

# Commissioning Strategy for General Practice 2019-2024

## Executive Summary



## Foreward

NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group aims to ensure **Better Health for Sunderland**, and that the local NHS improves health and wellbeing in the city, supports us to keep mentally and physically well, to get better when we are ill and, when we cannot fully recover, to stay as well as we can to the end of our lives<sup>1</sup>.

General practice is often described as the cornerstone of the NHS with roughly a million people visiting their general practice every day. As a clinically led commissioning organisation, we know from our 40 member practices across Sunderland that they continue to face significant challenges, including challenges in workforce, workload and expectations to deliver more out of hospital care.

With a growing and ageing population with complex, multiple health conditions, it is more important than ever that we preserve and sustain our practices to ensure they continue to deliver safe, effective and high quality care. This strategy aims to ensure the sustainability of general practice in Sunderland.

The NHS Long Term Plan outlines the expectations of the NHS over the coming years and this gives us the opportunity to further integrate general practice into the wider health and social care system in Sunderland, allowing greater flexibility and influence at a local level over the way in which services are delivered to patients.

Delivery of this revised five year strategy will contribute to our strategic objective to transform the way care is delivered out of hospital in Sunderland.



Dr Ian Pattison  
Clinical Chair



David Gallagher  
Chief Officer

---

<sup>1</sup> NHS Constitution, July 2015

## Executive Summary

In 2016 we published our first General Practice Commissioning Strategy which explained our vision of **Better Health for Sunderland**. Our overall aim was to **sustain and transform general practice to ensure the provision of high quality primary medical care, delivering improved health outcomes for local people, now and in the future.**

To do this we developed five objectives:

<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	<b>Supporting general practice to increase capacity and build the workforce</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	<b>Improving patient access</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 3</b>	<b>Ensuring the central, co-ordinating role of general practice in delivering out-of-hospital care</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 4</b>	<b>Supporting better health through prevention and increasing patients' capacity for self-care</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE 5</b>	<b>Encouraging new working arrangements between practices.</b>

Since 2016 we have seen several changes within the NHS both locally and nationally which has led us to review and revise our strategy; this revised strategy explains where we have got to in delivering our vision, and what we still need to do. Our practices have told us that we need to concentrate on the following areas:

- **Workforce** – Practices have reported that they need more staff and a greater diversity of skill mix to meet patient demand. The importance of training and retention of staff has been highlighted. Workforce requirements include the need for specific roles to address gaps in current provision within general practice such as mental health support, social prescribing and further clinical pharmacist input;
- **Integrated working** – Practices have stated that they would like primary and community services to be available in a more integrated manner with robust collaboration between different healthcare organisations to ensure patients are cared for holistically. Removal of bureaucracy and duplication across the wider healthcare sector and further integrated working with social care have also been highlighted;
- **Premises and IT/digital** – Practices have stated that they need faster IT with greater interoperability alongside an estate which is fit for purpose, meets capacity needs and ensures the sustainability of general practice;

- **Prevention and Self-Care** – Practices have highlighted the importance of having access to tools/information that will support patients to take responsibility for their clinical conditions and a greater focus on the prevention agenda;
- **Communication** – Practices have stated that they need standardised information, templates and guidance which are clear, easy to use and support them in their daily work.

On reviewing the delivery of initiatives against our original objectives, along with changes to the local and national healthcare landscape, this revised strategy highlights that our objectives should remain the same. However, to support the implementation of our objectives we have identified a number of initiatives that we will implement as follows:

Objective 1 Supporting general practice to increase capacity and build the workforce	Objective 2 Improving patient access	Objective 3 Ensuring the central, co-ordinating role of general practice in delivering out-of-hospital care	Objective 4 Supporting better health through prevention and increasing patients capacity for self-care	Objective 5 Encouraging new working arrangements between practices.
We will develop or continue initiatives to support recruitment and retention of the general practice workforce to meet increasing demand and complexity.	We will support our general practices by aligning extended hours requirements with our Extended Access service.	We will continue to develop Community Integrated Teams, support MDT working and to further refine schemes such as 'Recovery at Home' and 'Care Home Alignment'.	We will work with the Local Authority and Community Voluntary Sector to support the development of self-care models.	We will provide support to our PCNs to ensure delivery of the seven national specifications introduced by NHS England.
We will develop and support emerging and existing leaders.	We will support the requirement and ability for NHS 111 to book patients directly into the right service.	We will work with Local Authority colleagues to develop public health links and social care input to our PCNs.	We will continue to progress with and implement digital technologies to support self-care for patients.	We will support PCNs to maximise funding opportunities.
We will source and support education and training of the general practice workforce.	We will develop initiatives to support increased capacity within our practices.	We will work with colleagues to develop mental health services that support our patients	We will strengthen mental health prevention to address factors that shape mental and physical health and wellbeing of patients.	We will ascertain, in line with Objective 2, the general practice and wider health care estate needed to support further collaboration via PCNs.
We will support PCNs with the introduction of additional roles to general practice via the Network Directed Enhanced Service	We will implement the outcome of the national 'Improving Access to General Practice' review once published.	We will work with public health colleagues to determine how we can best ensure Health Visitors and Midwives are closely	We will continue to support the prevention agenda via local schemes.	We will continue to support practices who wish to merge or introduce new working arrangements.

Objective 1 Supporting general practice to increase capacity and build the workforce	Objective 2 Improving patient access	Objective 3 Ensuring the central, co-ordinating role of general practice in delivering out-of-hospital care	Objective 4 Supporting better health through prevention and increasing patients capacity for self-care	Objective 5 Encouraging new working arrangements between practices.
		linked with our practices and that there are links between School Nurses and our practices.		
We will continue to implement and work with our local practices to implement the initiatives within the GPFV.	We will continue to develop digital solutions to support better patient access to general practice services.	We will develop a safeguarding hub for the city to provide centralised support for the Safeguarding Adults and Children's agenda to ensure GPs meet their statutory responsibilities and improve outcomes for vulnerable adults and children.		We will continue to invest in our practices to sustain funding and reduce bureaucracy.
	We will support our practices to ensure there is sufficient premises capacity to deliver services to patients.			<p>We will continue to develop a pipeline of general practice investment opportunities that could attract local and/or national funding and also be delivered at a regional level.</p> <p>We will implement initiatives that support the interface between primary, community and secondary care.</p>

Despite being aligned to one of the five objectives, several of the initiatives will contribute to the delivery of more than one objective. The order in which these initiatives will be implemented will be influenced by our organisational Operational Plan and our transformational change programmes for 2019/20 onward.

## Expected benefits

We recognise the five objectives are interdependent and the priorities collectively have the potential to deliver the following benefits:

- Recruitment and retention of the general practice workforce and support for a different skill mix of staff working within general practice;
- Developing a workforce strategy that supports ongoing development of the various staff roles;
- Increased capacity within our general practice teams by introducing new ways of working and a holistic model of care delivery across community care;
- Improved integrated working with areas such as Mental Health, Public Health and Health Visiting;
- Developed and mature Primary Care Networks that deliver population-based care;
- Improved patient access to routine and urgent appointments within general practice;
- Increased capacity and additional staff roles, providing the platform for longer consultation time (to support a holistic and pro-active approach to care);
- Patients are engaged in making decisions about their health and are confident to care for themselves;
- Through reduced administrative burden on GPs and nurses, this will enable them to focus on clinical care; and
- Shared information across all main services to support the provision of high quality care.

To understand whether the strategy is delivering the anticipated benefits, a number of metrics will be developed and used as indicators of success, which will be refined and revised through implementation as well as taking any national metrics into account that are being developed.