

2023/24

CORPORATE PLAN

Final Version approved at Trust
Board [Date]

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Section 1 – Setting the scene

When we developed our corporate plan last year, we were just coming out of another difficult winter across many of our services. We were starting to focus our efforts on rebuilding our services, returning to pre-COVID levels of activity and providing some space to address the transformation of our services that is required to set us on the right path for the foreseeable future.

Since then we have made tremendous progress. Thanks to the unfailing efforts of our staff, many of our services are fully back to pre-pandemic levels of activity. We have had an important and valuable conversation with our population about the future configuration of our maternity services. We have begun building additional capacity in Antrim Hospital and have progressed the design of our new mental health hospital. We have supported our patients, service users and each other through another very difficult winter, and it is time to begin looking to the future.

Amidst the political upheaval, the financial uncertainty and the unprecedented levels of pressure we are seeing in our services, it is important for us to set out our direction of travel. While we are not yet in the position to produce a multi-year corporate plan, we are publishing a Strategic Outlook alongside this single year plan, with a longer term focus on some of the major challenges and issues that we will be dealing with over the next few years.

The Integrated Care System, our strategic reform programme Renewing Our Vision, the implementation of the encompass system, our on-going capital development programme, our new Delivering Value Programme Board, our People and Culture Plan and our drive to improve population health all form part of that medium-term strategic view.

The rest of this single year plan sets out in more detail some specific aims and objectives for the year ahead. We expect it to be another challenging year. However, as you will see from this Corporate Plan, we are facing it in the only way possible: together as #teamNORTH. Whether you are a patient, carer, service user, resident or member of staff, we look forward to working with you to achieve our vision of providing compassionate care, with our community, in our community.

Anne O'Reilly
Chairman

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

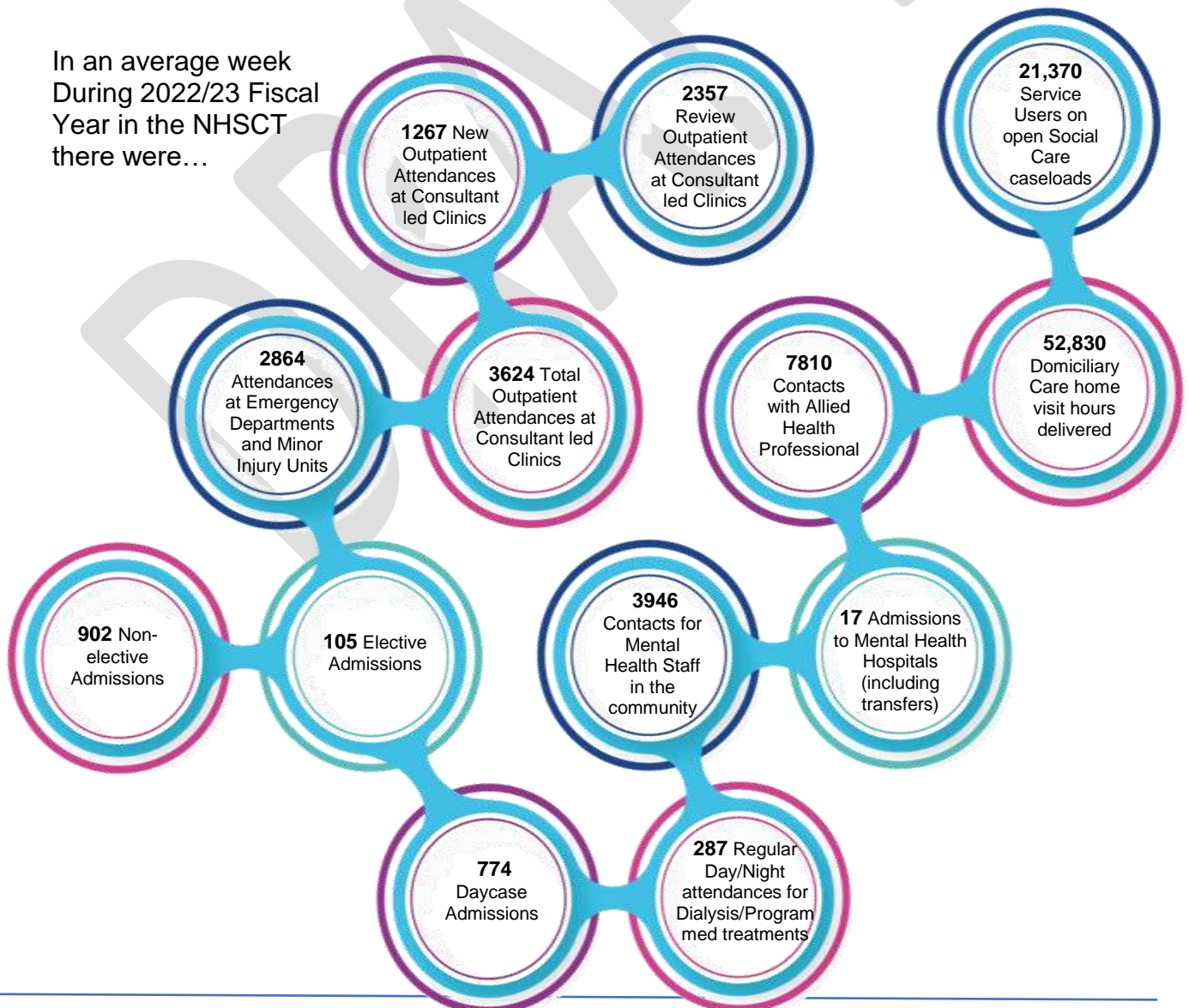
#teamNORTH

Section 2 – About the Northern HSC Trust

About the Northern Health & Social Care Trust

- The NHSCT provides a range of health and social care services to a population of approximately 484,000 people across a geographical area of 1,733 square miles (2,773 square km) making it the largest geographical trust in Northern Ireland.
- In 2022/23 the Trust's income was just over £1 billion and we employed approximately 15,000 permanent, temporary and bank staff across a wide range of medical, health and social care disciplines.
- We deliver services from over 150 facilities including: two acute hospitals, a mental health hospital, local community hospitals, health centres, social services, and a significant network of community services as well as provision of care in the home.

In an average week
During 2022/23 Fiscal
Year in the NHSCT
there were...



Section 3 – 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.

A major change in how health and social care is planned and managed across Northern Ireland is underway. The Integrated Care System brings together partners within the HSC and beyond to plan services based on the needs of the local population. New Area Integrated Partnership Boards (AIPBs) are forming the basis of this regional model. They will focus on joined-up planning of services, involving communities in shaping direction and influencing health outcomes and strengthening partnerships, including with those beyond the HSC sector. The first of these AIPBs is being tested in the Southern Area, and we expect rollout to the other areas later in this financial year.

Given the challenges faced by health and social care we are always open to new ideas and ways of working. To support this we created an Engagement Advisory Board (EAB) and publicly advertised the opportunity to join. Over 60 expressions of interest were received and after final interviews, 14 members of the EAB have been appointed 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.

By working together, listening and respecting each other we continue to ensure service user and carer involvement is at the heart of all the planning and delivery of our services. Our Involvement Network will continue 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. Our service users and carers will continue to help shape and develop our service improvements.

We will consolidate existing partnerships through memorandum of understanding agreements with partners, providing focus on shared objectives, e.g. extending learning, employment pathways and health literacy with the Northern Regional College.

We are committed to promoting equality, eliminating discrimination, building strong community relations and delivering accessible services that meet the needs of everyone living in the Northern area. This year we will consult on our draft Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan and review our Equality Scheme commitments. In keeping with the commitments in our Equality Scheme, we will ensure all our future plans for service transformation are subject to equality and rural needs assessments and develop measures to address any inequalities identified.

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.

Our Trust Board has approved the outcome of our public consultation on Maternity Services which we carried out between November 2022 and March 2023. This recommended that we centralise all births on the Antrim Hospital site, delivering an enhanced antenatal and postnatal service from the Causeway Hospital, and has been submitted to the Department of Health for approval.

We have begun to redesign the way in which we deliver our Intermediate Care Service. One of the strands of the work is looking at the rehabilitation of those patients who need a period of support following their discharge from hospital, before they are able to return home. Work is underway to streamline this service so that our rehabilitation staff can focus on a small number of sites, allowing them to maximise the amount of rehabilitation therapy which they can deliver. This will improve staff experience and allow our patients to achieve the best outcomes they can.

In the past, people with a dual diagnosis of learning disability and mental ill health who needed a period of assessment and treatment were admitted to Muckamore Abbey Hospital. For the last few years the Trust has had to treat these patients in its existing mental health wards in Holywell Hospital. These wards did not have a dedicated Learning Disability specialist skilled workforce, nor an appropriate environment. In April 2023, the Trust opened a new ward in Holywell Hospital. It will provide specialist staffing and an environment which allows us to deliver the highest quality support and outcomes for people with a learning disability who require inpatient treatment.

The Trust opened a Rapid Diagnosis Centre on the Whiteabbey Hospital site in December 2022. Two regional Rapid Diagnosis Centres have been opened, the other is in the South Tyrone Hospital in Dungannon. The Centre will allow GPs to refer patients to it, with urgent symptoms which could indicate cancer, but which are sufficiently vague that they do not sit clearly within an existing cancer referral pathway. This new service will assess and scan patients within days of receiving a GP referral and agree a treatment plan, if one is required. The Centre began its work with GPs in East Antrim, accepting referrals from this area and will extend across the entire Trust area in the coming months. When the service is fully established, it will accept referrals from across N. Ireland, in collaboration with the South Tyrone Hospital.

The encompass programme will introduce a digital integrated care record for everyone in the region, linking information across acute, community and social care. This is a momentous opportunity to replace outdated IT systems and reduce the need for paper records. The first encompass go-live in the South-Eastern Trust is scheduled for November 2023, and we will be working hard to prepare for our own Trust go-live the following autumn.

Objective 3 – We will deliver value by optimising resources

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

Given the very difficult financial climate at present, the Department of Health has created a regional Delivering Value Programme to drive productivity and efficiency, bringing together areas such as performance and productivity improvements across Trusts, ensuring effective and efficient use of staffing resource (driving down agency and locum costs), deep dive service reviews, effective procurement and increasing energy and waste efficiency.

In response we have set up a **NHSCT Delivering Value Programme** focusing on:

- **Productivity** – redesigning and improving services to do more with what we have - this includes, for example, theatre productivity, DNAs, reducing LOS in community hospitals. To assist with this we will identify and participate in benchmarking projects focusing on areas requiring reform in order to meet future demands
- **Cost control** – reducing spend that doesn't add value to our services, this includes, for example, reducing non-contract agency spend and use of contingency beds
- **Sustainability** - controlling our energy and waste costs by investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements, for example, solar panels and wind turbines, considering the environmental impact when making decisions on how to build and heat any new buildings and working with PaLS in the procurement of more sustainable products and services.

We will bring forward **major capital infrastructure investments** including completing the second 24 bedded medical ward on the AAH site, completing the next phase of design of the new mental health inpatient unit and the development and approval of business cases for a new Women and Children's Unit, a theatre in Antrim Hospital and Newtownabbey Health and Care Centre.

This year we will continue to develop the new regional Patient Level Information Costing System (PLICS). This will give us the ability to pull together and analyse all patient level activity and costs. This will provide our front-line clinical staff with more accessible and meaningful information and provide the tools to break costs down to patient level and identify and cost unwarranted elements and potential inefficiencies in patient journeys.

We will use **Information and Communications Technology** to support the maximising of our resources, for example by increasing utilisation of the Microsoft Teams toolset for collaboration and communication across all divisions, including promoting MS Teams as our product of choice for video conferencing throughout our services.

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

Our staff are our greatest asset.

Following our Silver Investment in People Accreditation in 2022 we launched Our People and Culture Plan 2023-26 in April 2023 which sets out our people priorities and commitments, to cultivate #teamNORTH as “more than a workplace.” This year we will focus on delivering on agreeing actions to deliver against the 3 strands:



Nurture our People: by building an open, just and learning culture, where staff wellbeing is protected, diversity and inclusion are embraced and where people are recognised and valued for their contribution. This will reduce absence, increase participation in Health and Well Being activities, improve staff experience and improve staff engagement.

Enable our Talent: by enhancing leadership, management and professional development and investing in new digital technology to improve patient care. This will include the development of a Learning and Development Strategy and a Leadership and Talent Development Framework, maximising participation in programmes and improving staff experience.

Build our Teams: by planning the workforce for the long term, attracting the best people to join the Trust and providing an excellent experience for all employees. This will improve substantive staffing levels, reduce reliance on agency and locums, improve

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.

An Integrated Care System is essential to creating a shared approach to improving population health outcomes. Our relationship with General Practice, the Community and Voluntary Sector and other partner organisations has been core to working to reduce boundaries inside the health and social care system, to improve patient experience and outcomes. By working better together within the service, we can better partner with others – both at a planning level and in the delivery of sustainable services to improve outcomes. The Trust will enhance these local relationships and systems, to enable a new way of working that embeds and mainstreams co-production and partnerships through the establishment of a ‘shadow’ Northern AIPB later this year following the evaluation of the first test site in the Southern Area.

Community Development

The Trust recognises the increased levels of need in the community related to the impact of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and other social and economic underlying causes. We are committed to strengthening capability within communities to support vulnerable people and to enhance activities for prevention and early intervention in the community. We will work in partnership with organisations and people across all sectors to improve outcomes for our shared population.

The Trust will:

- Build an infrastructure of peer support networks for mental wellbeing as a central element of our place based approach to mental health, with one network per locality developed and sustained through co-production.
- Provide holistic and integrated social prescribing through Connect North, a co-produced service with open access and a live database of local supports which informs targeting of community development initiatives.
- Further self-efficacy with a range of initiatives to enhance health literacy across the Northern Area, including further education courses and Read Yourself Well.
- Build collaborative partnerships where pooled resources deliver on shared outcomes, based on models developed for the Agewell and Thrive initiatives.

Population Health Improvement

In addition to existing Community Planning Partnerships and in preparation for the new models of integrated care, the Trust is working with partners to co-design a multi-agency collaborative to oversee shared learning and development of population health approaches. This will involve Council, Education, Community and Voluntary groups, service users and carers and the wider HSC family. The focus will be on how we strengthen our collective ability to build and sustain early intervention and prevention initiatives which relieve service pressures, build self-efficacy and increase support for people in their own communities.

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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