



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust

Care • Compassion • Community

CORPORATE PLAN 2022/23

FINAL REPORT

#teamNORTH 

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Section 1 – Setting the scene

When we developed our Corporate Plan for 2022/23 we were just coming out of another difficult winter across many of our service areas. We were starting to focus our efforts on rebuilding our services, returning to pre-COVID levels of activity and addressing the transformation of our services that is required to set us on the right path for the future, and deliver the care that our population expects and deserves from us.

We have made tremendous progress during this year and the unfailing efforts of our staff have meant that many of our services are fully back to pre-pandemic levels of activity. During 2022/23 we had an important and valuable conversation with our population, through a public consultation, about the future configuration of maternity services. We began to build extra medical bed capacity on the Antrim Area Hospital site and have progressed the design of our new mental health hospital. We supported our patients and service users through a difficult winter and we recognise that staff have worked tirelessly throughout this time in doing so – both those working directly with patients but also those behind the scenes. As an organisation, we can be extremely proud of our staff, not least for their unwavering tenacity and adaptability.

As you will see from this report, we have made significant progress in meeting our objectives. We have continued to build partnerships and integrate care, improve the outcomes for our patients and clients, use our resources efficiently and carefully, nurture our people and build successful teams, and improve the overall health of the population to address inequalities. We have continued to build on existing relationships with primary care, community and voluntary organisations, local councils and other statutory organisations and using these stronger relationships, we are better prepared for the roll out of the new Northern Area Integrated Partnership Board as part of the regional Integrated Care System.

This report summarises our achievements and I would like to express my sincere thanks to staff for their continued hard work and creativity, to the population we serve for supporting us during this last year and to our partners for working with us to plan, provide and improve our services.

We will continue to build on these achievements and face the challenges ahead. We commit to working together with you as #TeamNORTH to achieve our vision of providing compassionate care, with our community, in our community.



Anne O'Reilly
Chair

Jennifer Welsh
Chief Executive

We provide compassionate care with our community, in our community.

Our values

Working Together

Excellence

Openness and
Honesty

Compassion

Our objectives

N

Build Northern Partnerships & Integrate Care

O

Continue to improve Outcomes & experience

R

Deliver value by optimising Resources

T

Nurture our people, enable our talent & build our Teams

H

Improve population Health & address health & social care inequalities

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Section 2 – Corporate objectives

Objective 1 – We will build Northern partnerships and integrate care

Partnership is our first corporate objective, and it is at the heart of everything we do.

The introduction of the major change in how health and social care is planned and commissioned across Northern Ireland, known as the Integrated Care System, made significant progress during the last year. The Southern area was identified as the first test site and during 2022/23 the planning for the establishment of the Area Integrated Partnership Board, to manage and lead the new model in this geographical location, was substantially completed for 'go live' in May of this year. Other areas, including the Northern area, will follow later in 2023/24 following an evaluation of the test site this autumn. The legal provisions for the creation of the AIPBs was developed for future approval by Government along with a draft framework under which the AIPBs will function. Significant progress was made in the development of the Strategic Outcomes Framework through which the impact of the commissioning decisions of the AIPBs will be measured. A population health needs assessment was commenced, prioritising the Southern area as the test site. This joined-up planning of services, involving communities in shaping direction and influencing health outcomes, will help us face the challenges facing our local communities and health and social care services today.

Our Involvement Network has continued to grow. The Involvement Network is made up of over 300 service users, carers and representative organisations who work in partnership with the Trust to develop health and social care services. The Network is a key resource to help shape and design services, and contribute to the development of service information. Members have been given 69 involvement opportunities and 202 members have attended more than 20 engagement events. Over the last year, our service users and carers have helped to shape and develop a number of service improvements. Our service users were involved in the co-production on the Trust's Disability Equality Training Video, which was launched on World Quality Day and will be used to train and educate our staff.

Given the challenges faced by health and social care we are always open to new ideas and ways of working and one such new initiative is our Engagement Advisory Board (EAB). We publicly advertised the opportunity to become a member of our EAB and received over 60 expressions of interest. Following an interview process, members were appointed to our EAB to reflect the communities we serve. Members work with us to ensure we are approaching our engagement in a way that meets the needs and interests of all communities, with a focus on targeting the most hard to reach groups.

We continue with our commitment to promoting equality, eliminating discrimination, building strong community relations and delivering accessible services that meet the needs of everyone living in the Northern area. During the year, we completed an Audit of Inequalities and drafted a new Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.

Objective 2 – We will continue to improve outcomes and experience

We are constantly striving to improve the quality of our services, with better outcomes for those who use them, and a better experience for service users and staff.

We have been focusing our efforts on rebuilding our services, returning to pre-COVID levels of activity and providing capacity to transform our services through working with our partners locally to reform and redesign services as well as supporting the wider HSC system in the regional reform of services.

In terms of Quality Improvement training, cumulatively 8,160 staff have completed Level 1 Quality Improvement training. In the last year 124 staff graduated from the Safety Quality North programme and over 300 hours of training was delivered, enhancing organisational QI capability across all staff groups. Four staff completed the Scottish Improvement Leaders Programme and over 280 staff have been trained in Human Factors. Over 250 staff attended the QI Masterclass series. Over 140 improvement projects aimed at improving services and outcomes were supported through QI project clinics. In March 2023 we held our annual QI event with over 40 awards presented to staff in recognition of their achievements and success. The Trust won 3 regional awards from HSCQI recognising teams' Quality Improvement projects.

In response to the impact of COVID-19 on our waiting lists, we developed Trust rebuild plans and then worked with DOH / SPPG to track the recovery against improvement trajectories, as set out in the regional Service Delivery Plan. In addition work is ongoing within the elective work stream of the Trust Renewing Our Vision Programme to improve elective care services.

We introduced a new single referral pathway for those of our patients being discharged from hospitals in other Trust areas. The Community Discharge Hub oversees the repatriation of patients, who, following treatment in another Trust area, require a further community-based service. The focus of the Hub is to reduce delays and ensure that our patients receive the level of care and support they require in a timely way. Feedback from other Trusts about this new way of working has been positive and the improvement in partnership working has helped to build strong relationships with regional colleagues which contributes to an improved experience for service users and their families.

We have begun to develop an Intermediate Care Strategy, which included a review of home-based rehabilitation, reablement and community bed based intermediate care services. We carried out an extensive analysis of our community beds, looking at activity and bed usage for the four year period from 2019/20 - 2022/23. This analysis will help us to understand the number of nursing and residential beds which we need to have in the community, in order to deliver an effective intermediate care service for our population.

We carried out waiting list initiatives for families and children, within our Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Paediatric Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy Services. Our teams developed a range of flexible options to

support children and families, such as group clinical sessions, training programmes and virtual appointments. The feedback from parents has been very positive and so we will continue with this approach. Through Transformation Funding we were able to appoint a number of new staff within our Maternity Services, to enhance patient safety and support for our new mothers. We also carried out a consultation exercise with our population regarding the future of our maternity service. We introduced a multi-disciplinary team to support Children's Homes during the year, with the aim of supporting staff in the Homes to develop programmes of activities for children and young people. We also set up an Intensive Support Team, which supports families and carers in the home and a range of housing solutions were developed for new entrants.

Our Learning Disability service was able to remobilise fully its adult day care and Supported Living services following the pandemic. We appointed our first dedicated Learning Disability Carers Lead and held several very successful engagement meetings with carers. Supported Living is a vital part of the service which we provide to adults with a learning disability who live in our Trust area. We held a Supported Living Engagement event, which over twenty providers attended; the learning from this event will help to frame our future plans. We opened a new Trust-led Supported Living Service for 8 people in Maghera and were delighted to welcome local celebrity James Martin to the official opening.

Objective 3 – We will deliver value by optimising resources

We are committed to maximising our resources and delivering best value through evidence-based care.

All of our plans and objectives are underpinned by a desire to ensure we are using our teams, skills and resources in the best way possible, by streamlining pathways, avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions and ensuring earlier intervention. In some areas we will need increased investment to take account of higher costs, demographic growth and new technologies, or to enable the transition to more effective service models.

Investment has allowed us to begin work on a new Mental Health Inpatient Unit on the Antrim Hospital site and this year we completed Stage 2 design and have progressed with Stage 3 design. We developed and submitted an addendum to secure resource to move to Stage 4 design and are awaiting Department of Health (DoH) approval. The Full Business Case for 48 medical beds (2 wards) was approved by the DoH and Department of Finance and the first 24 bedded ward became operational in March 2023, with the second to follow in early summer 2023. Work on the development of a Business Case for a new Women and Children's Unit is progressing.

We have set up a Delivering Value Project Board, which oversees and supports benchmarking projects across the Trust. Service areas, which require reform in order to meet future demand, are areas of particular focus.

We continued to work towards the NI Central Government target of reducing net energy consumption by 30% by 2030, by investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements. This has included;

- scoping works for a new Solar PV Farm to be funded through central Invest to Save funding
- a potential geo-thermal energy plant which is being scoped as an option as part of the Mental Health project and
- working with wind turbine suppliers to develop options for the AAH wind turbine replacement, to mitigate reliability issues associated with the age of the turbine.

In 2022/23 the Department of Health Invest to Save projects included solar PV schemes, metering upgrades, lighting upgrades and oil to natural gas conversions.

We have used ICT to enable efficient and productive working practices through the roll-out of the Microsoft M365 toolset to our staff. This has involved migration of user mail to M365 allowing greater accessibility, for example, by the provision of Microsoft Teams video-conferencing tools.

We continued to work with our regional partners on major ICT projects throughout the year. The encompass electronic patient record system is planned to go-live in November 2023 in the South Eastern Trust and we have identified 136 of our staff as Super Users to support this. We continued to work on the integration build and test of the Northern

Ireland Pathology Information System (NIPIMS) and to plan for the Northern Ireland Picture Archive and Communications System (NIPACS+).

The risks associated with cyber threats remained high throughout the year, however our ICT Department continued to maintain robust cyber security through its continued focus on technical security measures, governance and compliance. The Network & Information Systems Regulation (NIS) Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) Stage 1 return was completed in January 2023 and a programme of work has been identified. A local focus on the challenging area of Cyber Awareness Training uptake has continued with the introduction of further bite size video training for users on specific Cyber areas.

Objective 4 – We will nurture our people, enable our talent and build our teams

The challenges of the past twelve months have shown more than ever how our people are our greatest asset.

The year 2022/2023 has been a year of gradual stabilisation as we move out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff have been significantly affected by redeployments, re-training in other areas, the absence of other colleagues, the cost of living crisis and other global events. All of these factors continue to test the resolve, resourcefulness and resilience of our staff who have been fantastic in their response to ensure patients and service users remain safe and well cared for and fellow colleagues supported.

Our ongoing commitment to our people was reflected when the Trust gained Investors in People Silver Accreditation in January 2023.

Our delivery plan over the last 12 months has been focussed on nurturing our people, enabling our talent, building our teams and the five key strategic people priorities are outlined further below.

Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion. We will promote, support, maintain and improve the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of our staff.

We committed to continue to make Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion a top priority, supporting staff via the provision of a wide range of resources and services over the last 12 months. These included:

- the launch of a Post COVID-19 Vocational Rehabilitation Staff Programme;
- launch of a new Supporting Attendance Toolkit;
- appointment of a financial wellbeing manager;
- launch of the Recognising and Responding to Stress policy and toolkit;
- an enhanced Psychology Service for staff;
- a series of webinars covering wellbeing topics such as menopause, stress and winter wellbeing; development of a Bereavement Network;
- and launch of a revised Flexibility Working Policy.

Over 2022-23 the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering group has been embedded and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring Campaign launched in February 2023 to encourage staff to record their Equality Monitoring Data.

Building capacity, capability and culture. We will develop action plans for recruitment and retention, leadership and talent development, and learning and development.

As part of our on-going commitment to leadership development launched three new bespoke Team North Leadership Development Pathways in September 2022:

- Aquilo: Bands 2-5
- Shimal: Bands 6-7
- Boreas: Bands 8a/b

These programmes will help build leadership capability at all levels to grow and develop the next generation of Team North leaders.

Cohort 4 of the Trust's CONNECT programme also launched in September 2022. CONNECT is a clinical leadership development programme, accredited by the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM), and is designed to support consultants, Specialty Doctors and Associated Specialists within Team North.

Throughout the year we continued to participate in local and regional plans to review and improve how we attract and recruit to Team North. This included promotion of the Trust as an Employer of Choice at a range of local, regional and national career and job fairs; launch of a new internal job board on the staff intranet site and roll out of Amicus, an online pre-employment screening system.

Workforce appeals were progressed to support the Muckamore Hospital Resettlement Programme and community hospitals along with Plea for Help, providing support from December 2022 – March 2023.

In line with the HSC's commitment to stabilise our substantive staffing and deliver safe care, the Trust established an Agency Reduction Oversight Group and Operational Group in February 2023. Representatives from SMT, Nursing, Social Work, Finance and HR commenced work to optimise use of new agency frameworks and deliver better value for money.

Workforce systems, performance and development. We will support the implementation of new ICT systems and ensure essential ICT skills training is offered to all staff.

The Trust continued to provide significant support to a number of regional e-Health programmes including the replacement system for HRPTS EQUIP, Encompass, a new Learning Management System and HSC Digital Services.

Partnership and engagement. We will promote openness and equality, support early conflict resolution and enhance partnership working.

Close working between Human Resources, other Trust services and Trade Union colleagues continued throughout Industrial Action and Action Short of Strike in 2022/23, to ensure appropriate derogations were in place and that patient and service user safety was maintained.

Supporting and enabling change and innovation in and across the organisation. We will work with divisions on strategic people issues, supporting workforce planning and new ways of working.

We have continued to support the Renewing our Vision transformation programme across the Trust, including the consultation on the future of Maternity Services at Causeway Hospital. We continue to work collaboratively across our multi-disciplinary teams to implement transformation programmes successfully.

Objective 5 – We will improve population health, and address health and social care inequalities

We are committed to improving health outcomes for our whole population and addressing poorer and inequitable health outcomes for deprived communities, working in partnership with others, given the impact of wider societal issues on health outcomes.

Community development remains a key priority for the Trust, working in partnership to strengthen involvement of service users and their community in their care and building early intervention and prevention approaches. This involves working closely with colleagues in the community and voluntary sector to improve understanding around good health and the underlying causes in local settings, to undertake joint initiatives and to increase both effectiveness and sustainability through co-production.

- We developed plans to support and build community peer networks focusing on loneliness and mental wellbeing, led by community leaders for local people
- We have improved access to local supports through the live Population Plus directory with commitment to support local organisations accessed by service users as part of the Connect North Social Prescribing service
- We worked with communities and with statutory partners to make facilities and services autism friendly, dementia friendly and age friendly
- We have begun to build a place-based approach to mental wellbeing, through establishing a community which values good mental wellbeing, working with the places where people spend their time – at school, in the workplace, in their community and at home.
- We developed health literacy for Trust staff, for service users and for the wider community to underpin the development of self-care and helped enable communities with initiatives such as Read Yourself Well providing widespread and easy access to trusted books and developing courses on loneliness, health literacy, bereavement and other issues in partnership with the Northern Regional College.
- We enhanced our commitment to collaboratively funded initiatives tackling key issues of childhood development, ageing well, health inequalities and other key areas where joint working is fundamental to outcomes

Population Health Improvement

The Trust has been working with partners to establish a multi-agency working group to oversee the development of population health improvement approaches which tackle the underlying causes of poor health. This group will share learning on best practice and develop place-based responses through forging closer relationships between statutory partners and with communities. The focus will be on jointly agreed priorities and initiatives in areas where there is shared responsibility for vulnerable people and a collective response is required. This provides opportunity to consolidate and grow initiatives through Community Planning and similar cross-agency relationships.

Section 4 – Publication and further Information

This document and other key Corporate Trust plans and policy documents are published on our website www.northerntrust.hscni.net.

The Trust Board meets 7 times in public per annum to discuss and take forward the business of the Trust. These meetings are open to the public; dates and venues are published on the website and through regional and local media/press outlets.

If you have any questions or comments on Trust services or plans you can email us at equality.unit@northerntrust.hscni.net or you can write to us at:-

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If you need any help in accessing any of the information, please contact the Equality Unit.

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