences, providing the best possible outcomes, and preventing illness in the first place.

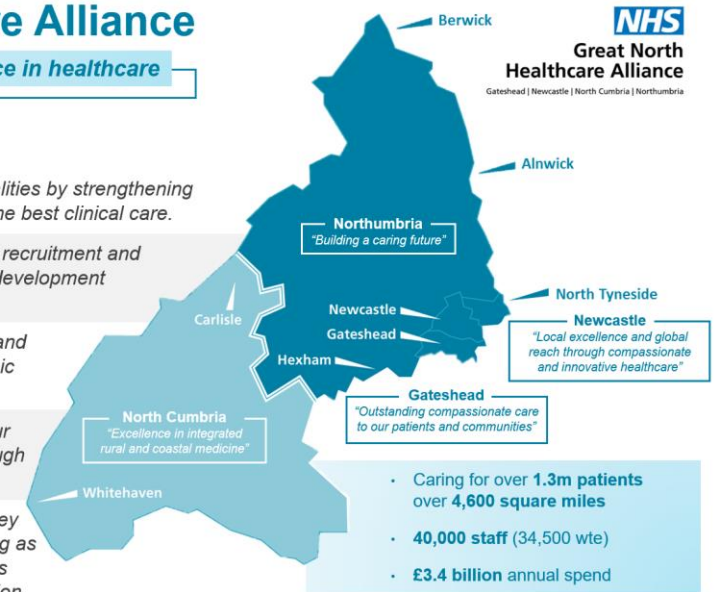
To support our strategic approach to the delivery of sustainable services and alliance working we have appointed a shared Chair across the three North East Trusts namely Gateshead, Newcastle and Northumbria. The shared Chair will support the development of a single, unified voice for the organisations making decision making more streamlined and increasing the strategic influence of the Alliance both regionally and nationally.

Great North Healthcare Alliance

Working together to deliver excellence in healthcare

By working together we will:

- *Improve patient outcomes and reduce inequalities by strengthening our services and making it easier to access the best clinical care.*
- *Create great places to work by joining up our recruitment and staff experience offer and by sharing career development opportunities.*
- *Pioneer innovation, transformation, research and development, making the most of our academic and commercial opportunities.*
- *Reduce health inequalities and do more for our economy, environment and communities through local and national partnerships.*
- *Create a financially sustainable value for money health economy that raises revenue by treating as many patients as possible within the resources available, commercial activity and cost reduction.*



The four Trusts within the Alliance are united in their commitment to deliver safe, high quality, personalised and integrated care. Prioritising population health and reducing health inequalities.

Working together we can deliver significant benefits to patients and our people ensuring resilient and sustainable services for our populations now and in the future.

Our strategic response

Aligning with system partners

In developing our corporate strategy we have worked closely with system partners including colleagues in primary care, the Great North Healthcare Alliance, Gateshead Council, North East and North Cumbria ICB as well as representatives from across the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector. Together we share a number of aligned priorities which are outlined below. These are based around a shared intent of leveraging our joint expertise, experience, and making use of our collective resources for the benefit of the populations we serve.

01. Health inequalities

➔ Focus on tackling inequalities in service access, health outcomes, and social determinants. Supporting our communities to support themselves and each other.

02. Prevention

➔ Improving health literacy, managing long-term conditions, and making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.

03. Care closer to home

➔ Avoiding unnecessary hospital use and supporting the provision of care at home or in the community.

04. Reforming models of care

➔ Working together across primary, community, secondary, tertiary care, voluntary sector and social services to transform the way we design and deliver sustainable services across the region.

05. Patient safety and experience

➔ Listening to the patient voice. Greater involvement in decisions about their care and in shaping the future of service provision.

06. Digital enablement

➔ Using data to anticipate need, identify future trends as well as transforming the way we work and interact.

07. People transformation

➔ Supporting resilience, retention, and flexible working alongside transforming roles to support future models of care.



An introduction to our strategy

How it was developed

Our strategy has been informed by extensive engagement with a broad range of stakeholders. Various activities were undertaken to seek the views of our people, patients, partners and governors. We also drew from a wide array of surveys, feedback and research data.

Throughout these activities we heard:



We need to focus on consistently getting the basics right, including securing our sustainable future. This foundation should drive a renewed focus on innovation and productivity, ensuring we utilise our resources in the most efficient and effective way.



The quality and safety of patient care remains our top priority and will guide our decision making.



We need to focus on utilising our resources to provide the best care possible for the population of Gateshead. This will include reforming models of care with an emphasis on prevention and providing care closer to home, optimising the use of digital where possible and appropriate.



We need to play our part in improving the health of the population and reducing health inequalities. As part of this there needs to be increased collaboration across all health and care providers including greater understanding of the breath of health and care provision available.

An overview

Our purpose is to deliver excellent healthcare and play our part in improving population health by being a good partner and a great employer

Our vision is to be recognised as a provider of safe, high-quality integrated health services, diagnostics, and a centre of excellence for women's health

We will achieve this by focusing on four strategic priorities

Excellent patient care

Great place to work

Working together for healthier communities

Fit for the future



Innovation



Caring



Openness



Respect



Engagement

Our ICORE Values

Our values are the golden thread that runs through everything we do. Following a Trust-wide consultation with our people, they remain unchanged with feedback illustrating that our values continue to resonate across the organisation.

Our strategy on a page

Purpose: To deliver excellent healthcare and play our part in improving population health by being a good partner and a great employer

Vision: To be recognised as a provider of safe, high quality integrated health services, diagnostics, and a centre of excellence for women's health

Excellent patient care

We will be a clinically-led organisation focused on delivering safe, high-quality care and improving health outcomes for our patients

We will ensure our patients experience the best possible compassionate care and make every contact count

We will continually improve our services creating a restorative culture where learning, innovation and research can flourish

Great place to work

We will care for our people, creating a fair, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone can thrive in their role

We will grow and develop our people with a focus on celebrating achievements and creating a culture of high performance and innovation

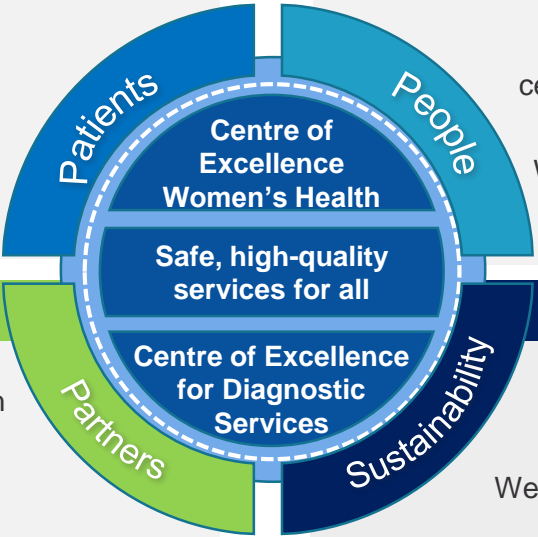
We will be an employer and training provider of choice within the local workforce recognising our role as an anchor institution

Working together for healthier communities

We will work in collaboration with our partners to improve the health of our population and reduce health inequalities

We will develop our neighbourhoods in line with the NHS 10 year plan

We will collaborate with system partners with an emphasis on maximising efficient use of collective resources across health and care services



Fit for the future

We will ensure effective and efficient use of our resources identifying opportunities to improve productivity and ensure best use of public money

We will be a data informed, digitally enabled organisation using technology to transform the way we plan and deliver care

We will focus on productive utilisation of our estate to facilitate care in the right setting and providing our services in an environmentally sustainable way

Innovation – Care – Openness – Respect – Engagement

Strategic goal 1 – Excellent patient care

Our aim:

We will provide safe, high-quality compassionate care for every patient, every time.

By improving access, redesigning care models, and embedding patient voice in all that we do, we will reduce unwarranted variation and ensure that people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

Through innovation, research, and partnership, we will continuously raise standards and deliver outcomes that meet and exceed national expectations.

Our ambitions:



We will be a clinically-led organisation focused on delivering safe, high-quality care and improving health outcomes for our patients



We will ensure our patients experience the best possible compassionate care and make every contact count



We will continually improve our services creating a restorative culture where learning, innovation and research can flourish

Strategic goal 1 – Excellent patient care

Ambition 1:



We will be a clinically-led organisation focused on delivering safe, high-quality care and improving health outcomes for our patients

We will ensure safety will always come first. We know the impact when care goes wrong, so we will keep strengthening our culture of openness and learning. That means acting early on risks, supporting staff to speak up, and making sure feedback leads to visible change.

We will focus on reducing waiting times, with particular attention to those patients and communities who face the greatest inequalities. We will reform pathways of care to support smoother patient flow, making the best use of our beds and resources so that people are cared for in the most appropriate setting. Digital solutions including the NHS App and expanding virtual wards, using patient portals, and remote monitoring will help patients stay connected to their care while easing hospital pressure. For staff, better use of digital tools will free up time for direct care and improve decision-making.

Patients will wait less and will be cared for in the right place at the right time. Safety outcomes will improve, with fewer avoidable harms and stronger evidence of learning when things do go wrong. People who have struggled to access our services will see real improvements in equity of care. Digital tools will become part of everyday practice, making care more efficient and convenient for both patients and staff.

Executive owner	Gill Findley / Carmen Howey
Trust Committee	Quality Governance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Put safety first in all that we do
- Improve equitable access to our services with an emphasis on reducing time to treatment and preventing worsening health while awaiting care
- Reform models of care to maximise resources, enhance patient flow and emphasise providing care in the right setting
- Maximise the use of digital to transform the way we work and how our patients access our services
- Prioritise investment to enhance quality, safety and improve patient experience

What will be different

- ✓ Recognised as a safe, learning organisation
- ✓ Maintain or better our CQC ratings and safety standards
- ✓ Achievement of constitutional standards, with access and waiting times in the top quartile for our region
- ✓ Reduction in avoidable harms across all services
- ✓ Reduce Length of Stay to the minimum clinically required
- ✓ Digital first for both our patients and our services

Strategic goal 1 – Excellent patient care

Ambition 2:



We will ensure our patients experience the best possible compassionate care and make every contact count

Good care is not just about treatment it is about how people feel when they use our services including how, when and where they access them. We will prioritise dignity, respect, and compassion in every interaction. Our approach will be more personalised, shaped around what matters most to each individual patient.

We will strengthen co-production of care by involving patients, carers, and the public in the design and review of services. That means not just gathering feedback but acting on it and showing people how their input has helped shape change. We will work more closely with partners in primary care, mental health, social care, and the voluntary sector so that patients experience joined-up care that addresses their wider needs, not just their medical treatment. This includes shifting care out of hospital where it makes sense to do so.

Patients will feel listened to and involved in their care. Feedback scores, surveys, and conversations will show a more positive experience, with real improvements in how responsive and compassionate our services feel. Services will increasingly be designed with patients, not just for them. Pathways will be smoother across health and social care, reducing duplication and hand-offs. Patients will notice care that feels joined-up, personal, and respectful.

Executive owner	Gill Findley / Carmen Howey / Jo Halliwell
Trust Committee	Quality Governance

To achieve this goal we will:

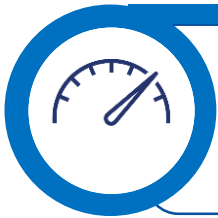
- Focus on getting the basics right every time
- Ensure our patients have the best possible experience
- Develop our approach to co-production, increasing patient, service user, carer and public engagement
- Ensure patients and carers are listened to and feel valued for their contribution
- Work alongside our mental health trust to improve access to services
- Establish new models of care that better meet the needs of our population and reduce pressure on our hospital services

What will be different

- ✓ More of our people and patients will recommend us as a place to receive care
- ✓ People report easy access, positive experience and effective outcomes
- ✓ Shift of provision to community setting
- ✓ Shared awareness of all health and care provision available to the population of Gateshead

Strategic goal 1 – Excellent patient care

Ambition 3:



We will continually improve our services creating a restorative culture where learning, innovation and research can flourish

Continuous improvement will become part of daily practice. We will support staff across all roles to use improvement methods confidently, making changes that directly benefit patients. This will link with Alliance-wide approaches so that we share learning and avoid duplication.

Research and innovation will be central across services and teams. We will expand our research portfolio, giving more patients the chance to take part in trials and benefit from new treatments. Evidence-based practice will guide how we design services, making sure improvements are grounded in the best available knowledge.

We will build on our strengths in diagnostics and women’s health, developing these areas into centres of excellence that serve not only our local population but the wider region.

Staff will be confident in using improvement tools, and patients will see the benefits of changes made closer to the front line. More patients will have access to research opportunities, with our Trust recognised as research-active and forward looking. Diagnostics and women’s health will be strengthened as regional exemplars. The combination of research, innovation, and improvement will lead to better outcomes, greater efficiency, and a culture where learning never stops.

Executive owner	Carmen Howey
Trust Committee	Quality Governance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Embed our continuous improvement methodology seeking opportunities to align to Alliance methodology
- Expand our existing research capacity and increase our uptake of clinical trials embedding this as a core feature of continually improving our services
- Further strengthen our presence in regional services
- Seek opportunities to grow women’s health and diagnostic services

What will be different

- ✓ Continuous improvement methodology adopted across all teams and services
- ✓ Increase in the number of services undertaking high quality research
- ✓ Establishment of the Northern Centre for Breast Research in 2025
- ✓ Maximised research and innovation opportunities including through the Alliance

Strategic goal 2 – Great Place to Work

Our aim:

To deliver outstanding and compassionate care to patients we must first care for our people.

We want to get the basics right for our people and to build on these to support our teams and help everyone to thrive in the workplace.

We want to create a sense of belonging where everyone is valued. We will train and develop all our people to ensure they continue to provide first class care to our patients.

Our ambitions:

- 

We will care for our people, creating a fair, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone can thrive in their role
- 

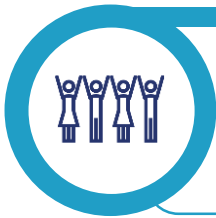
We will grow and develop our people with a focus on celebrating achievements and creating a culture of high performance and innovation
- 

We will be an employer and training provider of choice within the local Community recognising our role as an anchor institution

Strategic goal 2 – Great Place to Work

Executive owner	Amanda Venner
Trust Committee	People and OD

Ambition 1:



We will care for our people, creating a fair, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone can thrive in their role

Caring for others is an intrinsically compassionate behaviour; however, the culture we work in is not always one that is truly compassionate.

We aim to build an inclusive culture that is built on civility and respect, where everyone’s voice is heard, and our people feel proud to be part of the Gateshead team.

Alongside this, we will continue to embed our ICORE values and behavioural framework ensuring it enables us to live our values every day and makes a real difference to the experience of our teams and our people.

With more visible senior leaders and improved communication channels, we are passionate about truly engaging with as many staff as possible. We will refresh our engagement approach with an emphasis on providing more opportunities for conversations and developing understanding.

We will continue to promote a culture of speaking up, enabling and supporting colleagues to raise concerns. We will continue to promote and raise awareness of our route map for raising concerns, so staff know what routes are available to them to speak up.

We will prioritise our health and well-being offer based on need and proactively support our people to understand the support that is available and take personal responsibility for their own health and well-being within the work environment.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Further embed our ICORE values with an emphasis on ensuring these are consistently role-modelled throughout the organisation
- Be open and transparent in our communications
- Ensure a psychologically safe culture by encouraging speaking up and ensuring our people have a voice that is heard
- Prioritise our Health and Well-Being offer based on need
- Tackle poor behaviours and ensure all our people are role-modelling good behaviours and Trust values

What will be different

- ✓ Increase in people recommending us as a place to work to at least 75%
- ✓ Feel safe to speak up about anything that concerns me in this organisation, and feel organisation would address any concerns raised to 75% in Annual Staff Survey
- ✓ Closer parity in the overall positive engagement scores for disability and ethnicity
- ✓ Sickness absence remains consistently below 4.9%
- ✓ To maintain turnover below the NHS average <12% annually

Strategic goal 2 – Great Place to Work

Executive owner	Amanda Venner
Trust Committee	People and OD

Ambition 2:



We will grow and develop our people with a focus on celebrating achievements and creating a culture of high performance and innovation

We are committed to ensuring our people and teams have the skills and knowledge to be the best they can be. Our dedicated learning and development team will support with every step, from induction to core training, appraisals and a full management development offer.

Facilitating excellent clinical training will remain a key priority for us. We will develop a forward-thinking clinical leadership programme to give our clinical leaders the time, skills and experience to develop, learn and build on their existing approaches. This programme will support them as they move into leadership roles, giving them the tools they need to succeed and embed our Clinically Led, Management Supported ethos.

Underpinning all the work we do in People & OD is the aim of developing capacity and capability across our managers and colleagues. Providing expert advice and guidance enables us to upskill and train managers so that they have the confidence and capability to be great people managers. This will allow them to lead their teams compassionately ensuring direction, supporting alignment and nurturing commitment, which will lead to better patient outcomes and more motivated colleagues.

Robust workforce plans will ensure we take a more proactive, informed approach to our wider work, such as recruitment and retention, and ensure we can make informed decisions about future workforce needs. We will build internal skills on workforce planning and work with professional leads to plan across health and care ensuring we recognise the impact of digital advancements and automation on the workforce.

Working in partnership with clinical teams, we will move focus onto supporting resilience in our workforce developing innovative roles of the future and exploring more flexible ways of working.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Establish a leadership development framework to equip our current and aspiring future leaders
- Ensure all our people have the skills they need to provide excellent patient care
- Embed workforce planning, building on the six steps methodology
- Greater understanding of our future workforce demands with increased flexibility in roles and training to achieve this
- Define and develop our workforce of the future, by evolving roles across professional boundaries and supporting innovative ways of working and training

What will be different

- ✓ Increased proportion of people from diverse background progressing their career within the Trust. Organisation acts fairly regarding career progression
- ✓ All of our managers will have the opportunity to access leadership development training, with a target of 85% access the framework to develop their skills
- ✓ We will be recognised as a provider of excellent undergraduate and post graduate training
- ✓ Every business unit has a workforce plan, which identifies future workforce needs, flexible working, and clearly linking future operational and people requirements

Strategic goal 2 – Great Place to Work

Ambition 3:



We will be an employer and training provider of choice within the local Community recognising our role as an anchor institution

We have an important role to play in the Gateshead community as the largest employer as well as a health and care provider. Often referred to as 'Anchor Institutions' our size and scale means we can and will create new opportunities for local people to enter employment by expanding apprenticeships, providing routes into employment for volunteers and working more closely with schools, colleges and universities.

We are already working with other partners across the local authority and voluntary sector to encourage people into employment with the skills and support they need to make the first steps into a career in health and care. These new opportunities for local employment will bring benefits for people most at risk of the negative health effects of long-term unemployment while also helping health and care organisations in Gateshead.

The formation of the Great North Healthcare Alliance enables us to maximise the opportunities presented through the regional workforce programme. We want to grow the support and opportunities our teams have, and our work plan will have this at its heart. Key opportunities within this will include:

- Opportunities for joined up recruitment and workforce development programmes that supports local people into stretching careers.
- Adopting the Community promise that supports local growth - including promotion of health careers, social value, and a healthy green environment.

Executive owner	Amanda Venner
Trust Committee	People and OD

To achieve this goal we will:

- Continue to Increase our links with local colleges, schools and other community bodies to expand alternative routes to employment supporting t-level placements, work experience and apprenticeships.
- Maximise opportunities for our people to develop and work across organisations as part of the Great North Healthcare Alliance
- Promoting health careers to local populations, especially underrepresented groups
- Adopt the Community promise across all Alliance partners
- Be a training provider of choice

What will be different

- ✓ Increased breadth of pathways into employment
- ✓ Fully utilising the apprenticeship levy to support talent and supply pipelines for widening participation
- ✓ Aligned approach across the Alliance for recruitment and workforce development programmes
- ✓ Evidenced impact on the 5 component parts of the community promise

Strategic goal 3 – Working together for our healthier communities

Our aim:

To work collaboratively with our health and social care partners to improve population health by reducing inequalities and making the best use of collective resources to support the people of Gateshead have better life experiences which includes living well for longer.

To work with stakeholders and partners to co-design and co-produce a neighbourhood health care model aligned to the NHS 10 year plan focusing on the three radical shifts:

- Hospital to community
- Analogue to digital
- Sickness to prevention

Through neighbourhood health service co-design, shared leadership and delivery, we will create services that are inclusive, sustainable and rooted in the needs of our communities leading to improved health outcomes.

Our ambitions:



We will work in collaboration with our partners to improve the health of our population and reduce health inequalities



We will develop our neighbourhoods in line with the NHS 10 year plan



We will collaborate with system partners with an emphasis on maximising the efficient use of collective resources across health and care services

Strategic goal 3 – Working together for our healthier communities

Ambition 1:



We will work in collaboration with our partners to improve the health of our population and reduce health inequalities

Healthcare plays a significant role in preventing disease, promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing, enhancing quality of life and supporting economic and social stability. Improving the health of our local population through improved preventative measures and interventions, targeting those in greatest need or at greatest risk, improving health literacy and supporting navigation through our local health and social care systems, we aim to facilitate individuals to live longer and in better health. By collaborating with partners and stakeholders across the local and regional systems we will strive to deliver preventative and responsive intervention and treatments.

Particular focus will be paid to those in greatest need or at greatest risk as identified through local population health inequalities data derived from public health analysis, allowing the development of bespoke sub-population plans for prevention and early intervention to meet identified needs. By helping to focus resources on these sub-populations, we will look to close the gap in health inequalities (aligned to the CORE20PLUS5 targets and using locally identified deprivation data) and remove health variation.

Working with partners, we will maximise efforts to meet local population needs shifting focus onto prevention and key enablers for individuals to experience and sustain healthy lifestyles. These will include supporting environmental measures to create sustainable locality plans embracing Green plan targets. We will also involve all minority groups to ensure that communication channels are effective to achieve maximal engagement with all health care initiatives.

Executive owner	Neil Halford / Carmen Howey
Trust Committee	Quality Governance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Collaborate with partners to improve health literacy
- Work together with partners to improve the most profound health variances within Gateshead
- Play our role in supporting the population of Gateshead to improve their health and prevent illness
- Anticipate future health care requirements and consider health inequalities when prioritising developments

What will be different

- ✓ Holistic understanding across partners of our collective service offerings for our population
- ✓ Demonstrable impact on closing the gap in health inequalities (CORE20PLUS5)
- ✓ Progress towards achieving our Green plan targets which is proven to have a significant impact on population health
- ✓ Focus on making every contact count to promote positive health behaviours

Strategic goal 3 – Working together for our healthier communities

Ambition 2:



We will develop our neighbourhoods in line with the NHS 10 year plan

As the major healthcare provider and anchor institution within Gateshead, we will play a leading role in shaping and delivering healthcare into our local neighbourhoods to deliver the expected outcomes of the NHS 10 year plan. We will focus on current and future healthcare requirements using clinical evidence to drive forward service developments that create a healthcare system fit for the future. This will require us to work actively across interfaces with our partners and stakeholders to lead, co-design and deliver the new Neighbourhood models. This will include supporting the development of Neighbourhood Health services (particularly in areas of greatest need) and the support teams to deliver on the three radical shifts.

Clinical care will be evolved to focus on prevention, the management of need and the maintenance of wellbeing using treatment options to support individuals. We will look to develop new models of care for older people living with frailty including expanding our virtual ward capacity and reduce our bed inpatient base accordingly. Our outpatient service provision will be transformed to focus on prevention and support rather than intervention maximising the use of screening and diagnostic capacity. We will become more efficient removing duplication and ensure that we meet the right patient in the right place with the right staff first time. We will continue to evolve and deploy technologies to support a more flexible workforce meeting service user needs in a timely manner.

Workstreams will be developed with partners and stakeholders to develop actions to enable the three radical shifts to be delivered. We will through this work remain outcome focused looking to measure impact whilst seeking maximal benefit to the individual.

Executive owner	Neil Halford / Carmen Howey
Trust Committee	Finance and Performance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Anticipate future health care requirements and consider health inequalities when prioritising developments
- Improve our interface at Neighbourhoods and Place for example with General Practice and Primary Care Networks, Social Care and the broader Local Authority and voluntary sector (10 Year plan)
- Undertake a lead role within Gateshead, the Alliance and broader system, working collaboratively to develop a collective clinical and diagnostics service strategy
- Collaborate to identify system wide solutions to transform the way we design, deliver and sustain services across the region

What will be different

- ✓ Services will be redesigned and working within the parameters set by the 10 year plan
- ✓ Greater integration of services will be seen with previous hospital-based services shifting into the Neighbourhood Health delivery model
- ✓ The clinical model of care will be recognisably different focused on prevention and maintaining the wellness of the individual away from the hospital
- ✓ Our screening and diagnostic offers will expand to support prevention and early intervention when needed

Strategic goal 3 – Working together for our healthier communities

Ambition 3:



We will collaborate with system partners with an emphasis on maximising the efficient use of collective resources across health and care services

We will build upon existing relationships to evolve system working within Gateshead and across the Great North Healthcare Alliance, maximising the use of resources in health and social care in line with the NHS 10 year plan. Our focus will be on reducing duplication, improving impact on outcomes and supporting communities to live well.

To achieve this, we will help shape new governance arrangements that enable meaningful collaboration across organisational boundaries. We will lead and contribute to shared leadership and accountability across clinical pathways and services, ensuring service design reflects collective priorities and enables optimal workforce deployment.

We will engage with our supporting communities and populations to help shape our future services by developing consultation and feedback channels.

Through our position within the Great North Healthcare Alliance, we will unlock opportunities for transformation at scale, enhancing resilience and enabling more care to be delivered locally. We will seek to progress IT solutions across system partners focusing on patient data accessibility and system interoperability.

We will look to remove workforce barriers to help create Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and fully functional Neighbourhood Multidisciplinary teams supported by joined-up workforce training and development across health and social care.

Executive owner	Neil Halford / Kris Mackenzie
Trust Committee	Finance and Performance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Undertake a lead role within the Alliance and broader system, working collaboratively to develop a collective clinical and diagnostics service strategy
- Collaborate to identify system wide solutions to transform the way we design and deliver sustainable services across the region
- Trust and empower our teams to work in collaboration with others for the benefit of patient care enabling a one workforce approach

What will be different

- ✓ Collaboration will be the new expected norm within teams routinely working across organisational boundaries and embracing a one workforce approach
- ✓ Joint clinical strategy across the GNHA with lead provider arrangements supporting safe and sustainable service provision across the region
- ✓ Increased use of joint ventures and interface working
- ✓ Shared leadership arrangements across services and/or organisations where necessary and appropriate

Strategic goal 4 – Fit for the future

Our aim:

We will ensure our Trust is future-ready by making best use of public resources, embracing digital technology and transformation including the NHS App as the digital front door, and optimising our estate to deliver care in the right setting. Through data-informed decision-making, sustainable infrastructure, and a focus on productivity, we will build a resilient, efficient, and environmentally responsible health service.

We are committed to developing an estate that supports safe, high-quality, care. This includes optimising the use of our estate to support clinical activity and training, improving estate condition by tackling backlog maintenance and critical infrastructure and advancing our environmental sustainability goals. In support of our ambition to provide care as locally as possible, we will also prioritise the establishment of Neighbourhood Health Centres, working collaboratively with system partners to maximise the use of our collective estate.

Our ambitions:



We will ensure effective and efficient use of our resources identifying opportunities to improve productivity and ensure best use of public money



We will be a data informed, digitally enabled organisation using technology to transform the way we plan and deliver care



We will focus on productive utilisation of our estate to facilitate care in the right setting in an environmentally sustainable way

Strategic goal 4 – Fit for the future

Ambition 1:



We will ensure effective and efficient use of our resources identifying opportunities to improve productivity and ensure best use of public money

To be fit for the future, we must ensure that every pound spent delivers maximum value for our patients, staff, and communities. We will take a disciplined and transparent approach to financial sustainability, delivering recurrent cost efficiency savings and tackling our financial deficit with the ambition of achieving financial breakeven by 2027. This will enable us to reinvest in service improvement and innovation.

We will strengthen our commercial capabilities, maximising non-NHS income through our wholly owned subsidiary, QE Facilities, and broader commercial opportunities. Working closely with our Alliance partners, we will identify opportunities to share resources, reduce duplication, and improve system-wide productivity. We will also make full use of new commissioning arrangements under the ICB blueprint to secure funding and shape services that meet local needs.

Our corporate services will be efficient, resilient, and aligned to strategic priorities. Through robust planning, early development of delivery plans, and a strong accountability framework, we will build a financially sustainable base that supports long-term transformation and improved outcomes.

Executive owner	Kris Mackenzie / Jo Halliwell
Trust Committee	Finance and Performance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Deliver cost efficiency savings recurrently ensuring we are making the best use of public money to deliver the best possible care
- Tackle our deficit and become financially breakeven by 2027
- Be open and transparent about our difficult decisions
- Maximise our non-NHS income, both through our wholly owned subsidiary QE Facilities and via broader commercial opportunities
- Work with our Alliance partners to identify opportunities to make the best use of our collective resources
- Maximise opportunities open to us under new commissioning arrangements (ICB blueprint)

What will be different

- ✓ Achieve financial breakeven by 2027
- ✓ Recurrent delivery of our cost savings program
- ✓ Demonstrable financially sustainable base which enables us to focus on continued investment in service improvements
- ✓ Efficient and resilient corporate services

Strategic goal 4 – Fit for the future

Ambition 2:



We will be a data informed, digitally enabled organisation using technology to transform the way we plan and deliver care

Recognising the critical role data and digital play in today’s health and care systems and processes, we are committed to ensuring that we have the right technology and digital systems to support our patients and teams in their everyday lives. This includes working under the principle that by 2028 the NHS App will be the ‘front door’ to all NHS services offering booking, care planning, communication and access to health data. Understanding the role the 5 big bets of data, artificial intelligence (AI), genomics & predictive analysis, wearables and robotics play in healthcare reform will be key to our strategy.

We will continue to focus our efforts on the accuracy of our data to ensure it supports our analysis, modelling and forecasting to support the provision and planning of clinical care.

Our ambition is to place data and technology at the centre of how we deliver care with a focus on efficient and effective communication. This includes optimising our electronic patient record (EPR). Making the best use of our existing investments and adopting shared technology opportunities including across the Alliance.

Via our paper record optimisation strategy we want to eliminate our reliance of paper and support efficiency improvements by embracing our digital health record.

We recognise that to deliver our digital ambition we need to get the basics right. This starts with infrastructure stability and performance. We want to modernise and enhance our foundational infrastructure by embracing relevant cloud solutions.

In support of our ambition to be a centre of excellence for diagnostics, we want to utilise investment opportunities in digital diagnostics to create modern and reliable platform to deliver services.

Executive owner	Dave Elliott
Trust Committee	Digital

To achieve this goal we will:

- Improve our use of data to make informed decisions around investment, productivity and ongoing improvements
- Maximise use of the NHS App to support the way our patients access our services and we deliver care
- Make the best use of our existing investments and adopt shared technology opportunities
- Develop our digital strategy, ensuring we have a robust infrastructure to support advances in technology and to facilitate digital interoperability across the Alliance
- Successfully implement our digital records programme across all our services

What will be different

- ✓ Improved BI capability enabling us to make informed decisions around service demand and productivity
- ✓ Sustainable digital infrastructure which supports greater use of digital solutions in the way we design and deliver services
- ✓ Reduction in our use of paper
- ✓ Infrastructure stability and performance

Strategic goal 4 – Fit for the future

Ambition 3:



We will focus on productive utilisation of our estate (assets) to facilitate care in the right setting in an environmentally sustainable way

We are committed to developing an estate which facilitates the delivery of safe, high-quality care. Key to this is proactively addressing our backlog, much of which relates to critical infrastructure due to the estate's condition and age. Our focus will be on creating facilities that advance our clinical strategy by maximising clinical space, enabling efficient service co-location, enhancing the experiences of our patients and people, and supporting our goal to be a training provider of choice.

To achieve these objectives, we will prioritise the regeneration and optimisation of the estate. This includes a clear plan for addressing backlog, along with the disposal of underutilised assets. We are also firmly committed to decarbonising our estate and delivering the goals set out in our Green Plan, ensuring our facilities contribute positively to the environment.

In support of our Women's Health ambitions, we aim to co-locate maternity and family health services at the heart of the hospital. We will expand diagnostic imaging capacity with an emphasis on improving access for the whole of our population.

We will also collaborate with system partners to maximise the use of our collective assets. This will be key to the provision of care in the community including the establishment of Neighbourhood Health Centres aligned to the needs of our population. Through this we will develop an estate that provides neighbourhood teams with the equipment, working space and technology they need to make our new care model a reality.

Through these initiatives, we will create an estate that is resilient, flexible, and aligned with the evolving needs of our patients, staff, and wider population.

Executive owner	Gavin Evans / Jo Halliwell
Trust Committee	Finance and Performance

To achieve this goal we will:

- Develop an estates strategy which focuses on efficient use of our estate, supports our clinical ambitions, and enables the provision of increased care in a community setting, replacing the status-quo of hospital by default
- Collaborate with partners across the region to maximise use of our collective estate to support the provision of care in the right setting aligned to the needs of our population
- Actively pursue initiatives that reduce waste and inefficiency, ensuring the management of our estate supports a greener, more sustainable future

What will be different

- ✓ Patient care will be supported by modern, accessible, high-quality facilities
- ✓ Establishment of integrated Neighbourhood Health Centres aligned with the needs of our most deprived populations and maximising collective estate across partners
- ✓ Capital investment planned across a rolling 5-year period, guided by a robust funding strategy
- ✓ Achievement of our Green plan targets in line with national guidance
- ✓ Greater collaboration with partners to maximise the collective estate

Keeping us on track

Enabling plans

Our corporate strategy is ambitious and reflects our commitment to improving health outcomes for the residents of Gateshead with a relentless focus on the quality and safety of our services.

This document should be read in conjunction with our Clinical Strategy* which sets out how we intend to transform how we deliver high-quality services aligned to the national three shifts.

Each strategic goal within this strategy will also be supported by its own delivery plan providing more detail on how the ambitions in each area will be achieved. These along with this document will create the strategic framework for the organisation. Our Board Assurance Framework (BAF) will help us to manage risks associated with delivery of our strategy and the objectives within it.

To keep us on track each year we will review our progress, consider changes in the external environment and set priorities for the coming year. These priorities will be supported by defined performance indicators to ensure progress can be effectively monitored and the intended outcomes are clear.

Objectives will be cascaded throughout the Trust with progress reviewed through divisional team meetings, performance reviews, oversight through the Committee structure culminating in progress reports to the Board and Council of Governors.

*due for publication Autumn 2025

