

Date:

Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 4.30pm

Venue:Council Chamber, Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees
TS17 6BJ**Cllr Marc Besford (Chair)****Cllr Nathan Gale (Vice-Chair)**Cllr Stefan Barnes, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Jack Miller,
Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley**Agenda****1. Livestreaming**

This meeting will be filmed for live and / or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for 12 months. A copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.

If you attend and make a representation to the meeting, you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed. When admitted to the Council Chamber you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for livestreaming and / or training purposes. If you do not wish to have your image captured, please contact Democratic Services prior to attending the meeting.

If there are any technical difficulties with the livestreaming, the meeting will still proceed.

- 2. Evacuation Procedure** (Pages 7 - 10)
- 3. Apologies for Absence**
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
- 5. Minutes** (Pages 11 - 18)

To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 April 2026.

6. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust – Quality Account 2025-2026 (Pages 19 - 188)

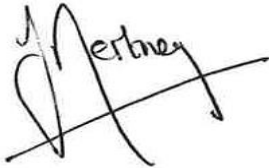
Senior University Hospitals Tees (UHT) personnel will be in attendance to outline performance against the NTHFT quality priorities for 2025-2026 and inform the Committee of the emerging priorities for the next year.

7. Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations – Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care (Pages 189 - 212)

Progress report for the previously completed Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care review.

8. Health and Wellbeing Board – Previous Minutes (January 2026) (Pages 213 - 216)

9. Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027 (Pages 217 - 220)



Jonathan Nertney
Head of Democratic Services
Monday 11 May 2026

Members of the Public - Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting, including the opportunities available for any member of the public to speak at the meeting; or for details of access to the meeting for disabled people, please.

Contact: Senior Scrutiny Officer, Gary Woods on email gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk

Key – Declarable interests are :-

- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's)
- Other Registerable Interests (ORI's)
- Non Registerable Interests (NRI's)

Members – Declaration of Interest Guidance



Table 1 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2 – Other Registerable Interest

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

Council Chamber, Dunedin House Evacuation Procedure & Housekeeping

Entry

Entry to the Council Chamber is via the South Entrance, indicated on the map below.



In the event of an emergency alarm activation, everyone should immediately start to leave their workspace by the nearest available signed Exit route.

The emergency exits are located via the doors on either side of the raised seating area at the front of the Council Chamber.

Fires, explosions, and bomb threats are among the occurrences that may require the emergency evacuation of Dunedin House. Continuous sounding and flashing of the Fire Alarm is the signal to evacuate the building or upon instruction from a Fire Warden or a Manager.

The Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point is in the overflow car park located across the road from Dunedin House.

The allocated assembly point for the Council Chamber is: D2

Map of the Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point - the overflow car park:



All occupants must respond to the alarm signal by immediately initiating the evacuation procedure.

When the Alarm sounds:

1. **stop all activities immediately.** Even if you believe it is a false alarm or practice drill, you **MUST** follow procedures to evacuate the building fully.
2. **follow directional EXIT signs** to evacuate via the nearest safe exit in a calm and orderly manner.
 - do not stop to collect your belongings
 - close all doors as you leave
3. **steer clear of hazards.** If evacuation becomes difficult via a chosen route because of smoke, flames or a blockage, re-enter the Chamber (if safe to do so). Continue the evacuation via the nearest safe exit route.
4. **proceed to the Evacuation Assembly Point.** Move away from the building. Once you have exited the building, proceed to the main Evacuation Assembly Point **immediately** - located in the **East Overflow Car Park**.
 - do not assemble directly outside the building or on any main roadway, to ensure access for Emergency Services.

5. await further instructions.

- **do not re-enter the building under any circumstances without an “all clear”** which should only be given by the Incident Control Officer/Chief Fire Warden, Fire Warden or Manager.
- do not leave the area without permission.
- ensure all colleagues and visitors are accounted for. Notify a Fire Warden or Manager immediately if you have any concerns

Toilets

Toilets are located immediately outside the Council Chamber, accessed via the door at the back of the Chamber.

Water Cooler

A water cooler is available at the rear of the Council Chamber.

Microphones

During the meeting, members of the Committee, and officers in attendance, will have access to a microphone. Please use the microphones, when invited to speak by the Chair, to ensure you can be heard by the Committee and those in attendance at the meeting.

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Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee

A meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee was held on Tuesday 21 April 2026.

Present: Cllr Marc Besford (Chair), Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr John Coulson, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Jack Miller, Cllr Vanessa Sewell, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

Officers: Angela Connor, Rebecca Gray, Graham Lyons, Carolyn Nice (A,H&W); James O'Donnell, Jacqui Warrior, Gary Woods (CS)

Also in attendance: Cllr Pauline Beall (SBC Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care); Sarah Jones (Catalyst Stockton-on-Tees)

Apologies: None

ASCH/1/26 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

ASCH/2/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

ASCH/3/26 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes from the Committee meeting held on 17 February 2026.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting on 17 February 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ASCH/4/26 Stockton-on-Tees Wellbeing Hub

Cllr Marc Besford wished it to be recorded for transparency purposes only that he was currently an employee of Catalyst Stockton-on-Tees.

The Committee received a presentation on the Stockton-on-Tees Wellbeing Hub.

Open in July 2024 and based in Wellington Square, the Wellbeing Hub was a one-stop shop for advice, guidance and support relating to any wellbeing issues, and brought together a range of expertise and organisations under one roof, making it easier for people to access local help and support. Now the Hub had become established, an approach was made to Catalyst (a charity which acted as the overarching body to further the impact, reputation and opportunities of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector within the Borough, and which led on the Hub project) for an update on its achievements since opening. Presented by the Wellbeing Hub Project Manager, the following information was provided:

- Introduction: In 2021, NHS England funding was secured to initiate community mental health transformation for Tees Valley, with a focus on people being able to access provision within their communities rather than just via clinical settings. Healthwatch led and supported feedback from local communities for the infrastructure of mental health services (2021), with recommendations presented for Stockton's community mental health transformation. The Stockton Lived Experience Forum voice (facilitated by local community organisations Red Balloons and Starfish Health and Wellbeing) in designing services had been, and continued to be, critical to the community transformation work.
- Wellbeing Hub Official Opening – July 2024: Whilst the preference was to have opened sooner, the July 2024 launch ensured the required arrangements were in place from the beginning. Involving a number of organisations, key partners included Catalyst, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) (a SBC adult mental health worker was present every morning), Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), Impact on Teesside, and Stockton and District Advice and Information Service (SDAIS), with the Hub enabling walk-in access to information on available mental health and wellbeing services, signposting to further opportunities for help, and pre-booked appointments with a range of support providers. Nothing was done without a person's consent (unless there was an identified safeguarding issue), and there was a clear sense that people were leaving the building feeling better / more upbeat about their future options.
- Measuring Success / Data: Reporting to the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) on a quarterly basis, the Hub used both qualitative and quantitative methods to ascertain performance – this included footfall data, case studies, impact assessments, and evaluations on the overarching offer (it was noted that this would be further enhanced through the forthcoming work of an intern from Teesside University, a development which may help in securing future resources). Statistics showed that the Hub had seen 1,660 walk-ins (including referrals in), with the main themes for attending being mental health (557), housing (201), bereavement (85), and drugs and alcohol (77). Activity attendance was growing monthly, mainly thanks to Public Health small grants funding and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector offering services onsite without cost.
- Case Stories: Examples were provided of people who had accessed the Hub, accompanied by quotes from the individuals themselves on their positive experience of the offer. A selection of comments from partners working onsite were also included, emphasising the friendly and welcoming environment and the benefits of being co-located with other organisations (aided by robust information-sharing agreements which would shortly be reviewed to ensure relevance and appropriateness).
- Single Referral Form for All Agencies: Badged as a 'Welcome to Services' form (rather than a referral form), this document had deliberately been designed to involve a simple format (in contrast to more clinical referral forms which could be time-consuming to complete) that only required basic personal information, along with a brief overview of the reasons for accessing the Hub, who the individual was currently engaging with / seeing regularly, and what they would like to achieve by coming to the Hub.

- Providers: Seven providers enabling greater capacity of the VCSE sector to support those requiring mental health services and who formed part of the formal partnership were highlighted – Starfish Services Limited, Daisy Chain, Knockout Depression, JoVivi Consultancy and Coaching, Teesside Lupus Support Group, A Way Out, and Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation. It was recognised that not everyone was able to travel into central Stockton to access the Hub – these services therefore worked to offer increased support within the wider community.
- Become a Volunteer – Make a Difference: Opportunities for individuals to become volunteers at the Hub were promoted, with a volunteer’s story included to demonstrate the personal benefits from undertaking this role. Further information was available via the Stockton Volunteers website.

Giving thanks for the presentation and the encouraging partnership-working that was a clear cornerstone of the Hub’s offer, the Committee praised the Wellbeing Hub Project Manager for leading this initiative with such enthusiasm, and for her ongoing efforts in delivering positive outcomes for those seeking support.

With regard the partners involved, clarity was sought on the work of PCP (Pioneering Care Partnership) – Members were subsequently informed that this organisation provided a diabetes peer support group, and that efforts were being made to expand the PCP offer within the Hub. Following a further Committee query, it was confirmed that Citizens Advice Bureau (known locally as the Stockton and District Advice and Information Service (SDAIS)) was still involved (as a co-located partner), though it was noted that its provision was usually appointment-only rather than accessible via walk-in – it was also acknowledged that the Hub and SDAIS needed to strengthen information-sharing in relation to the number of referrals they made to each other.

Continuing the discussion around partners, the Committee heard that there was initial caution about bringing so many organisations together who likely had differing ways of working. However, assurance was given that no issues had been encountered with or between those entities located at the Hub. It was also emphasised that the Hub was not a crisis service, but that risk was appropriately managed where necessary (people could be very unwell when walking in).

The Committee asked if people from outside the Borough were accessing the Hub in central Stockton and were notified that there had been six ‘out-of-area’ walk-ins recorded since opening in July 2024. Whilst no-one would be turned away, the vision was for individuals to be supported to get help more locally to them. Members also heard that, although the current offer was for adults (18+), a handful of under-18s had approached the Hub and had been signposted accordingly – the anticipated development of a young people pathway would also help ensure this cohort were directed to available support in a timely and effective manner.

Concluding this item, the Committee commended efforts to explore further avenues for funding, particularly given existing finance streams may dry up. Assurance was given that, as a result of support from the NENC ICB, the Hub would be maintained until at least March 2027, with a stated commitment for another 12 months taking this to March 2028. There was also a desire to put forward joint funding bids with partners in order to safeguard, and build on, the current offer.

AGREED that the information provided in relation to the Stockton-on-Tees Wellbeing Hub be noted.

ASCH/5/26 Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service

Presented by the relevant Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Service Manager, consideration was given to a draft Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the recently concluded review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service would be implemented, including success measures and target dates for completion.

Approving its content, the Committee emphasised the importance of the work on strengthening the SBC 'front door' which would play a vital role in the achievement of the Action Plan. Members drew further attention to the following:

- Recommendation 1 (In terms of general Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service development, SBC should:
 - c) Consider ways to increase the response rate for its annual carers consultation survey: Clarity was sought on when SBC conducted its annual survey (SBC officers confirmed that this was usually undertaken during April / May each year), and a request was made that the latest results were fed back to the Committee.
- Recommendation 2 (Regarding the partnership with Mobilise (the UKs digital platform for unpaid carers), SBC should:
 - a) Develop its own in-house digital support offer for local carers to build on / complement the services available through this external provider: SBC officers were asked if work regarding this recommendation had started yet and informed the Committee that this was included within the ongoing 'front door' developments.

It was noted that 'recommendation 5' was not one of the Committee's eight recommendations for this review, but was instead an action associated with wider work in relation to carers assessments. Recommendation 7 (The new carers awareness e-learning module be rolled out to SBC staff, Members and external partners) should therefore have been listed as recommendation 6, with the Committee adding that a reference to training being delivered to Members (as well as SBC staff and external partners) should also be incorporated within both the 'proposed actions / progress' and 'success measures' columns.

AGREED that the Action Plan in relation to the recently completed Scrutiny Review of Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service be approved.

ASCH/6/26 Overview Report: SBC Adults, Health & Wellbeing

The Committee received an overview report from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Adults, Health and Wellbeing directorate which provided details of key achievements and challenges in 2025-2026 for the Adult Social Care and Strategy & Transformation departments, as well as any emerging issues within these areas of Council activity.

Prior to the report being presented, some context around this item was outlined. In 2025, to facilitate the important overview function of scrutiny committees and provide

the opportunity to hold SBC Cabinet Members and services to account, a decision was made to resume overview and performance reporting to the Council's Select Committees (it was noted that the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee last considered an overview report in July 2023). It was agreed that this should take place twice-yearly.

Although the reporting of performance measures would not commence until September / October 2026, officers from the SBC Strategic Planning Team were in attendance to briefly outline how future performance information would be presented. With work ongoing in relation to finalising key performance indicators (KPIs) linked to the Stockton-on-Tees Plan, reporting would involve the relaying of 'tier 1' (Council outcomes) measures bi-annually to Cabinet and annually to the Executive Scrutiny Committee and Full Council, with 'tier 2' (service outcomes and progress update, including data that supports SBC strategies / plans) measures being submitted bi-annually to the five Select Committees.

Regarding the referenced SBC strategies / plans, the Committee asked if Members could have access to these in paper format (e.g. copies provided within political group offices) – officers agreed to take this up with the SBC Head of Policy, Development and Public Affairs after the meeting. The Committee also encouraged the retention of a consistent colour scheme for the proposed 'progress quadrant' when future performance-related information was provided.

The overview-only report that had been prepared for this meeting (supplemented by presentation slides) was then summarised by the SBC Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing (supported by the SBC Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and the SBC Assistant Director – Adult Social Care who were also in attendance).
Headline information included:

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Care Quality Commission (CQC) 'Good' rating (awarded in October 2025 for SBC adult social care services)
- 15% increase in people coming to the front door
- 10,840 care assessments completed
- 844 direct payments delivered
- 855 carers assessments completed
- 91% care homes rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'
- 72% of domiciliary care rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'

With regards the stated ambition of achieving 'Outstanding' in the next CQC inspection of SBC adult social care services, the Committee sought clarity on comments in relation to the Council '*waiting on indications from the baseline exercise which is nationally complete to understand what the future programmes look like*' (paragraph 1). It was explained that, like other Local Authorities, SBC was awaiting the outcome of several CQC reports reflecting on the adult social care inspection process thus far, and that further national guidance was anticipated. Members looked forward to seeing adult social care data at future meetings, as well as being able to shape what performance information was provided to the Committee for scrutiny.

In terms of the quality of wider adult social care provision (paragraph 7), the Committee was informed that a significant number of settings across the Borough still

needed to be inspected by the CQC – this was likely to be aided by its recent move to a more localised inspection team.

CHALLENGES

- Increase in demand for mental health and learning disability placements
- Support for working age adults is increasing up 59% in the Borough
- We have more work to do on our front door – we want to simplify and streamline, improving access
- People accessing reablement is up by 10% and we need to continue to ensure we have a strong reablement offer
- Getting people 'Home First' is a priority – we want more people being safely discharged home
- Partner restructure and pressures remain a system challenge – we need to maintain strong partnerships for residents
- Cost of living, financial pressures, global events

SBC was trying to ascertain the reasons for the increase in mental health and learning disability service demand (paragraph 10), and felt there was a clear need to be more 'preventative' around how the population was supported. The Committee questioned if the raising of the pensionable age was a factor in more requests for care from working age adults being received – officers acknowledged that this may be a reason, though also pointed to life expectancy going down, the legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic, and people living longer with co-morbidities (Barnet Council's 'graph of doom', illustrating how rising statutory care costs and constrained Council income could eliminate funding for discretionary services, was also referenced).

Regarding the local reablement offer (paragraph 12), this had been broadened so more people could benefit, though this had impacted upon performance (more individuals still required assistance after the reablement period had concluded). That said, the service was still very strong and effective, with efforts being made to integrate the offer more closely with health partners.

Discussion turned to hospital discharge (paragraph 13), with officers noting that the Borough performed well in comparison to the wider region, but that there was a desire to get closer to national levels in terms of the number of people being discharged to their own homes (where possible) rather than into bed-based support. Members recognised that this was a crucial area of focus and encouraged the provision of numbers as well as percentages when submitting performance data.

Continuing the theme of coming out of hospital, the Committee queried why the region seemingly had a greater tendency to place individuals in beds (instead of back home) when they were deemed fit to leave hospital. Several possible reasons were relayed, including organisational risk-aversion, a greater proportion of poorly people within the North East area, the NHS still being prescriptive (work was needed around the conversations professionals were having with patients), and that it was generally cheaper to use care services locally / regionally than in other parts of the country.

In relation to the new requirement to publish a supported housing strategy in 2027 (paragraph 18), the Committee expressed hope that this would link in with the emerging Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan. Members were subsequently assured that a SBC Strategic Housing Officer would engage with the Committee regarding the development of this now statutory strategy.

EMERGING ISSUES

- Neighbourhood Health
- New Adult Social Care Strategy
- Developing All-Age Carer Strategy
- New Legislation Changes
- Co-production – we need to do more!
- Finances remain challenging
- Casey Commission

Further to the stated ambition for co-production at all levels within the Local Authority (paragraph 23), the Committee asked whether there was a greater role for the Making It Real Board (MIRB) in this regard. In response, whilst acknowledging the positive impact of the MIRB, officers felt this pursuit went beyond the involvement of a single group, with increased community engagement required across all areas of Council activity to understand a greater range of public views (in particular, those voices that were seldom heard).

Bringing this item to a close, the Committee gave thanks for the information provided and looked forward to the next update (inclusive of performance data) later in 2026, a key part of which should highlight developments in relation to the 'neighbourhood health' initiative.

AGREED that the Overview Report: SBC Adults, Health and Wellbeing be noted.

ASCH/7/26 Regional Health Scrutiny Update

Consideration was given to the latest Regional Health Scrutiny Update report which summarised the work of regional health scrutiny committees and highlighted some recent health-related developments impacting on the Tees Valley and / or wider North East and North Cumbria footprint. Attention was drawn to the following:

- Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council hosted the Committee in 2025-2026. Two meetings had taken place since the last published update, the first being held on 11 December 2025 where agenda items included a key clinical services strategy update from the University Hospitals Tees (UHT), another Tees respite care / adult learning disability update, a presentation on the development and implementation of the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) palliative and end-of-life care strategy, and a health inequalities update.

The most recent meeting took place on 12 March 2026 and included Quality Account presentations from both North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV). TEWV also provided an urgent care mental health crisis update.

As per previously agreed rotational arrangements, Chair and support responsibilities for this joint committee would move to Middlesbrough Council for 2026-2027. The first meeting date of the new municipal year was yet to be confirmed.

Reference was once again made to Member attendance at the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, with ongoing absences from some of the appointed

representatives from other Local Authorities highlighted (it was noted that attendance by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) representatives continued to be strong). Concerns were also raised around the University Hospitals Tees (UHT) developments and the very recent reports of job losses across the two NHS Trusts (North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) within the UHT footprint.

- Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: No further developments regarding this Joint Committee since the previous update in December 2025. In related matters, regional developments highlighted included the ongoing promotion of the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) 'Here to help you' webpage, the extension of efforts to help people in the North East and North Cumbria tackle health problems and stay in work, new premises for a learning disability respite service that faced years of uncertainty, and the high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the North East. At a more local level, attention was drawn to recent North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) news items regarding the reaccreditation of its Teesside endoscopy service, a new initiative to help patients who may be deteriorating, and a new fast and easy system for feedback for new mums and mums-to-be.

AGREED that the Regional Health Scrutiny Update report be noted.

ASCH/8/26 Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair had no further updates.

WORK PROGRAMME 2026-2027

Consideration was given to the Committee's current work programme. The next meeting was due to take place on 19 May 2026 where the annual North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) Quality Account presentation would be received, along with the latest progress update in relation to the Committee's previously completed Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care review. Members were also informed of the recent confirmation of the Committee's next in-depth review topic (Protection of Property) – a draft scope for this piece of work would be presented at either the May or June 2026 meeting.

AGREED that the Chair's Update and Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Work Programme 2026-2027 be noted.

Chair:

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT): Quality Account 2025-2026

Summary

Senior University Hospitals Tees (UHT) personnel will be in attendance to outline performance against the NTHFT quality priorities for 2025-2026 and inform the Committee of the emerging priorities for the next year.

The Trust produces a Quality Account as part of this process. The Committee is invited to prepare a statement of assurance for inclusion in the final published version.

Recommendations

- 1) The Committee should consider and comment on the update on performance in 2025-2026 and the priorities for quality improvement in 2026-2027.
- 2) That a statement of assurance be prepared and submitted to the Trust, with final approval delegated to the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair.

Detail

1. NHS Trusts are under a duty to produce an annual 'Quality Account' – these are intended to set out:
 - What an organisation is doing well.
 - Where improvements in service quality are required.
 - What the priorities for improvement are for the coming year.
 - How the organisation has involved service-users, staff and others with an interest in that organisation in determining those priorities for improvement.
2. Quality in the NHS is defined under the headings of 'Patient Safety', 'Effectiveness of Care', and 'Patient Experience'. Being able to consider the Quality Account and associated information is a key way for Members to review the performance and quality of local health services. As such, each year, the Committee has the opportunity to review the quality performance of NTHFT.
3. Scrutiny committees also have the opportunity to provide a statement of assurance to be included in the published version of the Quality Account. Following the meeting, it is proposed that a draft statement of assurance is prepared and circulated to the Committee, with final agreement delegated to the Chair and Vice-Chair.

4. Ahead of the meeting, and for wider context, Members may wish to familiarise themselves with the following:
 - NTHFTs published Quality Account for the previous year (2024-2025) (*note: this includes the Committee's statement of assurance – see pages 116-118*).
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ANNUAL-QUALITY-ACCOUNT-2024-25-Final.pdf>
 - The slides and discussion points from last year's (2024-2025) Quality Account presentation to the Committee in May 2025.
<https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=4714>
 - Published NHS survey results in relation to NTHFT:
 - CQC Children and Young People's Survey 2024 (published May 2025)
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RVW/surveys/103>
 - CQC Adult Inpatient Survey 2024 (published September 2025)
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RVW/surveys/129>
 - CQC Maternity Survey 2025 (published December 2025)
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RVW/surveys/130>
 - NHS Staff Survey 2025 (Benchmark Report)
<https://cms.nhsstaffsurveys.com/app/reports/2025/RVW-benchmark-2025.pdf>
 - Further information / data in relation to NTHFT can be found via the NHS oversight framework segmentation and performance dashboard (search for NTHFT in the 'Select a trust' box).
<https://data.england.nhs.uk/dashboard/nofacute>
 - The latest Care Quality Commission (CQC) report regarding NTHFT (published on 16 September 2022) provided outcomes following an unannounced inspection of the Trust which was prompted by concerns about the quality and safety of services, and included an inspection of the 'well-led' key question for the Trust overall. The CQC also inspected maternity services at Hartlepool and North Tees hospitals, and services for children and young people at North Tees.
<https://api.cqc.org.uk/public/v1/reports/f877d342-ae10-48cc-9783-f99144e029fc?20221129062700>
5. Senior UHT representatives are scheduled to be in attendance at this meeting. A presentation has been prepared and is included within these meeting papers (see **Appendix 1**) – this is accompanied by a UHT draft Quality Account document which refers to both NTHFT and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) in line with ongoing formalised partnership arrangements (see **Appendix 2**).

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Telephone Number: 01642 526187
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UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS TEES

QUALITY ACCOUNT 2025/26

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust



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- This year marks our second full cycle since the formal creation of University Hospitals Tees as a hospital group—uniting the strengths of our two trusts to harness shared opportunities, enhance operational resilience and improve population health outcomes.
- University Hospitals Tees has produced a single Quality Account reflecting our shared quality priorities, and performance and achievements across South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.
- A single Quality Account supports greater consistency, transparency and collaboration across the UHT.

Purpose

- To provide assurance on quality, safety and experience
- To summarise performance in **Middlesbrough, Redcar and North Yorkshire (South Tees)** and **Stockton and Hartlepool (North Tees & Hartlepool)**
- To highlight progress, challenges and next steps

Context

- Single Group Quality Account
- Maintains **local accountability and site-specific transparency**



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Our Local Services



South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- James Cook University Hospital
- Redcar & Cleveland community hospitals
- ~1.5 million patient contacts annually
- CQC overall rating: **Good**



North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- University Hospital of North Tees
- Lawson Street Health Centre
- Tees Valley Community Diagnostic Hub (Stockton)
- Serving ~500,000 residents
- CQC overall rating: **Requires Improvement**



Shared Quality Priorities 2025/2026



Patient Safety	Clinical Effectiveness	Patient Experience
<p>**New QP 25/26**</p> <p>We will reduce the risk of acquiring healthcare associated infections in line with NHS England standard contract objectives such as Clostridioides Difficile, Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, Gram-Negative Blood Stream Infections (ECOLI, Klebsiella, and Pseudomonas) alongside other infections to improve outcomes for our patients whilst embedding IPC practices.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will ensure continuous learning and improved patient outcomes following implementation of best clinical practice, using data from clinical audits of compliance against evidence-based standards.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will develop and implement a Group Mental Health Strategy to improve care and share learning for our patients who are experiencing difficulties with their mental ill health.</p>
<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will continue to optimise the Trust's ability to respond to and learn from incidents, safeguarding concerns, claims and inquests to improve outcomes for our patients and reduce the risk of reoccurrence.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will review and strengthen the mortality review processes, ensuring that learning from deaths is used to improve patient outcomes.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will proactively seek patient feedback and ensure there is continuous improvement in care and treatment because of the feedback we receive</p>
<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will improve medication safety and continue to optimise the benefits of ePMA and evaluate the impact on learning from medication incidents</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will develop and implement shared decision making and goals of care.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25**</p> <p>We will respond in a timely way to complaints, supporting patients and families through difficult circumstances and implement quality improvements as a result of the learning.</p>

Patient Safety & Learning from Incidents



South Tees

- Full implementation of Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF)
- 8 out of 16 PSIRF evaluation recommendations delivered
- Incident reporting dip in March 2026 linked to system change, now recovering

North Tees and Hartlepool

- Medication incident rate ~6.2%
- No medication-related never events
- 50% reduction in time-critical medication omissions

Assurance:

- Unified incident reporting system (Healthcare Guardian) now live across UHT

Oversight

by InPhase

Submit InPhase System Change or Permission/Access Request



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South Tees

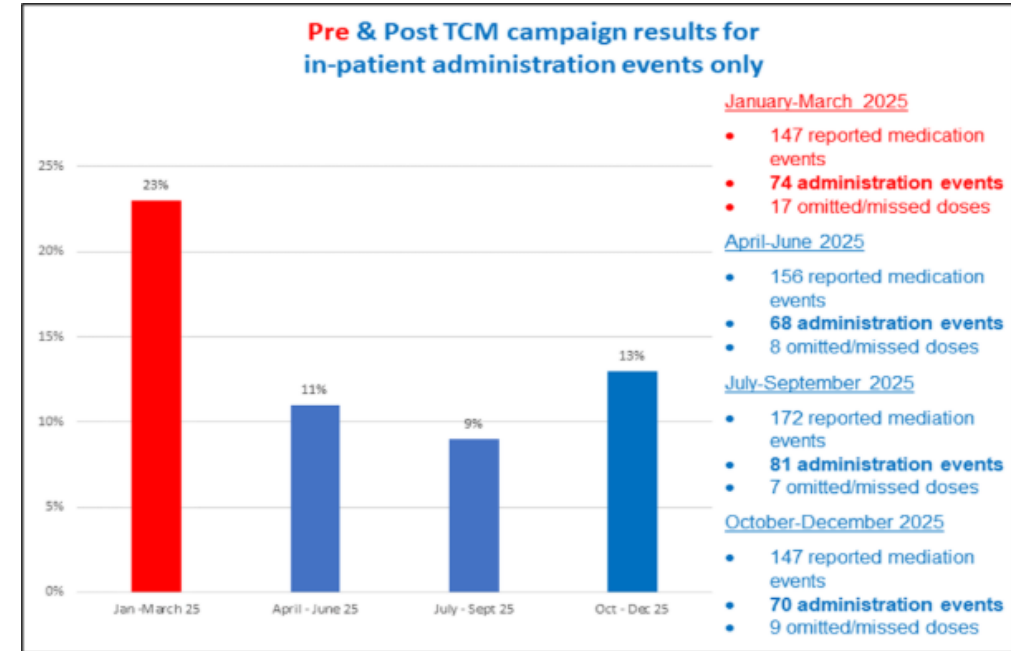
- 17 million medication doses via electronic prescribing (ePMA)
- Lowest regional antibiotic consumption (January 2026)
- Innovative penicillin de-labelling service (national recognition)

North Tees and Hartlepool

- EPMA 2.0 including IV medications
- Antibiotic use increased by 8.2% vs baseline
- Access antibiotic use: 60.2%

Next steps:

- UHT-wide medicines dashboards and benchmarking



Learning from Deaths and Mortality



South Tees

- 1,835 deaths
- 208 case record reviews completed
- 0.01% judged more likely than not due to care issues

North Tees and Hartlepool

- 1,198 deaths
- 53 case record reviews
- 0% judged more likely than not due to care issues

Improvement focus:

- Increased SJR coverage at North Tees
- Single UHT Learning from Deaths framework



Clinical Effectiveness & Audit



NICE Guidance Compliance

- South Tees: 74.7% compliant
- North Tees and Hartlepool: 99.4% compliant

Local Audit Activity

- South Tees : 369 audits reviewed
- North Tees and Hartlepool: 112 audits reviewed

Assurance:

- New GIRFT & Audit Panel providing stronger oversight



Patient Experience and Complaints



South Tees

- FFT scores above national average
- Response timeliness improving, but long open complaints remain a challenge

North Tees and Hartlepool

- FFT scores above national average
- Improved oversight through Clinical Service Unit (CSU) dashboards

Action Taken:

- Unified UHT complaints policy
- Family Liaison Officers embedded
- External audits completed (PwC / Audit One)



Mental Health & Vulnerable Groups



Across Trusts:

- Joint UHT Mental Health Strategy live
- Suicide prevention plan endorsed locally
- 1,267 staff trained in mental health awareness
- Right Care Right Person implemented
- Trauma-informed care programme launched



Urgent and Emergency Care



South Tees

- UTC at JCUH: ~60,000 patients/year
- 94% seen within 4 hours

North Tees and Hartlepool

- Emergency Assessment Suite: 55 patients/day
- ~70% discharged same day

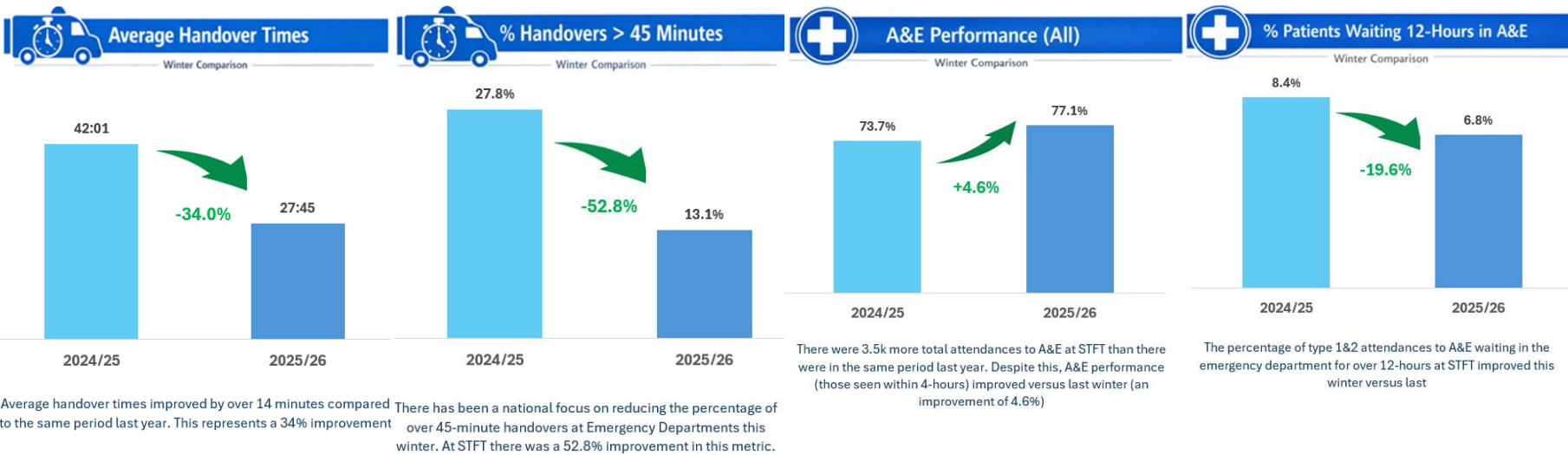
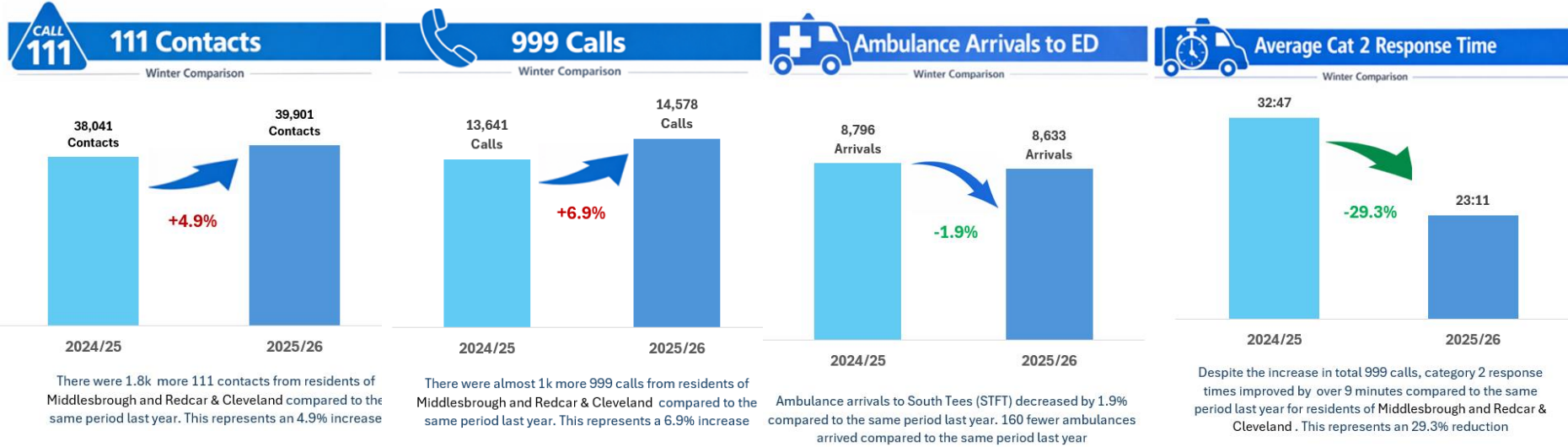
Winter 2025/26:

- Ambulance handover delays reduced
- Flow improvements across both sites



Comparison to last winter... South Tees

14-Week Winter Comparison: Mon 03/11/2025 to Sun 08/02/2026 (vs same period last year)



Comparison to last winter... North Tees

14-Week Winter Comparison: Mon 03/11/2025 to Sun 08/02/2026 (vs same period last year)



There were 1.3k more 111 contacts from residents of Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool compared to the same period last year. This represents a 3.4% increase

There were over 500 more 999 calls from residents of Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool compared to the same period last year. This represents a 3.9% increase

Ambulance arrivals to North Tees & Hartlepool (NTHFT) increased by 2.5% compared to the same period last year. Over 150 more ambulance arrivals than last year.

Despite the increase in total 999 calls, category 2 response times improved by over 7 minutes compared to the same period last year for residents of Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool. This represents a 25.0% reduction



Despite this increase in arrivals to NTHFT Emergency Departments, average handover times improved by 1 minute compared to the same period last year. This represents a 4.9% improvement

There has been a national focus on reducing the percentage of over 45-minute handovers at Emergency Departments this winter. At NTHFT there was a 35.1% improvement in this metric.

There were 400 more total attendances to A&E at NTHFT than there were in the same period last year. Despite this, A&E performance (those seen within 4-hours) improved slightly versus last winter (an improvement of 0.1%)

The trend over NENC is that the percentage of patients waiting over 12-hours in A&E reduced versus last winter. At NTHFT, the percentage of patients waiting over 12-hours in A&E actually increased compared to last winter.

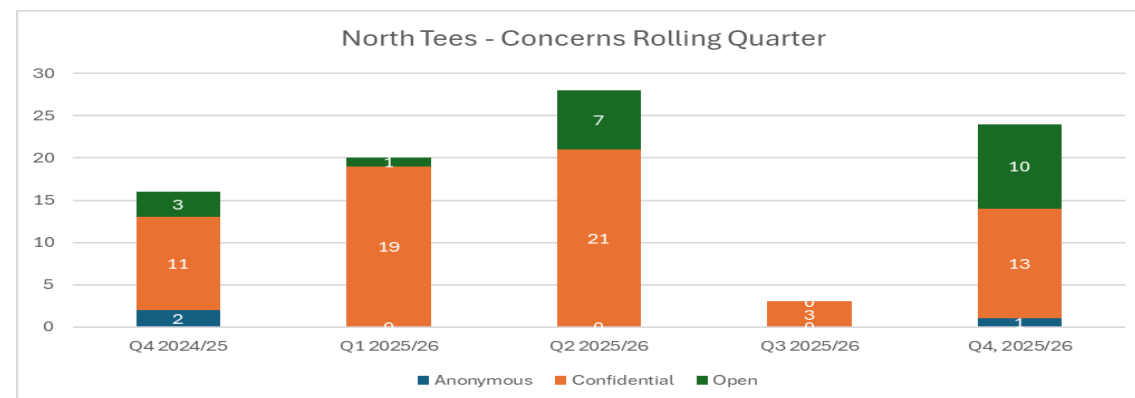
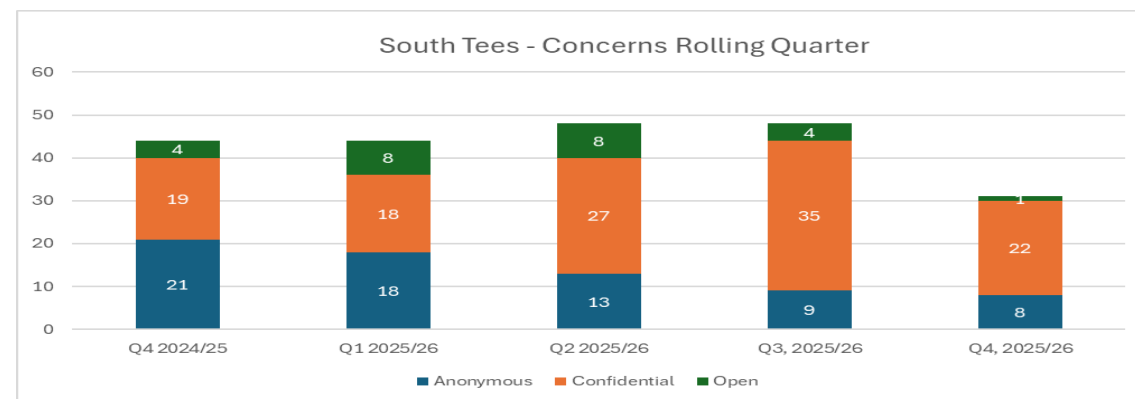
Staff and Culture



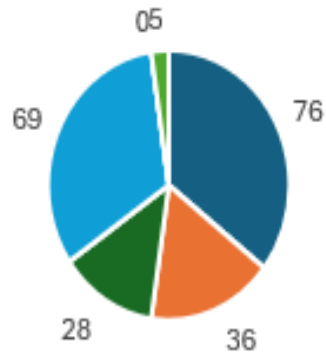
- Freedom to Speak Up concerns increased (positive reporting culture)
- Highest theme: inappropriate behaviours

Next steps:

- Clinical Service Unit (CSU) level people plans
- Visible leadership and engagement

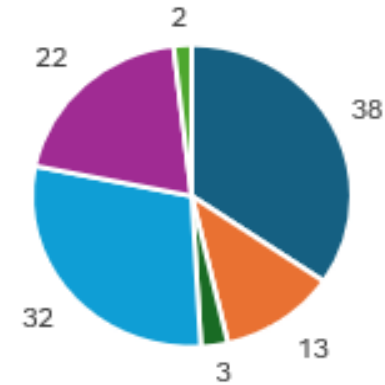


High Level Themes - South Tees - 2025/26



- Inappropriate attitudes/ Behaviours
- Bullying/ Harassment
- Systems & Processes
- Pt safety/ Quality
- Worker Safety/ Well being
- Detriment

High Level Themes - North Tees - 2025/26

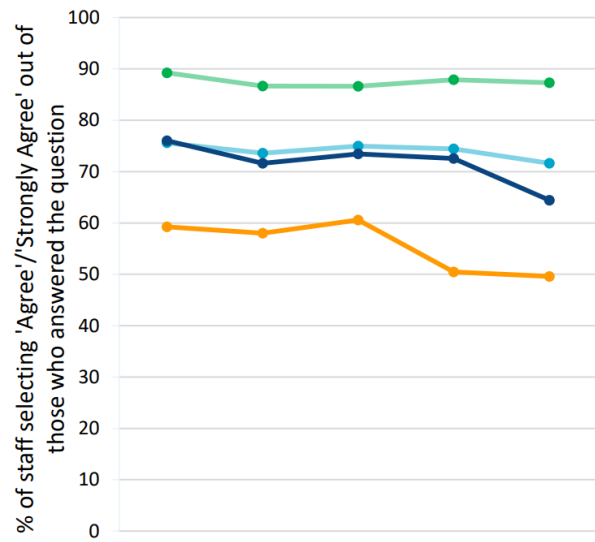


- Inappropriate attitudes/ Behaviours
- Bullying/ Harassment
- Systems & Processes
- Pt safety/ Quality
- Worker Safety/ Well being
- Detriment

Staff Friends and Family Test – STHFT

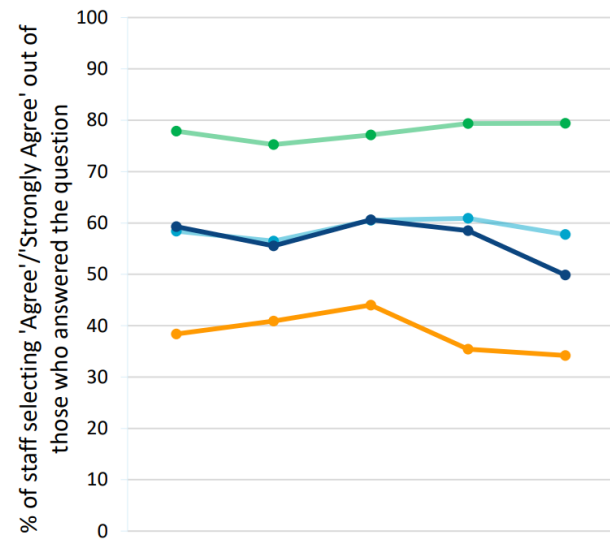


Q25a Care of patients / service users is my organisation's top priority.



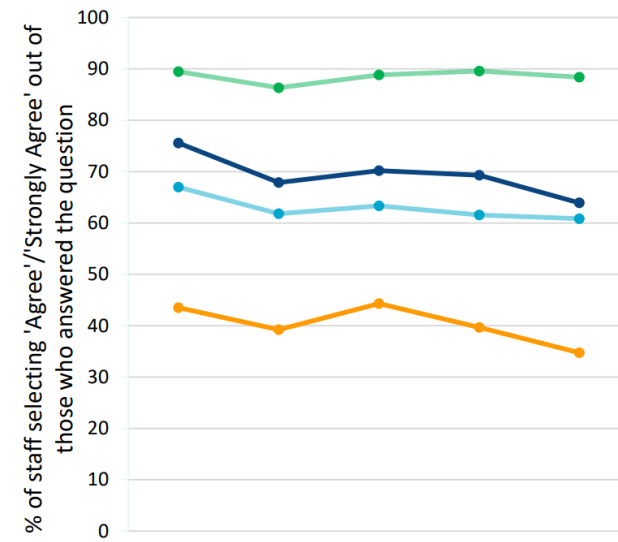
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	76.01%	71.64%	73.44%	72.53%	64.43%
Best result	89.24%	86.64%	86.62%	87.88%	87.31%
Average result	75.58%	73.58%	74.95%	74.42%	71.63%
Worst result	59.25%	57.99%	60.58%	50.48%	49.59%
Responses	2846	3324	3455	3036	2992

Q25c I would recommend my organisation as a place to work.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	59.31%	55.56%	60.61%	58.49%	49.86%
Best result	77.86%	75.26%	77.14%	79.37%	79.40%
Average result	58.41%	56.47%	60.52%	60.89%	57.77%
Worst result	38.40%	40.90%	44.01%	35.43%	34.20%
Responses	2851	3321	3456	3030	2988

Q25d If a friend or relative needed treatment I would be happy with the standard of care provided by this organisation.



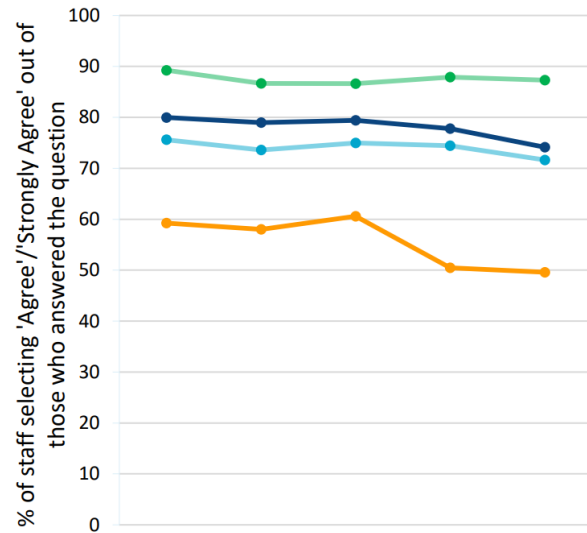
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	75.57%	67.89%	70.20%	69.30%	63.90%
Best result	89.49%	86.33%	88.81%	89.58%	88.41%
Average result	66.97%	61.78%	63.32%	61.55%	60.83%
Worst result	43.50%	39.20%	44.30%	39.68%	34.73%
Responses	2847	3322	3456	3030	2981



Staff Friends and Family Test – NTHFT

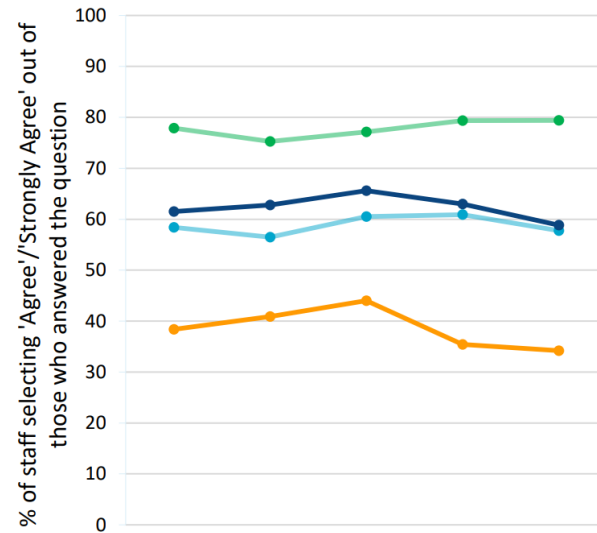


Q25a Care of patients / service users is my organisation's top priority.



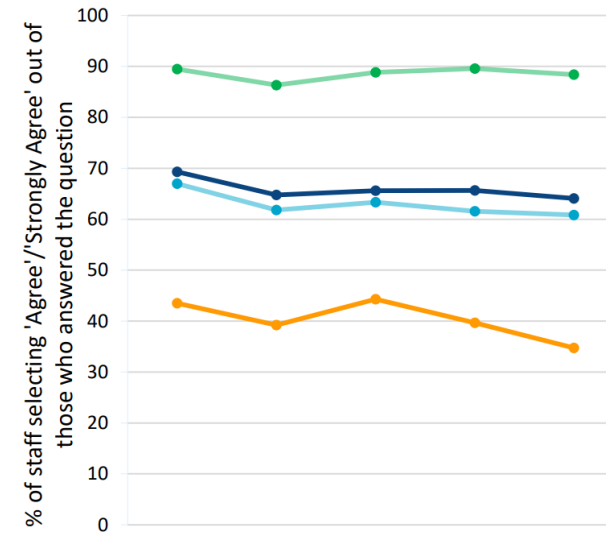
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	79.97%	78.94%	79.39%	77.79%	74.13%
Best result	89.24%	86.64%	86.62%	87.88%	87.31%
Average result	75.58%	73.58%	74.95%	74.42%	71.63%
Worst result	59.25%	57.99%	60.58%	50.48%	49.59%
Responses	2399	2348	2435	2325	2100

Q25c I would recommend my organisation as a place to work.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	61.50%	62.79%	65.60%	62.99%	58.83%
Best result	77.86%	75.26%	77.14%	79.37%	79.40%
Average result	58.41%	56.47%	60.52%	60.89%	57.77%
Worst result	38.40%	40.90%	44.01%	35.43%	34.20%
Responses	2403	2348	2432	2326	2098

Q25d If a friend or relative needed treatment I would be happy with the standard of care provided by this organisation.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Your org	69.30%	64.74%	65.59%	65.67%	64.08%
Best result	89.49%	86.33%	88.81%	89.58%	88.41%
Average result	66.97%	61.78%	63.32%	61.55%	60.83%
Worst result	43.50%	39.20%	44.30%	39.68%	34.73%
Responses	2394	2342	2431	2325	2099

What does this mean?



Middlesbrough, Redcar and North Yorkshire

- Medication safety
- Mortality review maturity
- UEC performance
- Complaints timeliness

Stockton and Hartlepool

- UEC flow improvement
- Antibiotic Access usage
- Mortality review capacity
- Antimicrobial consumption



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Looking forward to 2026/2027 Quality Priorities



- It is proposed that the following 3 Quality Priorities from 2025/26 are discontinued;
 - We will ensure continuous learning and improved patient outcomes following implementation of best clinical practice, using data from clinical audits of compliance against evidence-based standards
 - We will develop and implement shared decision making and goals of care
 - We will develop and implement a Group Mental Health Strategy to improve care and share learning for our patients who are experiencing difficulties with their mental ill health
- 5 Quality Priorities have been revised and carried forward into 2026/27 to allow for further embeddedness and completion of actions.

Quality Priorities 2026/27



Patient Safety		
<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will optimise learning from incidents, claims, and inquests to strengthen recognition and response to the deteriorating patient, improving patient safety outcomes and reducing avoidable harm.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will improve medication safety by optimising the use of the ePMA, and strengthening antimicrobial stewardship.</p> <p>We will achieve this by evaluating and embedding learning from medication incidents to reduce avoidable harm and improve the quality of prescribing against national and local standards.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will reduce risks of C. difficile, MRSA, GNBSIs (E. coli, Klebsiella, Pseudomonas) and other infections, embedding IPC good practice.</p>
Patient Experience		
<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will utilise patient and carer feedback as part of our continuous improvement methodology, with a specific focus on improving experience in the Emergency Department and eliminating corridor care.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will meet national Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman complaint standards</p>	
Clinical Effectiveness		
<p>Carried forward from 25/26</p> <p>We will review and strengthen the mortality review processes, ensuring that learning from deaths is used to improve patient outcomes.</p>		

Quality Priorities 2026/27 'in plain English'



Patient Safety

Learning from mistakes and improving care

We will learn from things that go wrong (like incidents and complaints) so we can spot when patients are getting worse sooner and act quickly to keep them safe.

Making medicines safer

We will make sure medicines are used safely and correctly by improving how they are prescribed and learning from any medication errors to prevent harm.

Reducing infections

We will work to prevent infections such as C. diff and MRSA by following good hygiene and infection control practices.

Patient Experience

Listening to patients and improving care

We will use feedback from patients and carers to improve services, especially in A&E, and work to stop treating patients in corridors.

Handling complaints properly

We will make sure complaints are dealt with fairly, quickly, and in line with national standards.

Clinical Effectiveness

Learning from deaths to improve care

We will carefully review deaths and use what we learn to improve care and outcomes for future patients.



Quality Priorities mapped to strategic objectives



Quality Priority	Strategic Objectives Aligned
Reducing HCAs	Consistent high-quality care; Using our resources well; Excellence as a learning organisation
Learning from incidents, claims, coroners in relation to recognition and response to the acutely ill patient.	Excellence as a learning organisation; Consistent high-quality care; Outstanding experience for our people
Medication Safety, ePMA, Antimicrobial Stewardship	Consistent high-quality care; Reforming models of care; Using our resources well
Mortality Review & LfD	Consistent high-quality care; Excellence as a learning organisation; Working with partners
Patient/Carer Feedback with a focus on 'Corridor Care'.	Consistent high-quality care; Excellence as a learning organisation; Outstanding experience for our people
Complaints Handling (PHSO)	Consistent high-quality care; Excellence as a learning organisation; Outstanding experience for our people

Proposed Quality Priorities 2026/2027



Each Quality Priority can be measured through:

1. Outcomes

Reduction in harm, variation, inequality, mortality, HCAs, and medication errors.

2. Processes

Audit compliance, timeliness (reviews, complaints), ePMA uptake, PSIRF methodology application.

3. Experience

Patient-reported outcomes and experience, FFT, complaints quality, equity in feedback.

4. Workforce Capability

Inclusive practice training, QI involvement, safety culture.

5. Population Health

Access equity, diagnostic uptake, prevention outcomes, reduction in health inequalities.



Clinical Service Unit achievements



JAG (Joint Advisory Group (on Gastrointestinal (GI) Endoscopy) Accreditation

The North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Endoscopy Service was reaccruited by the Joint Advisory Group on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (JAG) for its highest standard of achievement.

The reaccruitation follows a recent annual review and highlights the dedication of the endoscopy team.

Northern Endoscopy Training Academy (NETA) Academy Awards 2025

The North Tees and Hartlepool Endoscopy Team achieved notable success at the Northern Endoscopy Training Academy (NETA) Academy Awards 2025, winning the “***The Team of the Year***” award in recognition of the outstanding teamwork, high-quality patient care, and contribution to endoscopy training across the region. In addition, two of our Advanced Clinical Endoscopist were individually honoured with the “***Clinical Trainer of the Year Award***”, reflecting excellence in training, mentorship, and workforce development.



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Clinical Service Unit achievements



The introduction of a Community Thoracic Service and a Day-1 Discharge Programme (D1DP) enables patients to recover safely at home with timely specialist review, rather than remaining in an acute hospital setting unnecessarily.

The D1DP demonstrates that early discharge following lung resection can be delivered safely and efficiently with high patient satisfaction when supported by a dedicated specialist community thoracic service. The programme has achieved significant reduction in LOS, increased POD1 discharges, safe management of complex patients at home, maintained low readmission rates, high patient-reported satisfaction and meaningful financial and capacity benefits.



Clinical Service Unit achievements

A new estate for the Emergency Assessment Suite at University Hospital of North Tees

Urgent Emergency Care standards aim to reduce clinical risk through a shared responsibility and enhance patient experience through more timely assessment and appropriate clinical pathways

Based on consistent compliance against these standards we received national UEC incentive funding which allowed us to develop a bespoke emergency assessment environment designed to overcome previous challenges with patient flow and clinical capacity.

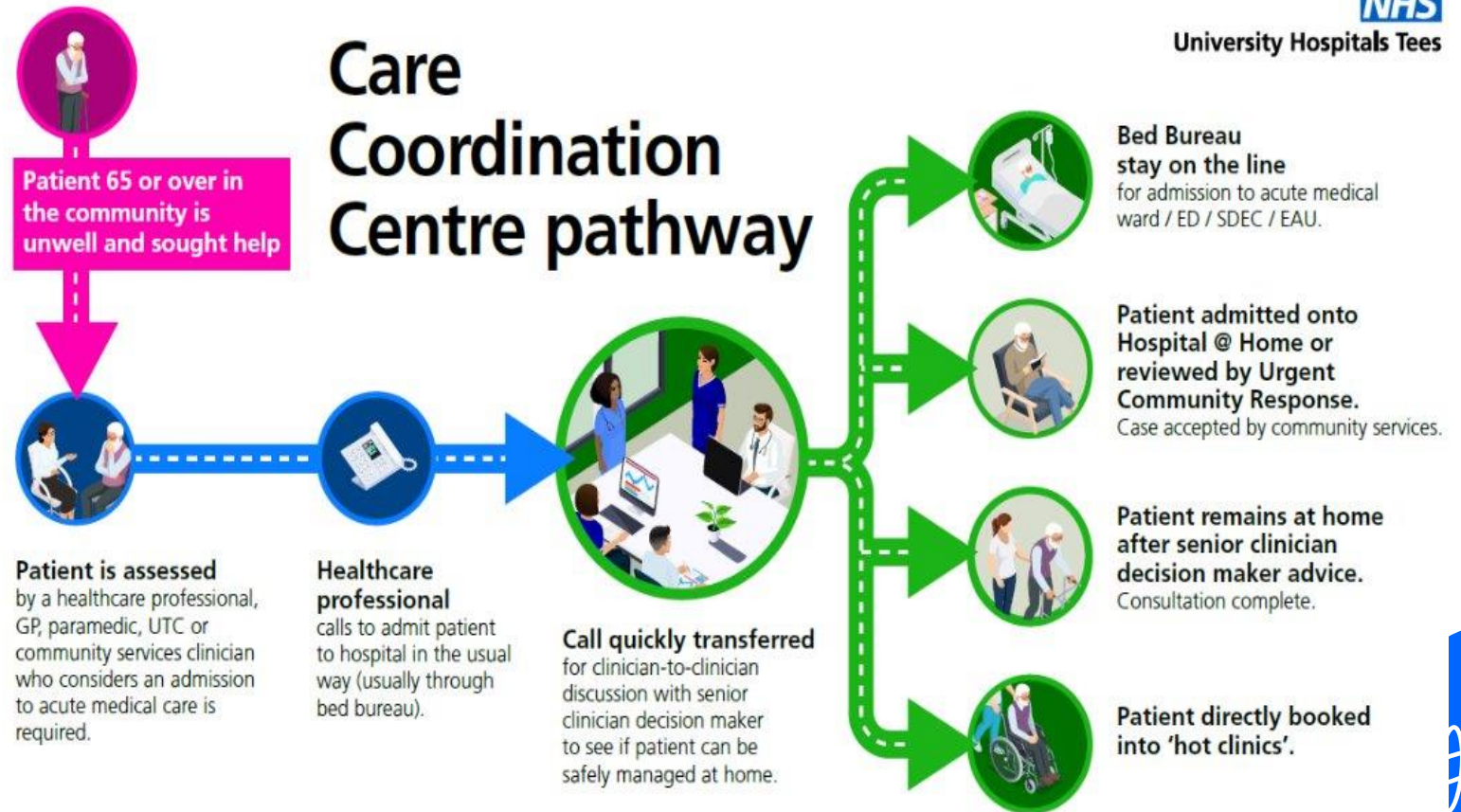
The new Assessment Suite reviews on average 55 patients per day and takes direct ambulance arrivals through paramedic pathways, bypassing ED. This shared responsibility for emergency pathways has led to consistent high achievement of the 4-hour standard and 70% of patients reviewed are discharged home within the same day without a hospital admission.



Clinical Service Unit achievements



The Care Co-ordination Centre (CCC) pilot saw more than 1,000 calls from ambulance and primary care providers relating to older people screened before admission, leading to more than 300 receiving care at home or in a community venue thus avoiding admission to the acute site



We welcome your questions



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North Tees and Hartlepool
NHS Foundation Trust



South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



University Hospitals Tees

Draft Quality Account

2025-26

Final publication – 30 June 2026



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Patient Safety Priorities

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2. Reducing the risk of acquiring healthcare associated infections
3. Medication safety and optimising the benefits of ePMA.

Clinical Effectiveness quality priorities

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3. Shared decision making and goals of care

Patient Experience quality priorities

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6. CQC registration, reviews and investigations
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- ii. Accreditation

Showcasing our Clinical Service Units

Family Health Services (CSU 1)
Digestive Health, Urology & General Surgery Services (CSU 2)
Trauma & Orthopaedics, Reconstructive & Plastic Surgery, ENT, OMFS, Dermatology
and Ophthalmology Services (CSU 3)
Theatres, Anaesthetics & Critical Care Services (CSU 4)
Cardiovascular Services (CSU 5)
Cancer Institute (CSU 6)
Clinical Support Services (CSU 7)
General and Emergency Medical Services (CSU 8)
Neurosciences Services (CSU 9)
Community & Neighbourhood Health Services (CSU 10)

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3.3 Additional required information

Seven-day services
Freedom to speak up
Resident grade doctors rota gaps and plans to manage

4. Annex 1: Statements from commissioners, local Healthwatch organisations and overview and scrutiny committees
5. Annex 2: Statement of directors responsibilities for the quality report
6. Annex 3: Glossary of terms

1. Statement on quality from the chief executive of the NHS foundation trust

I am pleased to present the first combined Quality Account for University Hospitals Tees. Covering the 2025-26 financial year for both North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, this report provides an opportunity to highlight the progress we have made over the past year.

During our second full year of working as a group, we have developed new clinical service units, launched our group values and a long-term strategy, and committed to an ethos of continuous improvement.

We continue to develop and strengthen relationships with our stakeholders, including patients and staff and those outside of our organisation including politicians, local service providers and advocacy groups. Our working relationships with our local authority partners remains key. Initiatives such as the Tees Valley Community Diagnostic Centre can only be achieved by working hand-in-hand with the officers and elected members of local councils.

Several elected members also form a core element of our administration serving as trust governors where their local knowledge and community-focused insight proves invaluable.

Strong local partnership working is central to the development of the Stockton Neighbourhood Health Pilot. As one of just 43 pilot sites across the UK, we will work with our local authority, primary care, community, mental health, social care and voluntary sector partners to develop a new health centre to deliver community-based services for people aged 50–64 with three or more long term conditions in the Stockton central and Portrack areas.

Looking ahead, we recognise that we are operating in a period of ongoing challenge and transformation. We have been open and honest about the difficult issues we face, in terms of financial resources, patient demand and an aging physical infrastructure.


At the heart of everything we do are our patients. They are the reason each and every member of staff comes into work every day. Their safety and health underpin everything we do.

University Hospitals Tees will continue to deliver on local and national priorities including the 'three-shifts' outlined in the 10-year plan for the NHS, delivering clinical services which will tackle immediate demand and lay the foundation for healthier communities in the long term.

Overcoming the health, social and financial disadvantages faced by so many in our region is a challenge – a challenge that no single service provider can tackle alone. We will play our part as a leading member of local and wider regional partnership systems to raise not only the physical health but crucially health aspirations of the communities we serve.

The voices of our patients and their loved ones are listened to, their concerns acted upon and we seek to learn and improve from every patient interaction. I would like to thank our patients and wider community for the role they play in improving our services for the future.

In closing, I would like to pay a small tribute to the hard work and commitment we see every day from our colleagues. A hospital group is not the buildings or equipment – it is the people. Our people come into work every day with a sense of purpose and drive that continues to inspire. I would like to thank every colleague who makes University Hospitals Tees the success it is. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained within this Quality Account is an accurate reflection of our performance, achievements and ongoing commitment to quality, which I am proud to present.



Stacey Hunter

Group Chief Executive Officer
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and North
Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust



DRAFT

1.1 Introduction

University Hospitals Tees has produced a single Quality Account on behalf of UHT reflecting our shared strategic direction, governance arrangements and quality priorities across both trusts.

As a Group, we are united by a common vision to improve patient outcomes, safety and experience. Our quality improvement priorities for the year ahead are aligned across both organisations enabling us to maximise opportunities, share learning and deliver improvement at pace and scale.

Producing a single Quality Account supports greater consistency, transparency and collaboration across the UHT. It enables best practice to be shared more effectively, strengthens collective accountability and reflects our ambition to deliver equitable, high-quality care for our populations regardless of where services are delivered.

Trust specific performance and progress continue to be monitored through established governance processes to ensuring strong local accountability is maintained.

During 2025/26 as a Group UHT has undergone significant change, aligning clinical services across multiple hospital sites under new operational model that has seen the development of our Clinical Service Unit model. Despite this challenge we have made significant progress in our quality priorities but also recognising that we have not achieved all that we wished to achieve in 2025/26.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust delivers acute and community healthcare services across Middlesbrough, Redcar, East Cleveland, Hambleton and Richmondshire.

The trust operates The James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough, Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, and provides community inpatient services at Redcar Primary Care Hospital, East Cleveland Primary Care Hospital and Friary Community Hospital.

Each year, we provide care to around 1.5 million patients across our region and beyond. We are proud to hold an overall 'Good' rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), reflecting the high standards of care delivered by our services and teams.

Our staff foster a strong culture of safety, quality and continuous improvement. We are committed to innovation and excellence, supported by leading edge clinical research, education, training and development.

The James Cook University Hospital offers an extensive range of specialties on a single site and receives around half of all major trauma cases from across the North East and Cumbria. The Friarage Hospital is one of the region's fastest-growing healthcare sites, serving communities across the Dales, North Yorkshire and Teesside. This year saw the opening of our £35.5 million surgical centre, doubling the hospital's capacity for planned operations annually.

Together with our three primary care hospital wards and community NHS teams, we provide care closer to home for people from Hawes to East Cleveland. Our 'Hospital at Home' programme enables more patients, particularly those who are frailer, to receive hospital-level care safely and comfortably in their own homes.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust provides high-quality healthcare for nearly half a million residents across Stockton, Hartlepool and parts of County Durham.

Care is delivered across a range of settings, including Peterlee Community Hospital, our Lawson Street Health Centre hub in Stockton, and the One Life Centre in Hartlepool. These valued community services complement our acute hospitals — the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool.

The new Tees Valley Community Diagnostic Hub, located on the banks of the River Tees in Stockton, has delivered thousands of diagnostic scans since opening and is now an integral part of the local healthcare system, providing timely access to essential diagnostics for our communities.

The University Hospital of Hartlepool is an accredited surgical hub, supported by advanced robotic surgery. It is also home to the Health and Social Care Academy and the Rowen Suite which will maternity services in the coming year following a temporary closure due to workforce pressures. This much loved hospital remains central to service delivery for local communities.

We continue to face the challenges associated with the ageing estate of University Hospital of North Tees. However, our commitment to investing in our estate remains strong. Recent developments including a new multimillion-pound robotic surgery facility and an emergency maternity theatre suite, demonstrate that our determination to deliver modern, high quality care despite by physical constraints.

Through our Group partnership, University Hospitals Tees brings together our hospitals and services in support of shared ambitions for our patients, service users and staff. By working collaboratively, we are strengthening quality, improving outcomes and building a sustainable future for healthcare across Teesside and beyond.

2. Priorities for improvement and statements of assurance from the Board

2.1 Priorities for improvement

a. Review of progress with the quality priorities defined for improvement in 2025/26

The Quality Account provides an opportunity for University Hospitals Tees (UHT) to reflect on its achievements over the last 12 months. This includes a look back at the progress made against the Quality Priorities for 2025/26 that were defined in the 2024/25 Quality Account and are summarised in the table below.

The following Quality Priorities (set out in Table 1) were agreed for both Trusts for 2025/26 following a consultation process with clinical colleagues at both South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT), North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) and the Council of Governors.

Patient Safety	Clinical Effectiveness	Patient Experience
<p>**New QP 25/26** We will reduce the risk of acquiring healthcare associated infections in line with NHS England standard contract objectives such as Clostridioides Difficile, Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus, Gram-Negative Blood Stream Infections (ECOLI, Klebsiella, and Pseudomonas) alongside other infections to improve outcomes for our patients whilst embedding IPC practices.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will ensure continuous learning and improved patient outcomes following implementation of best clinical practice, using data from clinical audits of compliance against evidence-based standards.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will develop and implement a Group Mental Health Strategy to improve care and share learning for our patients who are experiencing difficulties with their mental ill health.</p>
<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will continue to optimise the Trust's ability to respond to and learn from incidents, safeguarding concerns, claims and inquests to improve outcomes for our patients and reduce the risk of reoccurrence.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will review and strengthen the mortality review processes, ensuring that learning from deaths is used to improve patient outcomes.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will proactively seek patient feedback and ensure there is continuous improvement in care and treatment because of the feedback we receive</p>
<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will improve medication safety and continue to optimise the benefits of ePMA and evaluate the impact on learning from medication incidents</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will develop and implement shared decision making and goals of care.</p>	<p>**Carried forward from 24/25** We will respond in a timely way to complaints, supporting patients and families through difficult circumstances and implement quality improvements as a result of the learning.</p>

Table 1 – Quality Priorities 2025/26

Our drive for improvement, agreed actions, aims and progress at the end of 2025/26 for each quality priority are detailed below.

Patient safety quality priorities

1. Learning from incidents, safeguarding concerns, claims and inquests.

This quality priority focused on strengthening the organisations' ability to respond to and learn from incidents, safeguarding concerns, claims and inquests, in order to improve outcomes for our patients while embedding the principles of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) across UHT.

Aim;

The aim of this quality priority was to align and strengthen patient safety processes across University Hospitals Tees (UHT). In January 2025, an external evaluation of the implementation of PSIRF was commissioned across both Trusts. The evaluation report was received in July 2025 and set out recommendations to support the development of a consistent UHT wide approach to patient safety grounded in best practice.

In addition to promoting alignment of patient safety processes, the recommendations reinforced the core PSIRF principles of proportionality and focus on learning and improvement. This included strengthening organisational responses to patient safety incidents as well as aligning and improving Duty of Candour processes and arrangements to ensure compassionate engagement with patients, relatives and staff affected by patient safety incidents.

The recommendations from the external evaluation were incorporated into this quality priority and informed the Patient Safety Team's workplan, however, whilst some actions could be delivered within the year, others would require a longer timeframe and therefore have been extended into 2026/27.

Alongside the external review recommendations, the quality priority also included actions to further develop the organisation's ability to triangulate quality and safety data to identify potential areas for improvement, and to improve patient safety-related metrics within the NHS Staff Survey. Progress in these areas is also recognised as longer term, particularly in the context of significant organisational change.

Progress and achievements:

During 2025/26, eight of the 16 recommendations from the external PSIRF evaluation were completed. Notable progress was made in strengthening Duty of Candour arrangements across UHT, including the standardisation of audit processes to monitoring compliance with all statutory elements of the Duty of Candour.

There was also positive progress in aligning patient safety approaches across the organisation. This work required not only changes to process but also cultural change, to support a consistent and learning-focussed approach to patient safety.

Summary and forward plan:

Work is ongoing to finalise a UHT wide Patient Safety Incident Framework Plan (PSIRP), which will set out the organisation's patient safety priorities for the next two years. Analysis is currently underway to review the learning and improvements arising from the previous PSIRPs.

There will continue to be a strong focus on thematic analysis of incidents and on delivering measurable and sustainable improvements with the aim of reducing the need for learning responses to individual incidents where themes and system issues are already understood.

The significant organisational changes across UHT have limited the ability to fully evaluate the effectiveness of some of the previously implemented initiatives. This evaluation work will be undertaken in 2026/27 to ensure that learning is embedded and that improvements deliver meaningful and sustained benefits for patient safety.

2. Medication safety and optimising the benefits of MA.

This quality priority focused on improving medication safety through the continued optimisation of Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (EPMA), and on maximising organisational learning from medication incidents.

Medicines underpin almost every patient pathway, supporting care from admission and inpatient treatment through to discharge and ongoing management in the community. Nationally, over one billion prescription items are dispensed annually across the UK, with acute hospitals administering millions of medication doses each year.

For example, since the implementation of electronic prescribing in 2022, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) has recorded over 17 million medication doses via the EPMA platform, *Better Meds*. This represents a significant step forward in the safety, quality and efficiency of medicines management across the organisation. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) have achieved similar steps including its implementation of EPMA 2.0 to improve the range of medicines that can be administered to include IV injections and infusions.

Aims:

During 2025/26, this quality priority aimed to:

- Further optimise EPMA to improve patient safety.
- Agree and embed key medicines performance indicators across University Hospitals Tees (UHT).
- Promote the use of EPMA data to support clinically led quality improvement.
- Monitor and improve prescribing practice and medicines administration.

In addition, we aimed to strengthen learning from medication incidents and utilise digital capability to deliver tangible improvements in patient safety. This has included:

- Strengthening clinical protocols to support more consistent, evidence-based practice
- Improving allergy documentation and medicines interaction alerts, reducing the risk of medication related harm.
- Responding rapidly to national safety priorities through timely digital updates and enhancements.
- Demonstrating a reduction in harm from medication related events following digitalisation of prescribing and administration.

Collectively, these improvements support safer prescribing, more reliable medicines administration, and a more resilient medicines governance framework.

Quality Improvement Collaboration

In 2025/26, STHFT was one of 15 NHS trusts selected to join the first Specialist Pharmacy Services (SPS) national Quality Improvement collaborative cohort. This multidisciplinary programme focused on improving the delivery of time critical medicines to inpatients. Participation supported improved understanding and utilisation of medicines data to inform service improvement.

Digitalisation of Critical Care

EPMA was successfully implemented across all STHFT Critical Care areas in 2025, marking a significant milestone in patient safety, clinical efficiency and digital maturity. This included General ITU, Cardiac ITU, High Dependency and Spinal High Dependency Unit. Close collaboration between digital and clinical teams enabled a safe transition from paper-based prescribing within a complex, high acuity environment.

This implementation has improved prescription clarity, removed risks associated with transcription during patient transfers, and enhanced the timeliness of medicines administration. Realtime audit and strengthened clinical decision support for high-risk medicines have further enhanced medicines governance. This achievement provides strong assurance and supports progression to the final phase of the current digital medicines programme, including planned implementation within neonatal services. This will represent all inpatient areas as being on EPMA in line with NTHFT.

Clinical Pharmacy Services

Medicines reconciliation remains a core patient safety function. At STHFT, pharmacy teams reviewed medicines for over 90% of patients admitted during the year, with almost 50% reviewed within 24 hours of admission, both showing year on year improvement.

Clinical pharmacy reviews also continue to increase, with pharmacists reviewing over 5,000 patients in a single month. The most recent biannual intervention audit recorded 353 clinical interventions in one day, equating to an estimated £46,000 in daily cost avoidance through prevention of medication related harm.

The introduction of a prescribing pharmacist role within the JCUH discharge lounge is projected to deliver at least 507 interventions annually, supporting safer discharges and improved patient experience. This role has been positively received by both staff and patients.

At NTHFT, medicines reconciliation performance declined during the second half of the year due to workforce challenges (Figure 1). This has been addressed through additional recruitment, with new staff expected in post by Q2 2026/27.

Service developments at NTHFT included the introduction of pharmacist prescriber roles within lipid clinics, expected to positively impact waiting times and patient outcomes.

Additional safety initiatives at NTHFT included enhanced medicines procurement planning, expanded homecare services, use of *PharmOutcomes* to support safer discharge, and introduction of 'Good Catch' and Medicines Safety Star initiatives to promote reporting and learning.

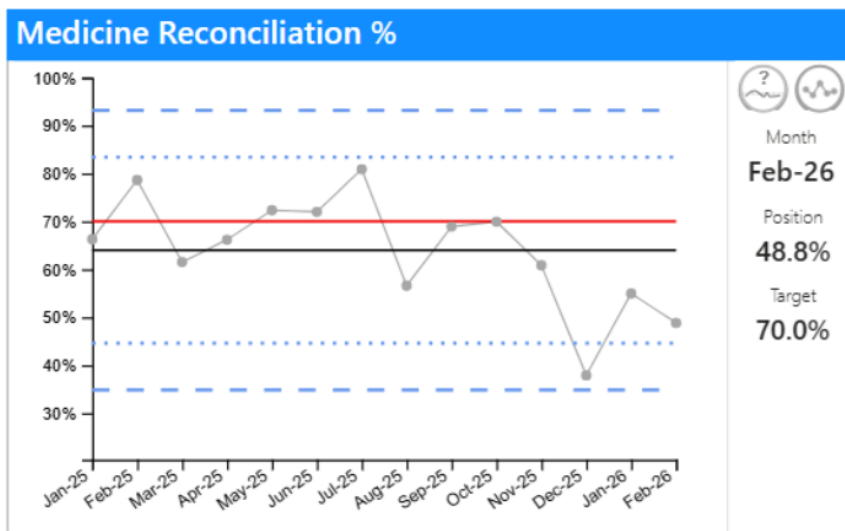


Figure 1 - NTHFT Medicines Reconciliation as % of Admissions

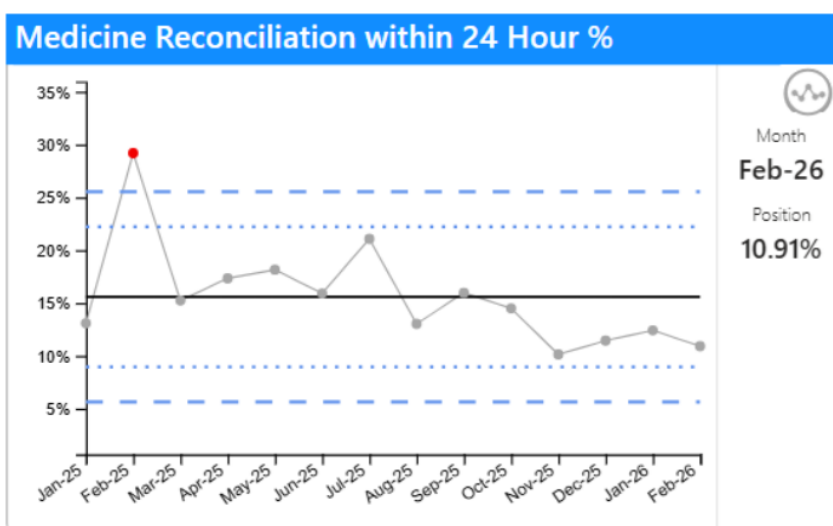


Figure 2 - NTHFT Medicines Completed within 24hrs as % of Admissions

Antimicrobial Stewardship

- **Regional performance:** In January 2026, STHFT achieved the lowest total antibiotic consumption regionally for the first time since 2019.
- **National alignment:** STHFT remains on track against the national ambition to reduce antibiotic consumption by 5% by 2029, with only 0.1% increase against 2019/20 baseline. For NTHFT total antibiotic use increased by 8.2% compared with baseline.
- **AWaRe prescribing:** Use of Access antibiotics increased from 50% to 52% in STHFT, with corresponding reductions in Watch and Reserve agents. NTHFT increased to 60.2%.
- **Digital support:** Eolas, the digital clinical guideline platform, now has over 1,500 users across UHT. The integrated antimicrobial guideline and high use resources (e.g. Hypokalaemia guideline) demonstrate strong staff engagement and clinical value.
- Improvements were demonstrated in Start Smart Then Focus audits and guideline adherence.

Penicillin De-labelling

STHFT has received national recognition for an innovative pharmacist and pharmacy technician led penicillin de-labelling service. Using EPMA to identify suitable patients, eligible individuals are offered testing in controlled settings. Delivery via a Patient Group Direction (PGD) model

represents an innovative and nationally commended approach, and a business case to expand the service, including at NTHFT has been produced.

Medicines Value Programme

Both NTHFT and STHFT have adopted principles from the regional Medicines Value Programme, establishing a UHT Medicines Value Group chaired by the Medical Director. The UHT-wide Medicines Value Policy supports clinical effectiveness, cost efficiency and patient centred outcomes, supported by an exceptionality process where best value medicines are not prescribed.

Medicines Safety KPIs

Medicines Safety Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are routinely monitored across UHT, including medication related never events and the proportion of incidents resulting in moderate harm and above.

Medicines Safety and Incident Learning

During 2025/26, NTHFT reported a medication incident rate of approximately 6.2%, with no medication related never events. Incidents resulting in moderate harm accounted for approximately 1%, with no severe harm or deaths recorded. STHFT also reported no medication-related never events.

Medication incident themes are reviewed regularly, with learning shared across medicines governance and patient safety forums. Improvement initiatives included:

- Redesign of the Medicines Administration Record to support safer insulin use.
- Standardisation of EPMA order sets aligned with regional palliative care guidance.
- Enhancements to electronic discharge summaries, supported by staff education and the development of visual prompts and posters to support learning and improvement (Figure 3)
- Introduction of hospice liaison support to improve end of life prescribing and transfers of care

Key Quality Points to consider for Discharge letters	
Discharge letter - Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check you have the correct patient record. • These are letters, the wording should be structured, clear, with punctuation and all abbreviations explained. • Ensure it is written so the patient, family or carers can understand? <i>Remember the average reading age in Teesside is 7-8 years of age!</i> • Have you detailed all surgical/invasive procedures completed, if applicable - and summarised the post-op instructions? • Have you given clear, realistic information about recovery and convalescence? • Has safety netting advice been given - state clearly, what advice was given? • Have you given the patient a "sick note" - if yes, how long for? • Clarity is key - be brief, accurate and clear without duplication. • Are instructions for other Healthcare professionals clear? • Are the follow up arrangements clear? • Patients should not be given incomplete or unapproved discharge letters
Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure any referrals identified during the admission have been made and are in process - include in the summary with the reason for the referral and the urgency • Consultant to Consultant referrals or referrals to specialist services should be made directly through the appropriate route rather than ask the GP to refer which can impact on good communication, triage and timeliness
Outstanding tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ask community colleagues to follow up outstanding Acute Trust test results • Identify what is outstanding - follow any up if available and record action taken in the records; what are the plans for any outstanding results? Don't assume they have been reviewed, acted upon and the patient is aware of them. • If a result is urgent ensure there is a mechanism in place for following it up! • Provide clear and meaningful instructions if actions are required from the results i.e. repeat in 3 months or refer if symptoms recur.
Medications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Discharge medication page with current medications • Check for any transcription errors and the accuracy of timescales for medications. i.e. Tinzaparin for 3 months - is this correct against our guidance or the patient's plan? • Clear instructions for GPs and Community Pharmacists about medications. If discharging the patient on OPAT - ensure the referral has been made and monitoring is arranged as outlined in the protocol. • Complete Discharge Medication questionnaire accurately to identify changes in medication i.e. stopped, held medication or new medications, dose changes & treatment length etc...
Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you completed all relevant sections on the "Clinical Summary" page? • Confirm all the relevant information is updated with current information - diagnosis, treatment and co-morbidities. • Ensure Acute Kidney Injury and Palliative Care detail sections are completed appropriately. • Selecting "Clinically complete" allows the admin teams to authorise the letter ONLY once the patient is discharged off Trakcare - IT CANNOT BE AUTHORISED WITHOUT ALL BEING COMPLETED • Discharge letters can ONLY be sent electronically to GPs once the letter is authorised. These should be received within 24 hours and is critical for continuity of patient care.
Finally...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this was your discharge letter, or someone in your family, would you be happy with the content and the accuracy?

Discharge letters Key Points - Final 30.09.2025

Figure 3 - Guidance on producing high quality discharge letters

Time Critical Medicines

Omission of time critical medicines (TCMs) was identified as a key risk at UHT. A UHT awareness campaign introduced the 'TIMELY' approach, supported by clinical tools, flowcharts and patient facing resources.

Following implementation, incidents at NTHFT that highlighted omitted TCM reduced by approximately 50% and this improvement has been sustained across subsequent quarters (Figure 4). Further work includes targeted education, EPMA alerts and pathway optimisation for high risk conditions such as Parkinson's disease.

At STHFT data was planned to be pulled directly from the EPMA system, however due to challenges with the dataset, this has only become available in March 2026. Further work will be undertaken in 2026/2027 to test the changes made at STHFT.

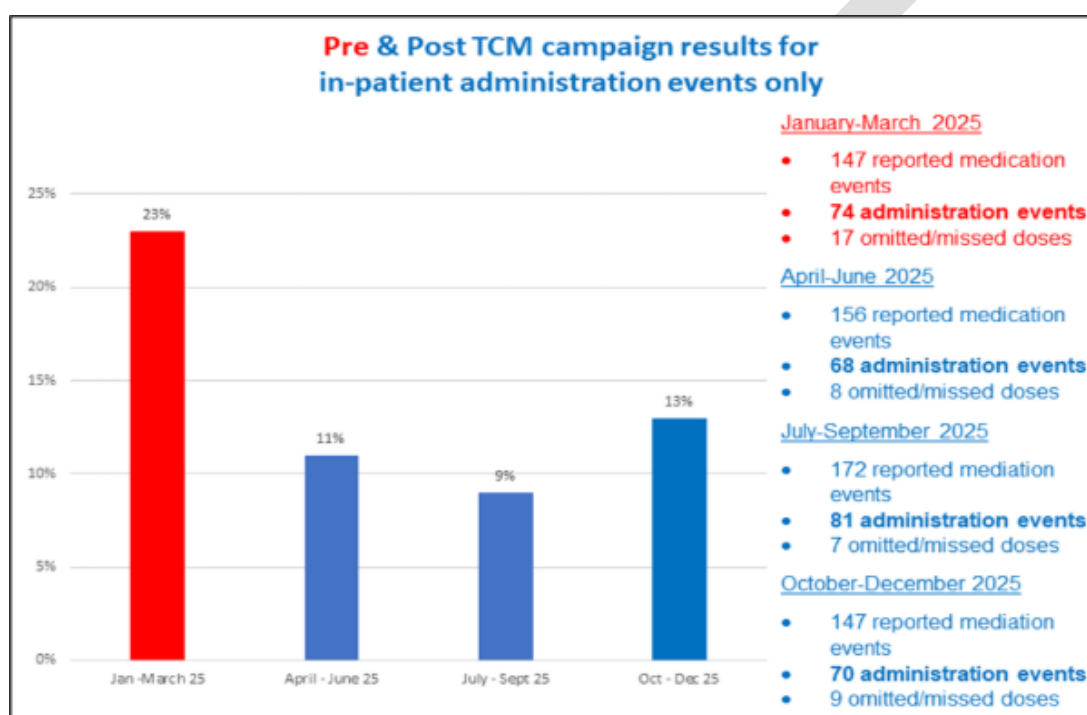


Figure 4 - % of incidents that related to omitted TCM at NTHFT

Summary and forward plan:

Building on progress during 2025/26, priorities for the coming year include:

- I. Expanding use of the Eolas digital platform to consolidate UHT wide clinical guidelines
- II. Strengthening and aligning medicines governance arrangements across UHT
- III. Embedding shared pharmacy performance dashboards to support benchmarking and continuous improvement

These actions will support safer medicines use, improved patient outcomes, and more consistent delivery of high-quality care across UHT.

3. Reducing the risk of acquiring healthcare associated infections

This quality priority reflects our commitment to reducing the risk of patients acquiring healthcare-associated infections (HCAIs), in line with NHS England Standard Contract objectives. These include *Clostridioides difficile* infection (CDI), methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and Gram-negative bloodstream infections (including *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella* and *Pseudomonas*). Through this work, we aim to improve patient outcomes while strengthening and

embedding effective infection prevention and control (IPC) practices across University Hospitals Tees (UHT).

Healthcare-associated infections (HCAI) can occur either as a direct result of medical or surgical interventions or as a consequence of contact with a healthcare environment. The term HCAI encompasses a wide range of infections, the most well-known being MRSA and CDI. HCAs pose a significant risk to patients, staff and visitors and can lead to increased morbidity, mortality and length of hospital stay. They also place a substantial financial burden on the NHS. As such, infection prevention and control remain a core priority for both the NHS and our organisation.

HCAIs are estimated to cost the NHS approximately £1 billion each year, with around £56 million of this incurred after patients are discharged from hospital. In addition to the financial impact, each infection results in increased use of NHS resources and can have a lasting impact on patients' health and wellbeing.

Aims:

During 2025/26, we aimed to:

- Agree clear HCAI and IPC operational priorities across UHT.
- Standardise reporting mechanisms for HCAIs across the organisation.
- Promote access to enhanced learning and education at the point of care.
- Undertake peer reviews across UHT and within the wider region to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Develop and implement a clear audit programme with robust reporting structures to enable timely organisational feedback.
- Monitor all HCAIs across UHT to identify trends and areas of concern, with targeted improvement programmes implemented where increased incidence is identified.
- Work collaboratively with antimicrobial teams across both organisations to strengthen and support the Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) strategy (Antimicrobial stewardship is a systematic approach to educate and support health care professionals to follow evidence-based guidelines for prescribing and administering antimicrobials).
- Provide clear governance and assurance through established operational and strategic reporting structures.
- Ensure all HCAIs are reviewed through the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF), supported by a weekly multidisciplinary review panel in collaboration with the patient safety team.
- Develop focused elements of the IPC operational plan aligned to Standard Contract objectives, led by designated members of the IPC team.
- Regularly review, update and deliver the IPC toolbox training programme, with a focus on HCAIs and core IPC practices.
- Continue to report HCAI and IPC performance and key messages through quality and safety governance forums and senior leadership meetings.

Progress and achievements:

During 2025/26, the following progress was made:

- All HCAI cases were reviewed on a weekly basis, with key learning shared through established forums, bulletins and newsletters.
- IPC patient pathways and care plans were developed within the electronic patient record (EPR), with successful implementation for CDI and MRSA.

- The organisational screening programme for organisms such as MRSA was fully reviewed and updated.
- Care pathways for invasive devices were reviewed across UHT, supported by a dedicated focus group with IPC input.
- The 2025/26 audit programme was successfully delivered, including environmental audits of clinical areas, commode and sluice audits, and hand hygiene audits.
- Dedicated respiratory IPC support was provided over the winter period, with updated clinical pathways developed and implemented.
- The FIT testing service at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was further developed, including workforce expansion, investment in filtration equipment to enhance staff safety, and implementation of systems to enable information upload directly into the Electronic Staff Record (ESR).
- A range of AMS-related activities were delivered, including education sessions, ward rounds and shared learning events, alongside the re-establishment of the Antimicrobial Working Group during 2025/26.
- Several wards across UHT underwent decant and deep cleaning as part of our ongoing programme to reduce HCAI risk.
- Audit processes were further aligned across services, including bespoke audits within theatres and the Emergency Department, supported by the development of audits within the Healthcare Guardian electronic system.
- A comprehensive IPC education plan was delivered throughout 2025/26, including the three-day IPC course, enhancement of the link practitioner programme, and targeted intensive support to clinical areas where required.
- Ongoing IPC support was provided to care homes during 2025/26, supported by additional Local Authority investment and a series of well-attended education events across Teesside.
- Compliance with mandatory submission of HCAI surveillance data to UKHSA national systems was maintained throughout the year.
- A comprehensive review of IPC policies across UHT was undertaken and concluded at the IPC Strategic Group in February 2026.
- Governance arrangements for IPC were reviewed and strengthened, resulting in improved alignment between IPC team meetings, the IPC Operational Group and the IPC Strategic Group.

Summary and forward plan:

While some improvements were achieved in reducing HCAI rates during 2024/25 and 2025/26, challenges remain. These will continue to be addressed through a detailed improvement plan and focused external support as we move into the coming year.

Key priorities for 2026/27 include:

- Continued implementation of IPC pathways and care plans within the electronic patient record as capacity allows.
- Further development and embedding of the electronic audit programme to strengthen assurance and feedback.
- Ongoing collaborative work across UHT to align FIT testing processes and enhance recording within the Electronic Staff Record system.
- Continued strengthening of Antimicrobial Stewardship through the Antimicrobial Working Group and the appointment of a new Clinical Lead for AMS.
- Identification of sustainable options for a dedicated decant facility to support enhanced deep cleaning of clinical environments.

- Continued work to align and streamline IPC processes, supporting the development of a consistent UHT-wide approach to infection prevention and control.

Clinical effectiveness quality priorities

1. Learning and improving patient outcomes from clinical practice and clinical audits.

This quality priority focussed on strengthening the organisation's approach to continuous learning and improvement in clinical practice, with the aim of improving patient outcomes through systematic review of compliance with evidence-based standards. Delivery was supported through the use of clinical audit, participation in national programmes such as Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT), implementation of NICE Guidance and improved systems for triangulating clinical effectiveness data.

To support delivery of best possible clinical outcomes, the organisation sought to ensure that robust and consistent processes were developed and embedded to support continuous learning. This work was underpinned by improved access to data, shared reporting mechanisms and strengthened governance arrangements designed to promote consistent s best practice across University Hospital Tees (UHT).

Aims:

During 2025/26 the organisation aimed to:

- Monitor progress with the implementation of, and compliance with, relevant NICE Guidance.
- Engage in regional GIRFT reviews and demonstrate improvement against agreed recommendations.
- Participate in mandatory national clinical audits, sharing local results and developing and implementing improvement plans where required.
- Develop common datasets and systems to support shared reporting and organisational learning.

Progress and achievements:

NICE guidance: baseline compliance

A baseline assessment of local compliance with all relevant NICE guidance was undertaken during 2025/26, led by an identified clinical lead within each speciality (target: 100%).

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- 99.4% (474 of 477) of relevant NICE guidance was confirmed as compliant.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- 74.7% (931 of 1,246) of relevant NICE guidance was confirmed as compliant

This provided a strong baseline position at both Trusts, particularly given the high volume of relevant NICE guidance applicable across clinical services.

NICE guidance: audit evidence of compliance

An audit was undertaken during 2025/26 to identify where contemporaneous local audit evidence of compliance against NICE guidance was available (target: 100%).

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- 47.4% (226 of 477) of relevant NICE guidance had evidence of local audit compliance.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- 31.3% (390 of 1,246) of relevant NICE guidance had recent evidence of local audit compliance.

The volume of relevant NICE guidelines, particularly at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, presents a challenge for clinical teams in maintaining up-to-date audit evidence. Where services operate against a large number of guidance, a pragmatic and risk-based approach has been adopted, prioritising audit activity where NICE guidance is associated with higher clinical risk or known variation in practice.

NICE guidance within Clinical Audit Forward Plans

Evidence was sought during the year to confirm that NICE guidance was appropriately prioritised within local Clinical Audit Forward Plans.

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- 100% of forward plans were submitted
- All submitted plans demonstrated planned audit activity mapped to NICE guidance

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- 91% of forward plans were submitted
- Five services did not submit plans
- No patient safety risk was identified as a result of non-submission
- All submitted plans demonstrate planned activity mapped to NICE Guidance

A standardised Clinical Audit Forward Plan template for 2026/27 has been developed and approved through the Clinical Effectiveness Group and is currently with the service senior management teams for completion.

Engagement with GIRFT

Three GIRFT reviews took place covering both Trusts during 2025.26:

- *Vascular Specialist Services Review* – South Tees Specialist Hub (28 August 2025)
- *Pancreatic Oncology Implementation Review* – Newcastle-upon-Tyne Network (11 February 2026)
- *Chronic Pain Virtual System Review* – North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (5 March 2026)

All reviews were well represented by clinical colleagues from across University Hospitals Tees, and local improvement plans were subsequently submitted.

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- Eight GIRFT reviews in 2025/26 required improvement plans. Five of eight plans have been received to date.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- Nine GIRFT reviews in 2024/25 required improvement plans.
- Improvement plans have been requested.

During 2025/26, University Hospitals Tees underwent significant changes to governance meeting structures. Legacy single Trust meetings were stood down and replaced with UHT-wide arrangements. This transition resulted in a temporary pause in the review of GIRFT reports and actions.

From April 2026, GIRFT reports and associated action plans will be overseen by the newly established GIRFT and Audit Panel (GAP), which will systematically work through the current backlog of reports requiring review.

Participation in mandatory national clinical audits

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- Participation in 64 relevant national audits during 2025/26.
- Eight confirmed non-submissions and one reduced submission.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- Participation in 80 relevant national audits during 2025/26.
- Seven confirmed non-submissions and two reduced submissions.

Participation is monitored through the quarterly Clinical Effectiveness Report to the Quality Oversight Group and Quality Assurance Committee. The Clinical Effectiveness team continues to work with identified audit leads where challenges exist, most commonly relating to workforce capacity and the availability of appropriate data systems.

Sharing and acting on national clinical audit results (presentation within four months of publication)

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

- Seven of 29 national audit reports published in 2025/26 were presented centrally within four months.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- Nine of 29 national audit reports published in 2025/26 were presented centrally within four months

As part of the revised governance framework, all national clinical audit reports will be reviewed through the GIRFT and Audit Panel (GAP) from April 2026, addressing the current backlog and improving timeliness of review.

Development of improvement plans

All national clinical audit reports presented centrally were supported by a local improvement plan.

- Seven of seven reports for North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
- Nine of nine reports for South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Development of common systems

- **NICE guidance:** A UHT Clinical Effectiveness subgroup is reviewing existing systems at both Trusts to develop a specification for a shared digital application within the Healthcare Guardian risk management platform.
- **Clinical audit:** A prototype audit application within Healthcare Guardian is being developed for audits requiring longitudinal data collection. Alternative software solutions are also being assessed for short-duration 'snapshot' audits.
- **GIRFT:** The UHT-wide GIRFT and Audit Panel (GAP), chaired by a Deputy Medical Director, has been established to provide a consistent oversight of the GIRFT programme from April 2026.

Unified Clinical Effectiveness Policy

As part of the broader review of governance arrangements, the UHT Clinical Effectiveness Group was established in December 2025, followed by the GIRFT and Audit Panel in April 2026. Once these arrangements are fully embedded, a revised, unified Clinical Effectiveness Policy for University Hospitals Tees will be developed, with the Chairs of these groups acting as joint authors.

Summary and forward plan:

Since the Quality Priorities were set in April 2025, North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have undergone significant horizontal integration of clinical teams within UHT. While this integration will deliver improved consistency and quality of care over time, it has required substantial effort to redesign and embed new systems of practice and governance.

The impact of this transition is evident in aspects of delivery against this quality priority, particularly during periods when legacy governance arrangements were stood down and replaced with new UHT wide structures. However, as the new governance framework becomes fully embedded, the organisation anticipates improved pace, consistency, and assurance during 2026/27.

2. Mortality review processes and learning from deaths.

It is accepted that for some people cared for in our services, death is an inevitable outcome. For most patients in our care and their families the experience will be excellent, but it is important to recognise that at times of significant pressure the quality of care may be impacted and lead to a poor experience. Therefore, we follow the National Guidance on Learning from Deaths (2017), and both Trusts have a policy on responding to deaths which defines how we review, where necessary commission detailed investigations and learn from the deaths of people who die in our care.

Our learning processes include working alongside the local medical examiners (MEs) who scrutinise the causes of all inpatient deaths in the Trust which are not going to be investigated by the coroner. This independent scrutiny provides additional safeguards for the public and an opportunity for the bereaved to raise concerns and ask questions to someone with significant medical knowledge, but who was not involved in the care of the person who died.

Despite these agreed policies and processes we recognised that there was still more we could do to refine and enhance our approach and processes to learning from deaths.

To review and strengthen the mortality review processes, ensuring that learning from deaths is used to improve patient outcomes in both Trusts by:

- Undertaking a benchmarking exercise to compare processes and performance metrics.
- Developing a standardised approach to completing mortality reviews.
- Considering whether specialty mortality reviews can be captured on the same electronic system, bringing this information alongside the Structured Judgement Reviews (SJR) recorded by the corporate mortality reviewers.
- Develop a consistent way of recording and reporting Learning from Deaths across both sites to ensure learning is identified and where necessary, improvement made.
- Draft a framework for the completion of Mortality & Morbidity (M&M) reviews, clearly identifying M&M Leads for each service.
- Continue to work with the wider Quality Team to ensure that themes emerging from learning from deaths are triangulated against data from Patient Experience, Patient Safety and Clinical Effectiveness and that improvement work is undertaken to address the themes.
- Develop a robust and integrated Learning from Deaths Team across UHT.
- Maintain a diverse team of reviewers to continue a multidisciplinary approach.
- Increase the number of deaths subject to SJR, particularly at North Tees and Hartlepool Trust, aiming to complete a review of 20% of all deaths.
- Specialty death reviews will be undertaken (LEDER, paediatrics, perinatal) and learning identified and acted upon.
- SJRs will be completed without undue delay.
- Continue to ensure there are proportionate learning responses following the outcomes from mortality reviews in line with the Trust's Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF).
- Review Learning from Deaths Policies (NTHFT & STHFT) and develop a UHT Learning from Deaths Policy.
- Monitor the number of in-hospital deaths weekly to highlight unexpected changes in mortality.
- Formalise decision making on learning responses when a concern has been indicated.
- Increase opportunities for triangulation of learning and agreement of processes.
- Ensure that learning from the Medical Examiner (ME) is shared within UHT.

Progress and achievements:

- We have undertaken a benchmarking review and compared processes across STHFT and NTHFT and identified that additional resource and refinement of processes are needed to ensure a consistent approach to learning from deaths and that the provision is adequate to meet the framework standards as indicated in the National Learning Guidance on Learning from Deaths (2017). A Lead Learning from Deaths Reviewer has been appointed and additional structure and resource to increase and strengthen the team has been agreed.
- One standardised template for recording SJRs is in development.
- A standardised approach to mortality reviews within Clinical Service Units is yet to be agreed.
- A combined Learning from Deaths quarterly report using one template has been achieved which includes learning from the ME, child deaths and LEDER.
- A weekly report on the number of deaths in both Trusts is available and shared, as are any concerns from SJRs.
- A combined Learning from Deaths Policy is in draft and awaiting consultation and agreement.
- A combined Learning from Deaths Group for UHT is in development; a chair and reporting infrastructure into the Patient Safety Group has been agreed.

Summary and forward plan:

During 2025/26 the aims identified to strengthen mortality review processes have been monitored, modified where necessary, and implemented where possible. Good progress has been achieved, although some progress has been delayed due to identification of resource and funding sources.

As there is now agreement on resource, most of the improvement actions which are outstanding, will be achieved at pace, specifically:

- increased staffing in the Learning from Deaths Team and merge to be one combined team to support both Trusts
- increase in the number of reviewers able to undertake SJRs
- increase at North Tees and Hartlepool Trust the percentage of SJRs completed and the sharing of learning
- development of the Learning from Deaths Group which will oversee the UHT Learning from Deaths Policy and associated processes
- approval of the UHT Learning from Deaths Policy and associated processes.

3. Shared decision making and goals of care

This quality priority outlines our commitment to embedding Shared Decision Making (SDM) as part of our patients' care pathway.

Patient autonomy and active involvement are central to modern healthcare. SDM ensures that individuals are fully informed, supported, and empowered to participate in decisions about their care, including choosing whether to proceed with proposed treatments. This represents a shift

from a paternalistic model to a collaborative partnership, reflecting both statutory requirements and our organisational quality priorities.

The legal context for SDM has been strengthened by the Montgomery v Lanarkshire Health Board judgment, which redefined the professional duty of informed consent. The Health and Care Act 2022 further reinforces the requirement for providers to support informed choice and ensure that information is communicated in an accessible and meaningful way. These principles are integral to reducing health inequalities and maximising clinical outcomes.

To standardise our approach, we have aligned our pathways with NICE Guideline NG197: Shared Decision Making. Embedding these evidence-based principles ensures SDM is not an add-on to care, but a core component of clinical effectiveness and person-centered practice.

Aims:

For 2025/26, our aim was to systematically embed SDM as a sustainable, “business as usual” model. By strengthening governance, strategic leadership, and clinical capability, the Trust has worked to formalise SDM as an expected standard of care across all services.

An SDM Improvement Plan was developed and ratified following engagement with patients, staff, and wider stakeholders. Key objectives included:

- Preparing patients and the public to understand and engage in SDM.
- Training and equipping staff with the skills and knowledge to deliver effective SDM.
- Reviewing commissioned services and pathways to identify priority areas.
- Strengthening leadership and supportive systems to enable reliable delivery of SDM.
- We also worked closely with clinical teams to develop procedure-specific consent forms, ensuring information on risks, benefits, and alternatives is personalised and supported by high-quality decision aids.

Progress and achievements:

Over the past year significant progress has been achieved in the following areas:

1. Supportive Systems & Processes

The Trusts approved a new shared decision-making strategy, aligning organisational culture with NICE NG197.

Oversight has been strengthened through:

- Appointment of a director-level sponsor for SDM.
- A Patient Director with VCSE expertise acting as non-executive champion.
- Integration of collaboRATE (an audit tool used to assess patient experience in Shared Decision making) and baseline assessment tools into audit processes to support ongoing quality assurance.

2. Prepared Patients

We have expanded our patient-facing resources to support informed choice and proactive engagement. This includes:

- Trust-wide use of “Ask 3 Questions” and BRAN (Benefits, Risks, Alternatives, doing Nothing) materials.
- Incorporation of SDM principles into appointment letters and Patient Information Leaflets.
- Launch of a dedicated SDM webpage on the Trust website and “Choices” platform, offering accessible, evidence-based information and decision support.

3. Trained Teams

To build a sustainable, skilled workforce, we have developed a comprehensive training infrastructure aligned with NICE NG197. Achievements include:

- Establishing a cohort of accredited SDM trainers.
- Training more than 200 staff across diverse clinical services.
- Developing a bespoke UHT SDM e-learning module.
- Co-producing an educational video with senior leaders, clinicians, and service users, including guidance on the legal principles arising from the Montgomery judgment.



To embed SDM within consent processes, we have:

- Initiated a full review of the Consent to Treatment Policy, ensuring SDM is integral to clinical consent.
- Developed a centralised repository of national and internal Patient Decision Aids (PDAs).
- Completed PDA integration at North Tees, with implementation at South Tees underway.
- Submitted a business case for Digital Consent, supporting an 18-month transition from paper-based to digital consent workflows.



Routine clinical audits continue to provide oversight and support continuous improvement

Summary and forward plan:

During 2025/26, we have embedded SDM as a systemic clinical standard, integrating supportive systems, patient preparation, workforce capability, and digital infrastructure in line with NICE NG197. These developments ensure compliance with the statutory duties of the Health and Care Act 2022, positioning SDM as part of everyday clinical practice.

Our forward priorities include:

- Expanding training to include advanced communication skills for risk, probability, and uncertainty.
- Ensuring all staff have access to high-quality learning materials and decision aids in multiple formats.
- Using collaboRATE data to provide feedback to individual clinicians and support continuous improvement in SDM delivery.

UHT is moving from implementation toward national best practice, ensuring that shared decision making is a consistent, measurable right for every service user.

Patient experience quality priorities

1. Patient feedback and continuous improvement in care and treatment.

This quality priority sets out our commitment to proactively seeking patient, carer and family feedback and ensuring that this feedback leads to continuous improvement in the care and treatment we provide.

Aims:

- To provide equitable opportunities for patients, carers and families to proactively share feedback on services.
- To ensure services are responsive to, and meet, the needs of the local population.

Progress and achievements:

The Patient Involvement Facilitator has continued to develop the involvement bank and strengthen links with key community groups. Members of the involvement bank have provided feedback on a range of patient information materials, including posters and leaflets. This involvement has been positively received by both staff and participants and has supported improvements to the quality and accessibility of patient-facing information.

The Good Practice Report has now been embedded within the monthly, quarterly and annual Patient Experience Reports, strengthening oversight and enabling learning to be shared more effectively.

During 2025/26 the management of patient information was harmonised to cover both Trusts. The Information Review Group ensures a consistent approach to the oversight and approval of patient information.

The Discharge Task and Finish group has continued to meet and progress key improvement workstreams. A twelve-month review has been completed to identify themes from patient feedback alongside CQC enquiries and safeguarding referrals. A University Hospitals Tees Group has been developed to ensure continuity and good practice is shared to improve the discharge process across both sites.

Formfinity platform is now in place at NTHFT to capture the Friends and Family Test (FFT) responses. At STHFT the transition from the Meridian platform to the Healthcare Guardian platform is complete and embedded.

Summary and forward plan:

A presentation is in development which will enable the Clinical Service Units (CSUs) to provide updates on patient experience and involvement activities at the Experience of Care Council monthly meeting. This will highlight the good practice ongoing with the CSUs and provide the opportunity to share good practice.

To ensure continuity, both NTHFT and STHFT will move to the Healthcare Guardian platform for recording patient surveys and family and friends test (FFT) responses. This will ensure that patients are provided with the opportunity to give feedback at any point during their care and treatment.

2. Responding in a timely way to complaints & implementing quality improvements.

This quality priority sets out our commitment to responding to complaints, in a timely manner, supporting patients, carers and families through difficult circumstances, and implementing service improvements based on learning from complaints.

Aims:

- To provide timely responses to complaints, meeting agreed the timescales with patient, carer and families and complying with NHS Compliance Standards.
- To provide support to patients, carers and families during complex or distressing complaint investigations, including the use of Family Liaison Officers (FLO'S).
- To ensure continuous improvement to services through learning from complaints.

Progress and achievements:

Timeframes for complaint responses, including compliance with agreed extensions, continue to be monitored, with weekly escalation to the Quality and Safety Panel where required. Oversight is provided through the Experience of Care Council, which reports to the Quality Assurance Committee, ensuring appropriate governance and assurance.

As part of the University Hospitals Tees (UHT) organisational restructure and associated accountability framework, there is a clear ambition to strengthen shared ownership of quality oversight within Clinical Service Units (CSUs). This includes local responsibility for the monitoring and management of complaints and extensions, supporting timely responses, learning and continuous improvement.

The target for reducing the number of complaints open longer than six months has not yet been achieved. As a result, specific targets for 2026/27 will be agreed with the senior leadership teams within each CSU.

For complex complaints, the allocation of Family Liaison Officer's (FLOs) is considered and offered where additional support and communication would benefit patients, carer and families. The introduction of a dedicated system to identify FLO involvement has improved oversight and monitoring of their use. dropdown box identifies where FLOs have been allocated to a complaint, aimed to improve the monitoring of the allocation of FLOs for complaints.

The UHT Experience of Care Council was established in November 2025 replacing the two Trust specific patient experience meetings. This has facilitated and strengthened opportunities for learning and improvement.

During 2025, external audits of the complaints process were undertaken across University Hospitals Tees. Audit One completed an audit at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT), and Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC) completed an audit at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT). Both audit reports have been received and reviewed.

An action plan is being developed in response to the findings, with a focus on strengthening processes and ensuring a consistent, high-quality approach to complaint handling across the Group. This includes the development of a University Hospitals Tees-wide complaints policy and associated process revisions, aimed at improving the timeliness, quality and assurance of complaint responses.

Summary and forward plan:

The introduction of the Healthcare Guardian risk management system across University Hospitals Tees (UHT) has supported further improvement in the management of complaints. The development of complaints dashboards at Clinical Service Unit (CSU) level has improved visibility of performance, enabling teams to take ownership of complaint handling and respond more promptly to learning and emerging themes.

Complaints open for longer than six months continue to be monitored weekly at the Quality and Safety Panel to identify barriers to timely resolution and inform targeted improvement actions. Targets for 2026/27 will be agreed with CSU Associate Directors of Nursing and Heads of Nursing to drive sustained improvement in complaint timeliness and patient experience.0

3. Development and implementation of a Group Mental Health Strategy.

During 2025/26, University Hospital Tees (UHT) progressed its priority to develop and implement a joint Mental Health Strategy across South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT). The strategy aims to improve outcomes for patients experiencing mental ill health by strengthening the integration of physical and mental healthcare, enhancing staff capability, and improving organisational governance, safety and partnership working.

The UHT Mental Health Strategy was completed in April 2025 and is now in place across both Trusts. It is supported by a Mental Health Improvement Plan that sets out milestones, timescales and deliverables monitored through established governance structures.

The strategy sets out a clear vision for delivering compassionate, person-centred mental health care.

The anticipated outcomes include:

- A holistic understanding of patient needs to inform care, interventions and discharge planning
- Increased opportunities to address mental health needs alongside physical care
- Stronger organisational governance, safety and risk management
- Defined objectives and KPIs to demonstrate statutory compliance
- Improved collaboration with health, social care, voluntary and community partners
- Increased access to mental health self-help and supportive resources
- Better aligned mental and physical health pathways across both Trusts and our partners

Aims:

The following aims guided the development of the strategy:

- Review and compare STHFT and NTHFT Mental Health Strategies.
- Develop a single, UHT Mental Health Strategy.
- Identify seven priority areas for collective improvement.
- Develop a UHT Mental Health Dashboard.
- Establish a Group Mental Health Strategic Group.
- Identify mental health training requirements by professional group.
- Clarify risk-assessment tools and compliance levels.

Progress and achievements:

1. Suicide Prevention

The Teesside Suicide Prevention Plan 2024–29, developed with Middlesbrough Council and Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust, has been endorsed locally and outlines eight key actions to reduce suicide. These include improved use of data, targeted support to high-risk groups, safer crisis pathways, reducing access to means, strengthening bereavement support and embedding suicide prevention across all services.

Regionally, suicide deaths decreased across most areas between 2023 and 2024, with updates shared regularly through established reporting processes. The plan is being promoted through the UHT Mental Health Communications page.

2. Right Care Right Person (RCRP)

RCRP has been fully implemented across UHT services to ensure patients receive emergency and urgent care from the correct service. While national pressures have been reported relating to police capacity, this has not yet affected UHT. Continued engagement with police colleagues remains a priority.

3. Restraint Policies and Rapid Tranquilisation

Work is underway to align restraint related guidance across UHT to support consistent practice and minimise restrictive interventions. Key activities include:

- Developing a single SOP for restraint.
- Aligning rapid tranquilisation guidance following an audit.
- Ensuring Mental Capacity Act considerations are embedded.
- Reviewing violence and aggression policies.
- Establishing a working group to progress the documents.
- A dedicated rapid tranquilisation policy will be created for both Trusts, following CQC feedback.

4. Training and Development in Mental Health

Psychology-led training continues to be central to upskilling staff. During 2025/26:

- 1,267 training places were delivered.
- 42 bespoke sessions were provided to wards and departments.
- A new Psychology Training Lead was appointed.
- Ten priority training topics were identified based on staff feedback.
- A Trust-wide Mental Health Awareness Conference took place in October 2025.
- Promotion of training remains challenging due to limitations with the STRIVE platform; alternative solutions are being explored.

5. We Can Talk Training Platform

A small pilot of the We Can Talk training platform showed increased staff confidence in discussing suicide and mental health. However, evaluation identified a need for additional staffing to monitor quality and impact. A £30,000 charitable bid (covering platform access and an Assistant Psychologist) was unsuccessful. CPD funding options will be reviewed. Alternative training packages, including those from Bespoke Mental Health, are being evaluated.

6. Maternal Mental Health

Work with commissioners is ongoing to develop workforce models and improve mental health support for maternity patients, particularly for mild to moderate concerns where gaps exist. Recruitment to key posts is underway, and updates will be provided in Q1 2026/27. Some financial risks remain and will be reflected on the risk register.

7. Children and Young People's Mental Health

Key developments include:

- National engagement to strengthen mental health support in urgent and emergency care.
- Exploration of CPI de-escalation training.
- Consideration of a mental health champion in NTHFT Emergency Department (ED).
- Review of eating disorder pathways.
- Charitable funding for enhanced outdoor spaces in 'Children & Young People' (CYP) areas.
- Improved joint working with CAMHS and school partnerships.
- Implementation of simulation training and review of triage tools.
- Over 600 staff previously completed We Can Talk CYP training when funded by NHSE.

8. Trauma-Informed Care

A phased approach is being developed to embed trauma-informed care across UHT. Progress includes:

- Establishment of a working group.
- Appointment of a 6-month Assistant Psychologist (charitable funding).
- Identification of six development domains (governance, policies, workforce, environment, service design, evaluation).
- Commitment to embedding trauma-informed principles within the People Plan.
- Establishment of a Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP).

Work will follow national frameworks, progressing through Trauma Aware → Trauma Sensitive → Trauma Informed → Trauma Responsive stages. A communications plan and readiness assessment using the NHS Scotland tool are underway.

UHT has made strong progress in implementing its joint Mental Health Strategy during 2025/26. Key achievements include establishment of Group wide governance, significant training delivery, alignment of clinical policies, and strengthened regional partnerships. Further work during 2026/27 will focus on embedding trauma-informed care, implementing revised restraint and rapid tranquilisation guidance, progressing maternal and CYP mental health developments, and enhancing training accessibility and quality.

b. Quality priorities defined for improvement in 2026/27.

Following consultation with our Council of Governors and other stakeholders the following Quality Priorities for 2026/27 have been agreed (Table 2)

Patient Safety		
<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will optimise learning from incidents, claims, and inquests to strengthen recognition and response to the deteriorating patient, improving patient safety outcomes and reducing avoidable harm.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will improve medication safety by optimising the use of the ePMA, and strengthening antimicrobial stewardship.</p> <p>We will achieve this by evaluating and embedding learning from medication incidents to reduce avoidable harm and improve the quality of prescribing against national and local standards.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will reduce risks of C. difficile, MRSA, GNBSIs (E. coli, Klebsiella, Pseudomonas) and other infections, embedding IPC good practice.</p>
Patient Experience		
<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will utilise patient and carer feedback as part of our continuous improvement methodology, with a specific focus on improving experience in the Emergency Department and eliminating corridor care.</p>	<p>Revised Quality Priority 26/27</p> <p>We will meet national Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman complaint standards</p>	
Clinical Effectiveness		
<p>Carried forward from 25/26</p> <p>We will review and strengthen the mortality review processes, ensuring that learning from deaths is used to improve patient outcomes.</p>		

Table 2 – Proposed Quality Priorities 2026/27

2.2 Statements of assurance from the Board

1. Relevant health services

During 2024/25, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provided and/or sub-contracted 92 relevant health services. South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has reviewed all the data available to them on the quality of care in 92 of these relevant health services. The income generated by the relevant health services reviewed in 2024/25 represents 92.9% of the total income generated from the provision of relevant health services by the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust for 2024/25.

During 2024/25, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust provided and/or subcontracted 103 relevant health services. The majority of our services were provided on a direct basis, with a small number under sub-contracting or joint arrangements with others. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has reviewed all the data available to them on the quality of care in 103 of these relevant health services. The income generated by the relevant health services reviewed in 2024/25 represents 92.5% of the total income generated from the provision of relevant health services by the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust for 2024/25.

2. National clinical audits and national confidential enquiries

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) remain committed to the effective delivery of clinical audit across all services. Clinical audit and participation in national audits and confidential enquiries form a key component of the Trusts' quality assurance arrangements, supporting patient safety, continuous improvement and the delivery of high-quality patient-centred care.

Both Trusts maintain structured and co-ordinated clinical audit programmes which, are regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with national requirements and the priorities of local acute and community services.

Participation in national Clinical Audits

During 2025/26, 77 national clinical audits and three national confidential enquiries covered relevant health services that STHFT provides. During the same period, 61 national clinical audits and three national confidential enquiries covered relevant health services that NTHFT provides.

STHFT participated in 69 of the 77 national clinical audits (90%) and 100% of national confidential enquiries for which it was eligible to participate in; NTHFT participated in 53 of the 61 of national clinical audits (87%) and 100% of national confidential enquiries for which it was eligible to participate in.

The national clinical audits and national confidential enquiries that STHFT and NTHFT were eligible to participate in, and for which data collection was completed during 2025/26 are listed in Table 3, alongside the number of cases submitted to each audit or enquiry as a number or percentage of the number of registered cases required by the terms of that audit or enquiry.

Mandatory National Clinical Audits	Participation STH	% cases submitted	Participation NTH	% cases submitted
BAUS Boomerang Audit (British audit of the investigation and referral of women with recurrent urinary tract infection using recent guidance)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
BAUS EMPAST Audit (Evaluating the management pathway for suspected testicular cancer referrals)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Breast and Cosmetic Implant Registry	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
British Spine Registry	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Case Mix Programme (CMP)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Emergency Medicine QIP: Adolescent Mental Health	No	0%	No	0%
Emergency Medicine QIP: Care of Older People	No	0%	No	0%
Emergency Medicine QIP: Mental Health (Self-Harm)	No	0%	No	0%
Emergency Medicine QIP: Time Critical Medications	No	0%	No	0%
Epilepsy12: National Clinical Audit of Seizures and Epilepsies for Children and Young People	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme (FFFAP): Fracture Liaison Service Database (FLS-DB)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%

Programme (FFFAP): National Audit of Inpatient Falls (NAIF)				
Falls and Fragility Fracture Audit Programme (FFFAP): National Hip Fracture Database (NHFD)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Learning from lives and deaths of people with a learning disability and autistic people (LeDeR)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Maternal, Newborn and Infant Clinical Outcome Review Programme	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Adult Diabetes Audit (NDA): National Diabetes Core Audit	No	0%	Yes	100%
National Adult Diabetes Audit (NDA): National Diabetes Footcare Audit (NDFA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Adult Diabetes Audit (NDA): National Diabetes Inpatient Safety Audit (NDISA)	Yes	Zero harms confirmed	No	0%
National Adult Diabetes Audit (NDA): National Pregnancy in Diabetes Audit (NPID)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Adult369 Diabetes Audit (NDA) Transition (Adolescents & Young Adults) Young Type 2 Audit	No	0%	No	0%
National Adult Diabetes Audit (NDA) Gestational Diabetes Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%

National Audit of Cardiac Rehabilitation	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Audit of Care at the End of Life (NACEL)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Audit of Dementia (NAD)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Bariatric Surgery Registry	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre: National Audit of Metastatic Breast Cancer	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre: National Audit of Primary Breast Cancer	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Bowel Cancer Audit (NBOCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Kidney Cancer Audit (NKCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Lung Cancer Audit (NLCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma Audit (NNHLA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Oesophago-Gastric Cancer Audit (NOGCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Ovarian Cancer Audit (NOCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Pancreatic Cancer Audit (NPaCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Prostate Cancer Audit (NPCA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Cardiac Arrest Audit (NCAA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit (NACSA)	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A

National Cardiac Audit Programme (NCAP): National Heart Failure Audit (NHFA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Cardiac Audit Programme (NCAP): National Audit of Cardiac Rhythm Management (CRM)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Cardiac Audit Programme (NCAP): Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Audit of Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (NAPCI)	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
UK Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) Registry	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
Transcatheter Mitral and Tricuspid Valve (TMTV) Registry	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
National Comparative Audit of Blood Transfusion: 2025 Major Haemorrhage Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Early Inflammatory Arthritis Audit (NEIAA)	Yes	40%	No	0%
National Emergency Laparotomy Audit (NELA) Laparotomy	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Emergency Laparotomy Audit (NELA) No Laparotomy	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Joint Registry	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Major Trauma Registry	Yes	100%	Yes	32%

National Maternity and Perinatal Audit (NMPA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Neonatal Audit Programme (NNAP)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Obesity Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Ophthalmology Database (NOD): Age-related Macular Degeneration Audit	No	0%	N/A	N/A
National Ophthalmology Database (NOD): Cataract Audit	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
National Paediatric Diabetes Audit (NPDA)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Perinatal Mortality Review Tool	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Respiratory Audit Programme (NRAP): COPD Secondary Care	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Respiratory Audit Programme (NRAP): Pulmonary Rehabilitation	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Respiratory Audit Programme (NRAP): Adult Asthma Secondary Care	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Respiratory Audit Programme (NRAP): Children and Young People's Asthma Secondary Care	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
National Vascular Registry (NVR)	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
Paediatric Intensive Care Audit Network (PICANET) Level 2 Unit	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A

Perioperative Quality Improvement Programme	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP)	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Serious Hazards of Transfusion (SHOT) UK National Hemovigilance Scheme	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
UK Cystic Fibrosis Registry	Yes	100%	N/A	N/A
UK Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) Registry	No	0%	No	0%
UK Parkinson's Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
UK Renal Registry Chronic Kidney Disease Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
UK Renal Registry National Acute Kidney Injury Audit	Yes	100%	Yes	100%

Table 3 - national clinical audits

National Confidential Enquiries (NCEPOD):

Both STHFT and NTHFT participated in all three national confidential enquiries (100%) that they were eligible to participate in, as shown in Table 4;

NCEPOD study	Participation STH	% cases submitted STH	Participation NTH	% cases submitted NTH
Acute illness in people with learning disabilities	Yes	100%	Yes	100%
Pleural procedures	Yes	TBC	Yes	100%
Stabilisation of the critically ill child	Yes	100%	Yes	TBC

Table 4 – National Confidential enquiries

Use of Audit Data Findings to improve Quality of Care

National audit confidential enquiries reports are reviewed through established governance arrangements to identify learning, areas of good practice and opportunities for improvement and

support the development of targeted action plans where required. Actions are monitored to ensure that audit outcomes lead to tangible service improvements.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)

During 2025/26, nine national clinical audit reports were reviewed. These audits provided assurance of strong performance in several areas, including dementia care, bowel cancer services and paediatric diabetes outcomes.

Where opportunities for improvement were identified, actions were agreed and implemented. These included: strengthening documentation, addressing service capacity and workforce challenges, enhancing access to seven-day services where required, and improving data quality to support accurate reporting and performance monitoring.

Collaborative working with NTHFT and external partners has supported shared learning and service improvement. Table 5 below provides more details of these actions.

Audit title	Actions taken/in progress
Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) Quality Improvement Projects 2025/26	Issues with the management of these projects by the Royal College were identified nationally. As this is a paid service, we have raised concerns with the provider about the viability and use of the national results.
Falls and Fragility Audit Programme: National Fracture Liaison Service Database report	The lack of service provision in the Hambleton and Richmond area had an impact on the results. The aim to assess patients within 90 days showed poor results due to limited staffing.
National Respiratory Audit Programme (NRAP) Catching our breath: Time for change in respiratory care	The performance of the trust compared well with other trusts in the region and the teams are reviewing ways to reduce readmissions. Contact has been made to collaborate with North Tees to learn from each other's approaches and improve all services for patients.
National Paediatric Diabetes Audit: Care & Outcomes and Type 2 Diabetes spotlight audit 2023/24	The performance was good in this audit showing that we had excellent clinical outcomes and that there has been a continued improvement over time. There is now an 'Open Access Asthma Clinic' available for patients with the aim of reducing readmission rates.
NATCAN: National Bowel Cancer Audit (NBOCA)	The audit showed excellent results – especially in the number of patients seen by a Clinical Nurse Specialist which was well above the national average. However, the audit identified a need for improvement in some areas and in response to this, the Cancer information team will undertake a data quality audit to ensure that documentation of cases is improved.
National Audit of Dementia (NAD):	The audit showed an excellent care rating for the trust at both James Cook and Northallerton above the national average.

Dementia Care in General Hospitals	Some work will be done to improve the use of delirium screening tools and resources and an action plan has been developed with Dietetics and Education teams following patient feedback at Northallerton.
Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP)	There were some good results, but performance had dropped recently and there was not a 7-day service available for patients which impacted on the mechanical thrombectomy targets identified in the audit. Discussions with the mechanical thrombectomy lead are to be arranged to better understand the barriers and improve on this performance.
NHS Blood & Transplant National Audit of NICE Quality Standard 138	The audit identified a concern with a reduction in the use of tranexamic acid (used for reducing the risk of bleeding). In response, a reminder is now included on the checklist. Other areas of concern have been addressed such as recording of patient results and the recording of patient consent.
National Audit of Care at the End of Life (NACEL)	Following this audit an action plan has been agreed to develop a mandatory 3 yearly e-learning session on end-of-life care for all staff and look at opportunities to seek funding for a palliative care educator post. The team will also train additional staff to develop and deliver an advanced communication skills training programme. They will also work collaboratively with the Patient Experience Team and colleagues at North Tees to re-establish a trust wide bereavement survey. The team will also focus on chaplaincy support for all patients receiving end of life care and review the provision of support to identify spiritual and religious needs at end of life.

Table 5 - Actions following National Audit

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT)

During 2025/26, reports from 24 national clinical audit reports were reviewed. Audit findings demonstrated overall good performance across a range of specialties, alongside identified opportunities for further improvement.

Actions taken or underway include improving patient information and communication, enhancing compliance with national standards, strengthening personalised and reasonable adjustment approaches, and addressing service capacity and pathway efficiency. Audit findings have been used to support continuous improvement and strengthen clinical governance arrangements.

Table 6 below provides more details of actions taken.

Audit title	Actions taken/in progress
National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death	Following this audit there is now a patient information leaflet available which explains the services provided. Patients also receive a copy of their clinic letters.

<p>(NCEPOD) Crohn's Disease Study</p>	<p>The audit showed that multi-disciplinary meetings take place on a regular basis and are documented effectively and shared with the GP as appropriate.</p> <p>Good practice was shown in referring patients for surgery when medication alone does not work and a checklist has been developed for patient discharge to improve efficiency and support.</p> <p>The team are developing a project to focus on improving capacity in theatres so that abdominal surgery waiting times can be improved,</p>
<p>National Audit of Dementia (NAD)</p>	<p>The audit showed good performance in patients being screened for delirium. Improvement was also recorded in completing the screening within 24 hours of admission.</p> <p>Good results were also shown in the development of management and care plans.</p>
<p>Learning from lives and deaths – people with a learning disability and autistic people (LeDeR)</p>	<p>This audit identified a need to address delayed discharges which is a regional concern. The team are working with the regional group to improve on this issue.</p> <p>The team are also working on improving Mental Capacity Assessments as identified by the audit.</p>
<p>NHS England Learning Disability Improvement Standards</p>	<p>Following this audit 'Reasonable Adjustments' training is now available online and all staff can access this.</p> <p>A poster campaign and leaflets have been shared with all wards following the audit and 'John's Campaign' (a national disability campaign) has been relaunched in the trust providing support for carers, discounted meals in the canteen, free parking and patient centred visiting.</p>
<p>Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) Quality Improvement Project: Time Critical Medications</p>	<p>National issues with data collection meant that this audit did not provide the expected reporting consistently over the year. This has been previously reported and discussed directly with colleagues from the Royal College.</p> <p>In the meantime, the Trust is to build a dashboard for staff to highlight omitted doses of time-critical medications. In addition, an awareness campaign in relation to time-critical medications via our staff communications and the Trust's social media platforms has been positively received.</p>
<p>National Oesophago-Gastric Cancer Audit (NOGCA)</p>	<p>The audit highlighted that there is an increased input from Clinical Nurse Specialists at the time of consultation. However, the issue of deprivation in the area coupled with patients presenting late with their symptoms, has led to a lower success rate with patient outcomes compared to the national average.</p>
<p>National Cardiac Arrest Audit</p>	<p>The data from this audit shows an improvement in outcomes but also led to work aimed at improving clinical training.</p>

NRAP Adult Asthma Audit	This audit highlighted good prescribing of inhaled steroids at patient discharge and there is a self-discharge policy under review to address take-home asthma medications for patients.
NRAP Pulmonary Rehabilitation Audit	Following this audit, the Trust has been recognised as a major contributor to a national systematic review to promote pulmonary rehabilitation referral, uptake and adherence in people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.
NHS England Learning Disability Improvement Standards	Following the audit there are lower numbers of learning disability patients awaiting a first appointment date. Staff are now more confident in providing reasonable adjustments as a digital national reasonable adjustments flag is now in place.
Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MINAP)	This audit identified that a high proportion of patients are now seen by a cardiologist as an inpatient and that swift referral is now done electronically. The audit did, however, identify that echocardiograms are not always done prior to transfer or discharge and this will be addressed.
National Fracture Liaison Service (NFLS) audit	Good overall results were recorded for this audit especially in case ascertainment. There was an increase in falls risk assessments and bone treatment - all above national average
National Heart Failure Audit	This audit showed good results for echocardiograms being undertaken to confirm the clinical diagnosis, medication prescribing being given when the patient is still an inpatient and specialist input for patients with diagnosis of heart failure with reduced ejection fraction. Results were also good with regard to timely referral to cardiac rehabilitation and cardiologist follow-up on discharge.
National Paediatric Diabetes Audit (Core audit)	The audit noted that 100% of children and young people received thyroid and coeliac screening and that 87.4% of them were recorded as using real time continuous glucose monitoring. There was, however, a need to improve on the foot check completion rate as the results were below national averages.
National Paediatric Diabetes Audit (spotlight audit 2023/24)	This audit showed that dietetic and psychological input to the service is better than national average. However, it was also noted that the team does not routinely request liver ultrasound screening for patients with Type 2 Diabetes or perform sleep assessments.
National Paediatric Diabetes Audit (Patient Reported Experience Measures report)	The feedback from families was that they were impressed with the team's level of individualised care and expertise, that there is access to the latest technology and the team are accessible. The families highlighted the need for more regular appointments and follow-up calls for cancelled appointments.

NATCAN: National Bowel Cancer Audit (NBOCA)	This audit recorded a performance status of 94%, which was significantly higher than national figures. The results for 30-day unplanned readmission and/or unplanned return to theatre were better than most trusts locally. Significantly, the 90 day mortality rates were the best in the region and the trust also had excellent results for 2 year survival when compared to other trusts.
Intensive Care National Audit & Research Centre (ICNARC) Case mix programme	The results for this audit were good with all quality indicators being met and it was noted that the process for collecting accurate data in the audit was excellent.
Catching our breath: NRAP COPD report	The audit showed that the team are linking well with community teams to give excellent results. However, it was noted that respiratory specialist review within 24 hours was not routinely achieved due to the lack of a 7-day service. This issue is being reviewed currently.
National Lung Cancer Audit 2023 patient cohort	The audit showed good performance for data completeness, with results better than the national average. Systemic treatment for small cell lung cancer was lower than national average, so another audit was completed which gave assurance that all treatment plans were correct and appropriate for patients.
National Cardiac Arrest Audit	Results showed improvements were made in all areas since the previous report. Survival to discharge for patients showed a significant improvement. A new tool has been implemented to try to improve critical event management – the TAKE STOCK tool - this looks at learning to improve patient care and look after the wellbeing of the team.
NHS Blood & Transplant National Audit of NICE Quality Standard 138	The audit results appeared to show a significant drop in the results regarding transfusion patients receiving verbal and written information about blood transfusion. On review, it was recognised that there should have been a 'not applicable' option available to make the results more reflective of practice. Otherwise, the results were good.
British Association of Urological Surgeons (BAUS): Environmental Lessons Learned and Applied to the bladder cancer care pathway (ELLA)	The audit highlighted good practice in using advice and guidance to improve secondary care referrals. Areas for improvement included delivering a one-stop haematuria assessment, decarbonising the flexible cystoscopy procedure and maximising the day-case bladder tumour resection rate.
National Audit of Care at the End of Life (NACEL)	Following this audit, a review of the 'Caring for the Dying Patient' document is underway, for relaunch. The audit also raised awareness of the need to attend to the spiritual and religious needs of people important to the patient.

	The trust is also developing a face-to-face 7-day Cancer Nurse Specialist resource and working on a new End of Life discharge checklist.
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Table 6 - Actions following National Audit

3. Local Clinical audit

Local clinical audit continues to play an important role in identifying and addressing service-specific risks and opportunities for improvement.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)

The reports of 369 local clinical audits were reviewed by the provider in 2025/26. These audits demonstrated the effective use of audit to drive improvements in patient safety, documentation standards and clinical outcomes. Where initial audits identified areas for improvement, re-audit cycles confirmed sustained improvements across multiple services, including radiology, surgery, podiatry and outpatient referral pathways.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust intends to take the following actions to improve the quality of healthcare provided (Table 7):

Audit title	Actions taken/in progress
Cancellation of Scheduled Contrast CT scans due to cannulation difficulty and implementation of Ultrasound-Guided Peripheral IV Cannulation	<p>An initial round of audit identified 45 cancellations due to cannulation failure, out of a total of 3174 scheduled contrast CT scans (1.42%)</p> <p>An evidence-based protocol was implemented as part of a local quality improvement initiative, including expansion of ultrasound-guided cannulation training for radiographers, establishment of a formal competency framework for independent radiographer-led cannulation, assurance of more continuous onsite support for complex cases, and maintenance of detailed records of ultrasound -guided attempts and outcomes.</p> <p>Following the improvement phase, a local re-audit was carried out; findings including a significantly reduced cancellation rate of only one patient out of a total of 2917 scheduled contrast CT scans (0.03%)</p>
Compliance with Obtaining Consent in Clinic Prior to Elective Breast and Thyroid surgery	<p>An initial audit looking at documentation of the patient consent process within the elective breast and thyroid surgery clinic identified the need for improvement across all areas, including the need for work around producing a new standardised consent document to highlight previous areas where clinical recording could be improved.</p> <p>Teaching sessions were established to ensure staff were aware of the current national GMC and RCS clinical consent standards.</p> <p>A reaudit following the teaching sessions evidenced that documentation of risks and benefits, copy of consent form being given to the patient, and appropriately trained staff conducting the consent process were now all achieving 100% compliance.</p>

Podiatry Nail Surgery LocSSIP	<p>An audit of the podiatry nail surgery LocSSIP identified several areas of documentation which fell short of the required 100% standard: Documentation of sign-in recorded in 79% of cases, changes in condition since pre-assessment only 25%, checking of allergies in only 50% of cases, and antiplatelet/anticoagulant checked only 25%.</p> <p>As part of the improvement plan, a meeting was held for all staff involved in nail surgery to present the audit results and review all poor areas of documentation. Education and training was provided across the team to improve awareness of weaker areas and the need for increased consistency.</p> <p>Results of a follow-up audit demonstrated 100% compliance for all above items which initially did not meet the required standard.</p>
Audit of appropriateness of referral to Soft Tissue Shoulder and Elbow Clinic	<p>An audit of 1790 referrals to the Soft Tissue Shoulder and Elbow Clinic demonstrated 68.5% of referrals were appropriate for the clinic. The most common inappropriate referrals were fracture cases, ranging from small non-displaced fractures to fracture dislocations.</p> <p>A presentation to both junior and senior doctors was given in order to highlight the issues identified from the audit and reiterate the correct referral criteria for the clinic.</p> <p>A reaudit of 2246 further referrals after education was given, demonstrated an improved compliance of 82.4% appropriateness of referral. A new “Webice” referral in place of the previous direct booking process was also considered instrumental in improving the triage process into the clinic.</p>

Table 7 - Actions following Local Audit

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

The reports of 112 local clinical audits were reviewed by the provider in 2025/26. These audits highlighted areas of good practice, alongside targeted actions to address documentation quality, compliance with national guidance and consistency of care delivery. Improvements have been supported through education, digital system enhancements and service redesign.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust intend to take the following actions to improve the quality of healthcare provided (Table 8):

Audit title	Actions taken/in progress
Prophylaxis against Infective Endocarditis NICE CG64 (Dentistry)	Action has been taken to highlight patients at risk of infective endocarditis (IE). A ‘toggle’ alert is now entered on to a patient’s medical history if they have an increased IE risk.
Neuromuscular Monitoring during the Peri-Operative period (Anaesthetics)	This audit highlighted some gaps in documentation and inconsistency in ‘train-of-four’ (TOF) monitoring used to assess the depth of neuromuscular blockade. The outcome is that TOF is now a mandatory field in the digital anaesthetic record, more monitoring devices are

	being purchased, and an educational programme has been put in place to ensure consistency.
Chest Wall Injury Management in the Emergency Department (Emergency Care)	This project identified a measurable improvement in the timeliness of analgesia for older patients presenting with chest wall injuries. Patients all now consistently receive analgesia within five minutes of arrival in the department.
Audit of Elective Consent (General Surgery)	Some key documentation issues have been addressed as a response to the audit findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person taking consent and the patient's signature are always included on the form • Confirmation is documented regarding all risks associated with the procedure • Patient consent is confirmed on the day of the surgery • Information leaflets and a copy of the consent form are given to the patient.
Management of Headaches in the Emergency Assessment Unit (Medicine and Elderly Care)	The audit identified an issue with Fundoscopy (a diagnostic tool for headaches) leading to the purchase of a digital fundoscope and a newly developed assessment area for these patients.
Assessment with Compliance and use of the Pleural Procedures Safety Checklist (Medicine and Elderly Care)	This audit highlighted good completion of the checklist, but action is being taken to improve some areas to include the documentation of the technical aspects of the procedure and documenting that patient information has been given out.
Children's Safeguarding Audit (Obstetrics and Gynaecology)	Excellent compliance with the standards of the audit but it highlighted that documentation of parental assessments on the postnatal ward needed to improve. These audit results are to be shared with the team to ensure that this issue is highlighted and acted upon.
Management of Ankle Fractures (Orthopaedics)	Compliance with the audit requirement to document a skin assessment has improved dramatically from 40% to 80% but there are still improvements required and the follow up actions have focused on this area along with a need to improve the documentation of neurovascular status before and after patient mobilisation.
Bacterial Meningitis NICE NG 240 and QS 19	Excellent outcomes regarding blood tests being undertaken prior to giving antibiotics – 100% of patients had all necessary investigations performed. However,

(Paediatrics)	the audit identified the need for a bacterial swab to be performed in all cases of suspected meningitis prior to starting antibiotics.
Ultrasound Detection of Biliary Dilatation in Abnormal MRCP (Radiology)	The audit highlighted an inconsistency in recording/commenting of intra or extra hepatic dilation and has also identified the need for completing ultrasound scanning in a reasonable time frame prior to completing MRCP.

Table 8 - Actions following National Audit

Participation in national and local clinical audit during 2025/26 has provided assurance that both Trusts continue to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality and safety of care delivered to patients. Audit findings consistently inform service improvement, support learning and enable early identification of risk.

Both Trusts remain committed to maximising the impact of clinical audit and national confidential enquiries as an integral component for quality improvement and enhanced patient safety.

4. Clinical Research

Research structure and governance

Research governance is overseen through the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) portfolio and, reports directly into the Academic Committee for Research, Education and Innovation with the Chief Medical Officer as Executive Lead.

Our new Academic Strategy is an enabling strategy for the UHT “Partnerships & Places” strategic pillar and describes our commitment;

To create an innovative and inclusive academy that supports everyone to realise their full potential through research, education, training, lifelong learning and innovation.

The strategy aims to enable staff to realise their potential while contributing to improved outcomes for patients and our wider population.

The Tees Valley Research Alliance (TVRA) Research Strategy is a patient focused strategy and aligns with the Academic strategy. It is delivered through two inter-related programmes of work:

- Research Delivery – supporting the delivery of externally sponsored research studies
- Research Development – supporting the development and growth of research led by UHT researchers

Our research vision is;

“To support and embed the development, delivery and growth of high-quality, patient-focused research in the Tees Valley and beyond”

A new Clinical Leadership model for research is being implemented with the appointment of Director and Deputy roles for Research Delivery and Research Development. In parallel, research performance dashboards are being developed for Clinical Service Units (CSUs) to increase visibility, support oversight and embed a culture of research awareness and engagement.

Risks relating to research and academic strategy delivery are reported quarterly to the Academic Committee via the Board Assurance Framework (BAF). Progress against key milestones is reported bi-monthly to the Strategy Programme Board and quarterly to the Academic Committee for oversight and governance.

Research Delivery

The number of patients receiving relevant health services provided or subcontracted by South Tees NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) in 2025/26 that were recruited during that period to participate in research approved by a research ethics committee was 6,150 (across 152 studies and 23 clinical specialties).

The number of patients receiving relevant health services provided or subcontracted by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) in 2025/26 that were recruited during that period to participate in research approved by a research ethics committee was 7,233 (across 72 studies and 18 clinical specialties).

This represents a total of 13,383 patients recruited across UHT.

Across both Trusts, research delivery was supported by 136 Principle Investigators, including an increase in non-medical Principal Investigators from 30 to 32, reflecting broader multidisciplinary engagement in research activity.

National Performance Metrics

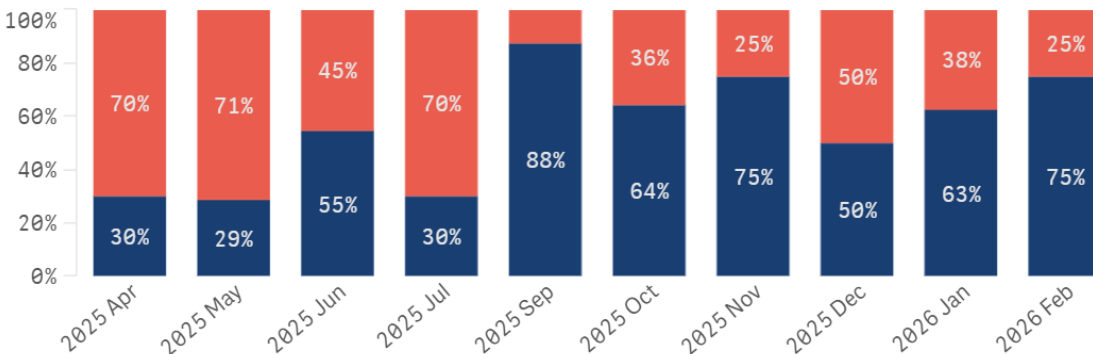
During the year 2025/26, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) introduced new national performance metrics to support timely study set-up and delivery:

- 60-day study set up metric (target 80%)
- 30-day recruitment of first participant t following study set-up (target 80%).

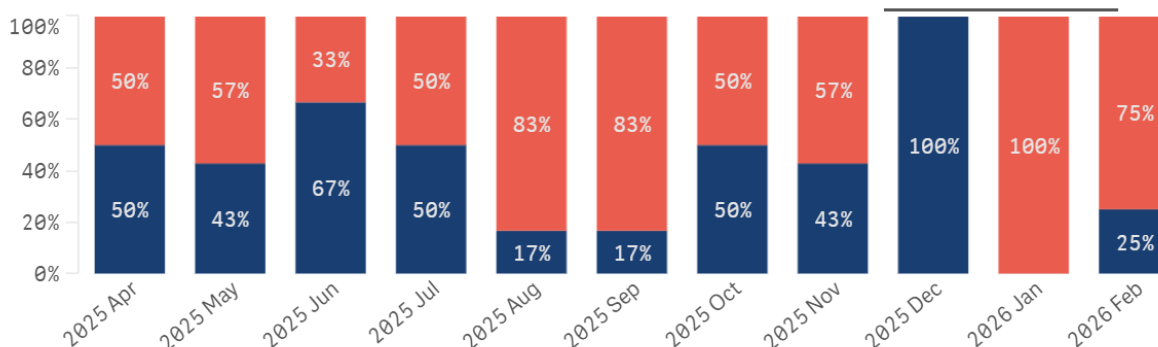
Performance against these metrics will influence up to 20% of the NIHR funding allocation for 2026/27, subject to cap and collar arrangements to prevent destabilisation of budgets.

A range of actions were implemented to improve our performance, including the appointment of dedicated research facilitator, strengthened investigator oversight, improved communication and enhanced reporting at TVRA level. Improvement has been observed in study set-up times during the year; istudy delivery remains an area of continued focus.

Our performance against these metrics is shown in Graph 1 and 2 below.



Graph 1 - % of studies set up within 60 days



Graph 2 - studies recruiting first patient within 30 days

Research Development

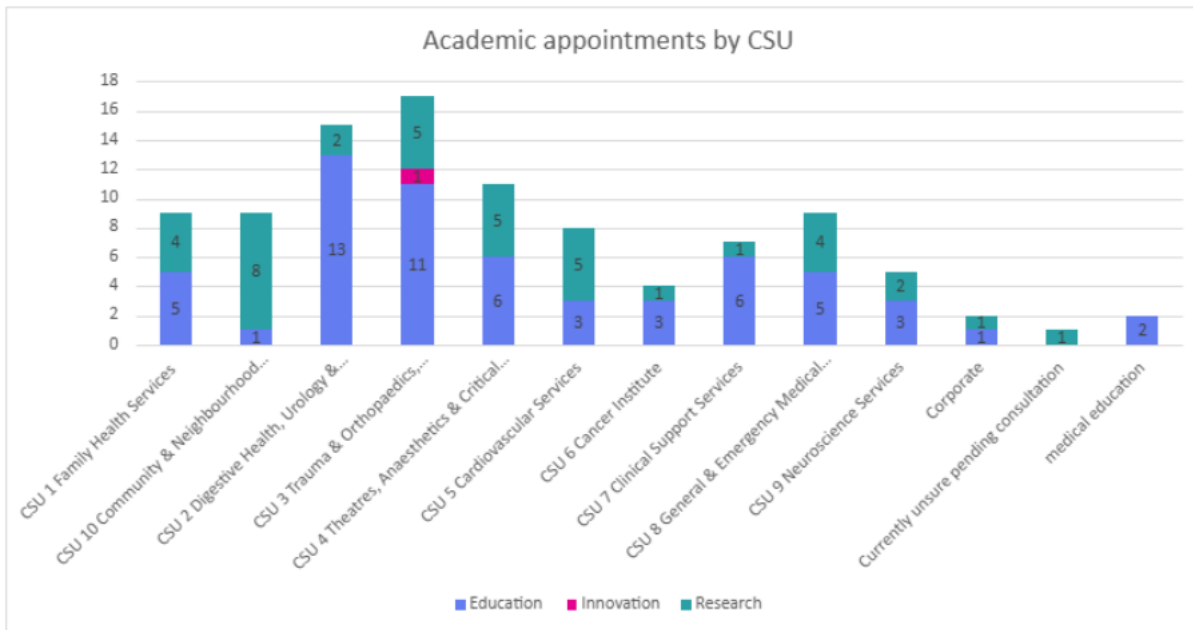
Performance

At year end, there were 41 UHT trust-sponsored studies in pipeline/set-up, 26 open, 5 in active follow-up and 16 closed (Table 9). Details below of distribution according to whether these studies are led by an Academic Research Unit (ARU) or the TVRA CI team.

UHT Sponsored studies	Pipeline	Set up	Open	In follow-up	Closed
Academic Cardiovascular Unit (ACU) Supported	7	4	6	1	4
Academic Centre for Surgery (ACeS) Supported	6	9	9	2	1
TVRA Projects/ CI team Supported	2	13	11	2	11
Total	15	26	26	5	16

Table 9 – UHT sponsored studies

In a response to our recent “Academic Affiliations Survey” we identified 39 members of staff-reporting honorary or clinical academic appointments relating to research with 11 different Universities. This information has been shared with CSU Leads to support appraisals and career discussions.



Graph 3 – Academic appointments by Clinical Service Unit

Research collaboration continues with regional academic partners including Teesside, Newcastle, Hull, York and Durham Universities. Work is also underway to develop collaborative research delivery models with Primary Care and community pharmacies, including support for vaccine trials.

Nursing Midwifery and Allied Health Practitioner (NMAHP) Development

Three staff members successfully secured NIHR North East and North Cumbria Internship awards, this provided funding of £10,000 each for 9 months. The NMAHP Best Practice Council has continued to grow with over 70 members benefitting from support, guidance and resources for their research journey and clinical academic development.

Research and Academic Highlights

Key academic achievements during 2025/26 include:

- A UKRI Cabinet Office Fellowship awarded to Dr Chris Wilkinson (Academic Cardiovascular Unit), supporting research into data-driven and community-centred approaches to addressing health inequalities.
- Dr Donna Wakefield, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, awarded the 2025 *Wakley Prize Essay* by *The Lancet*, alongside publication in *eClinicalMedicine* exploring inequalities in access to palliative care for people with lung disease.
- For the first time, an NMAHP clinician secured a nationally competitive Tessa Jowell AHP Research Fellowship. Alice Franklin, a physiotherapist supported by the Academic Centre for Surgery, was awarded funding of £178,520 to support early-career academic development.

Innovation

Innovation, alongside Research, is one of the eight domains reporting into the Board via the Board Assurance Frameworks (BAF) which outline the risks to achieving our strategic aims above. Monthly reporting of progress against the BAF is provided to the Quality Committee.

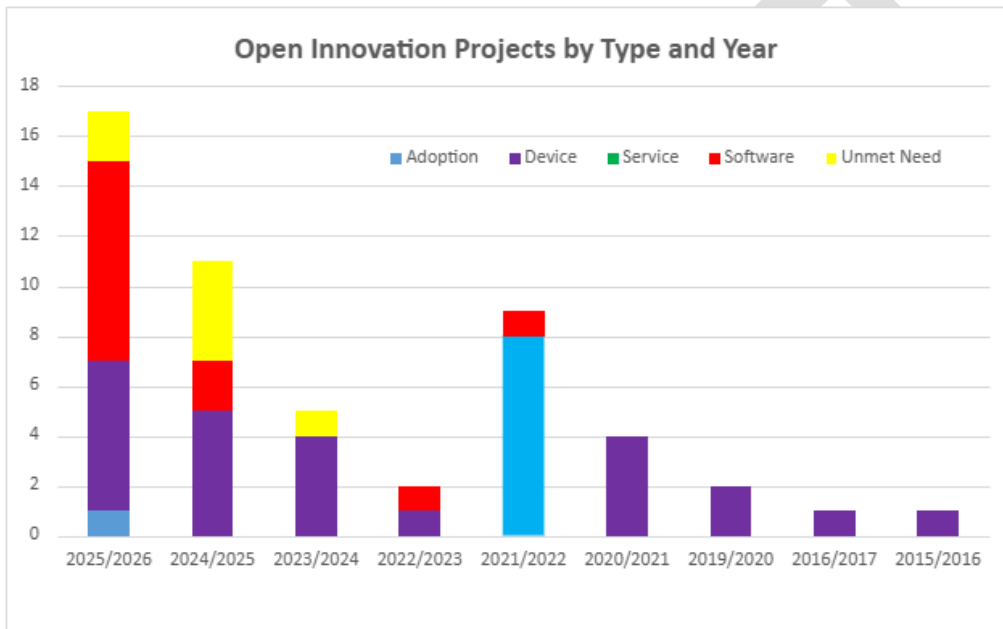
A Group-wide Innovation Strategy has been developed and approved, supporting delivery of a consistent culture of innovation across UHT. Recruitment to a newly established Innovation

Manager post is underway to support delivery of this strategy. The Trusts are also implementing the Department of Health and Social Care Intellectual Property guidance published in November 2025, including updates to IP policies and staff awareness training.

Innovation at NTHFT is supported through NTH Solutions, with a Business Development and Innovation team structure implemented from January 2025. Innovation support at SHFT is delivered directly via Trust staff.

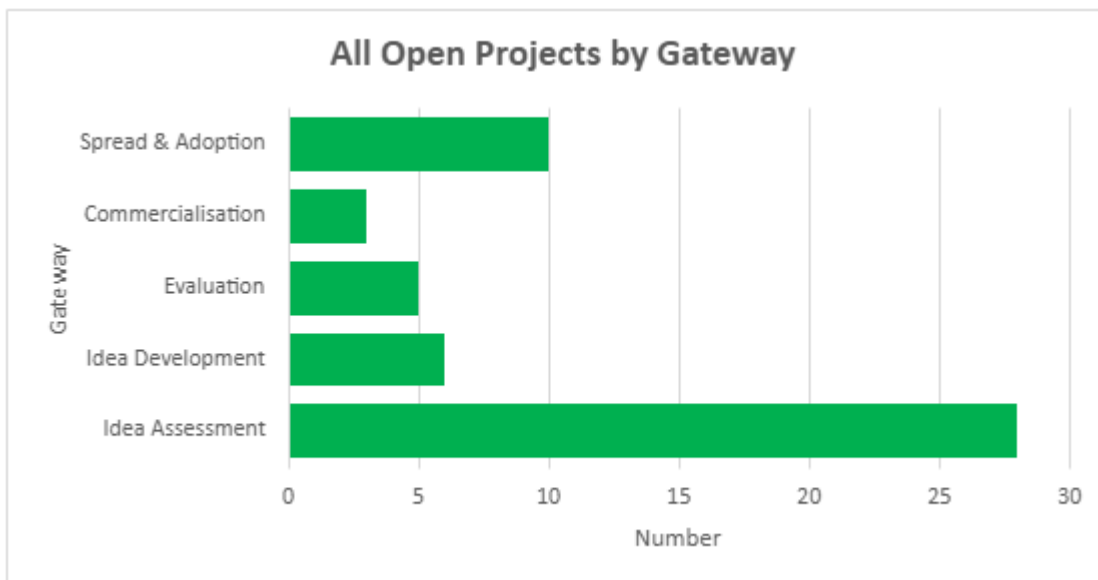
During 2025/26, 31 innovation enquiries were received across UHT. Of these, 17 projects remain under assessment, including medical devices, unmet clinical needs and software solutions. Open projects continue to be supported through the Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria Innovation Pathway.

Work is ongoing on from previous cohort enquiries, with a breakdown of these provided below (Graph 4).



Graph 4 – Open Innovation Projects

Innovation, utilise the Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria (HI NENC) Innovation Pathway (<https://innovationpathway.healthinnovationenc.org.uk/>) which consists of 5 gateways: Idea Assessment, Idea Development, Evaluation, Commercialisation, Adoption & Spread. Below in Graph 5 shows the gateways the open North Tees & Hartlepool and South Tees projects are on the Pathway.



Graph 5 – All open projects

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust has entered the development phase of a Well-being Journal that is funded by the Trusts charity, which will be available across UHT to support staff with any physical/ mental ailments they are going through. A patent application for the Birtha Stool has been granted to protect the IP rights.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has commercialised the Neonatal Chest Drain Training Kit in October 2025, a device kit manufactured and distributed by the Trust, which is a practical high-quality solution designed to support healthcare professionals in mastering this critical procedure with confidence. The kit was first used within the Trust training scheme which received excellent feedback. We have offered an introductory price to other Trusts to gain further feedback. This kit is now available to the wider NHS, and we are looking at opportunities to spread further. In 2025, IP has been protected in relation to this project with design registrations in the UK being secured.

5. Use of the Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) payment framework

There were no CQUIN arrangements over 2025/26.

6. Care Quality Commission registration, reviews and investigations

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) with no conditions applied to its registration.

The CQC did not take any enforcement action against the Trust during 2025/26, and the Trust did not participate in any special reviews or investigations during this period.

In October 2025, the CQC completed an IR(ME)R inspection of the Radiotherapy Department. No breaches meeting the threshold for enforceable action were identified. Areas for improvement were highlighted, and the Trust developed and submitted an action plan. The CQC subsequently confirmed it was assured by the actions taken and closed the inspection file.



Figure 5 - South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust overall CQC rating

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT)

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust is also registered with the CQC with no conditions applied to its registration.

The CQC took no enforcement action against the Trust during 2025/26, and the Trust did not participate in any special reviews or investigations during the period.



Figure 6: North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust overall CQC rating

All reports are available at:

- [South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - Overview - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/S05000001)
- <http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RVW>

CQC Contact and Communication

Both STHFT and NTHFT maintain regular joint engagement meetings with the CQC through scheduled meetings and routine communication. Informal visits to clinical areas are facilitated upon request when CQC staff are on site.

7. Submission of records to the Secondary Uses Service

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust submitted records during 2025/26 to the Secondary Uses Service for inclusion in the Data Quality Maturity Index (DQMI).

The percentage of records in the latest published data for November 2025 which included the patient's valid NHS number was:

- 100% for admitted patient care
- 100% for outpatient care, and
- 99.6% for emergency department care.

The percentage of records in the latest published data for November 2025 which included the patient's valid General Medical Practice Code was:

- 100% for admitted patient care
- 100% for outpatient care, and
- 100% for emergency department care.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust submitted records during 2025-26 to the Secondary Uses Service (SUS) for inclusion in the Data Quality Maturity Index (DQMI) which are included in the latest published data.

The percentage of records in the latest published data for November 2025 which included the patient's valid NHS number was:

- 100% for admitted patient care
- 100% for outpatient care, and
- 99.7% for emergency department care.

The percentage of records in the latest published data for November 2025 which included the patient's valid General Medical Practice Code was:

- 100% for admitted patient care
- 99.5% % for outpatient care, and
- 100% for emergency department care.

8. Information Governance grading

Both Trusts continue to provide assurance to the UHT Board of Directors that systems and processes for managing information are regularly reviewed and strengthened to ensure the security and confidentiality of data. In accordance with UK GDPR Article 37, we have an appointed Data Protection Officer (DPO) who provides advice and assurance and oversight of compliance with legal requirements, and acts as the point of contact for data subjects and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

The Data Security and Protection Standards for health and care organisations are set out in the National Data Guardian's (NDG) ten standards and are assessed through the completion of the Data Security Protection Toolkit (DSPT). All organisations with access to NHS patient data and systems must complete the DSPT annually to demonstrate the appropriate handling of personal information and adherence to data security requirements.

The DSPT is now aligned to the Cyber Assessment framework (CAF) which provides a structured approach to assessing how well cyber and information governance risks are being managed across essential services.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust submitted its 2025 DSPT submission on the 30 June 2025. The Trust has self-assessed compliance with all standards and all mandatory evidence items were evidenced, meeting all mandatory assertions; therefore, the Trust scored as all 'Standards Met' for the DSPT.

An external audit was conducted by Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) in May 2025, reviewing 12 outcomes across the five CAF objectives. The independent audit rated:

- Overall risk level: Very High
- Confidence level in self-assessment: Low

Assessment Outputs		
	Overall risk rating across all five CAF objectives	Confidence level of the Independent Assessor in the veracity of the self-assessment
Independent Assessment Outputs	Very High	Low

An action plan addressing the identified risks has since been fully implemented.

At the time of writing, for the 2026 DSPT, the Trust has submitted baseline information for all outcomes and is gathering evidence ahead of the final submission deadline of 30 June 2026.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust submitted its 2025 DSPT submission on the 30 June 2025. The Trust has self-assessed compliance with all standards and all mandatory evidence items were evidenced, meeting all mandatory assertions; therefore, the Trust scored as all 'Standards Met' for the DSPT.

Audit One conducted an external audit of 12 outcomes across the five CAF objectives. The Independent risk audit rated:

- Overall risk level: Low
- Confidence level in self assessment: High

Assessment Outputs

	Overall risk assurance across all five CAF objectives	Confidence level of the Independent Assessor in the veracity of the self-assessment
Independent Assessment Outputs	Low	High

For the 2026 DSPT, baseline information has been submitted for all outcomes, and evidence is currently being collated for the final submission due 30 June 2026.

Data Security

The confidentiality and security of patient and staff information is maintained through the application of our Governance Framework, which incorporates relevant legislation and policy requirements.

While information is increasingly held electronically within secure digital systems, the continued use of paper records within some services means that data security incidents can still occur. All incidents involving the loss, disclosure, or compromise personal data are investigated in line with UHT's Data and Cyber Breach Management Policies and graded using the NHS Digital 'Guide to the Notification of Data Security and Protection Incidents'.

Incidents are assessed based on:

- The significance and potential impact on individuals
- The likelihood of harm
- Criteria set out in national breach assessment guidance

Incidents assessed as high risk are reported to the ICO within 72 hours through the DSPT.

Staff are encouraged to report any suspected data protection or cyber incident, regardless of severity, in accordance with Trust policy.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

During the reporting period we reported 4 incidents to the ICO (an increase from zero in the previous year). These related to:

- 2 incidents of inappropriate access to clinical systems
- 2 incidents of information being sent to an incorrect recipient

Two cases have been closed by the ICO with no further actions. At the time of writing, two remain open pending outcome. All appropriate mitigating actions have been implemented.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

During the reporting period two incidents were reported to the ICO (an increase from one in the previous year). These related to:

- Inappropriate access to clinical systems
- Inappropriate disclosure of information.

Both incidents have been closed by the ICO with no action, and the Trust has implemented appropriate mitigations.

Actions taken to strengthen data security

Across both Trusts, the following actions have been undertaken to further strengthen data protection and minimise the likelihood of future incidents:

- Review and update of Information Governance policies and standard operating procedures.
- Continued quality assurance and spot checks across all departments
- Ongoing annual Data Security and Cyber Security Training with targeted sessions in areas of non-compliance.
- Robust monitoring of departmental action plans following incidents through the Digital Governance Committee.
- Annual review of information assets and data flows to ensure compliance with GDPR requirements.
- Regular staff awareness campaigns led by the Communications Team, HR processes enacted in cases of repeated non-compliance.

9. Clinical coding audit

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was not subject to a Payment by Results clinical coding audit during 2025/26 by the Audit Commission.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust was not subject to a Payment by Results clinical coding audit during 2025/26 by the Audit Commission.

10. Data quality

Both South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) continue to take actions to strengthen the quality, accuracy and completeness of data recorded across their organisations.

High-quality data is essential to support safe patient care, effective service delivery, operational planning and statutory reporting.

All data collected, recorded and reported by both Trusts complies with national data standards set out in the NHS Data Dictionary, and clinical coding is undertaken in line with classifications published by the World Health Organization and NHS Digital (ICD-10 and OPCS-4.10).

To support clinical and operational teams, Business Intelligence, Management Information and Data Quality functions across both Trusts provide analytical tools, dashboards and reports to identify efficiencies and highlight areas for data quality improvement.

Both Trusts routinely monitor the completeness, accuracy and validity of data to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Monitoring reports, audits and validation checks are used to improve processes, strengthen staff training and support consistent use of Trust systems. Examples of routine monitoring undertaken across the Trust are detailed in Table 10 and include:

Type of Monitoring	Frequency	Responsibility
External and internal audit of data quality of differing aspects of the Trust's data.	Weekly and ad-hoc (internal)	Clinical Coding Team
Check of completeness and validity of data submitted to Secondary Uses Service and other mandatory returns.	Weekly	Finance and Business Intelligence Unit Team Leads
Validation of blank or invalid patient demographic details.	Weekly	Data Quality Team
Validation of inpatient and outpatient activity.	Weekly	Data Quality Team
Investigation of queries, issues, errors as they arise.	Ad-hoc	Data Quality Team
Benchmarking of audit inputs and outputs to identify discrepancies that may indicate data quality improvements required.	Annual cycle	Clinical Effectiveness

Table 10 – Data monitoring

All staff involved in recording patient information are responsible for following NHS data standards and Trust guidance relevant to their roles. Online data quality awareness sessions are available to all staff via the Trusts intranet platforms. These resources outline key data recording standards, pathway-based data collection requirements and updates on changes to national guidance. Staff are encouraged to complete this training annually.

UHT remains committed to improving data accuracy; improving, strengthening internal controls, and ensuring their data supports delivery of high-quality care and robust decision-making.

11. Learning from deaths

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

During 2025/26, 1,835 patients of South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust died. This comprised the number of deaths which occurred in each quarter of that reporting period:

- 449 in the first quarter
- 382 in the second quarter
- 494 in the third quarter
- 510 in the fourth quarter.

By 31st March 2026, 230 case record reviews and 23 investigations have been carried out in relation to 1,835 deaths above. In 23 cases, a death was subjected to both a case record review and an investigation. The number of deaths in each quarter for which a case record review or an investigation was carried out was:

- 29 in the first quarter
- 49 in the second quarter
- 79 in the third quarter
- 73 in the fourth quarter.

1 representing 0.01% of the patient deaths during 2025/26 are judged to be due more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient. In relation to each quarter, this consisted of:

- 1 representing 0.1% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the first quarter.
- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the second quarter.
- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the third quarter.
- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the fourth quarter.

These numbers have been estimated using the adapted version of the Structured Judgement Review Plus tool.

Of the 230 case reviews completed 90% (208) were Definitely not Preventable, 4% (8) showed slight evidence of preventability, 1% (3) were possibly preventable less than 50/50 and 0.5% (1) Definitely Preventable. In 5% (10) of cases, preventability was unable to be graded.

76% (175) showed Good Practice, 12% (24) required room for improvement in clinical care, 9% (20) required room for improvement in organisational care and 4% (8 cases) required room for improvement in clinical and organisational care. In 1% (3) of cases, quality of care was unable to be graded.

The Trust established a Medical Examiner Service in May 2018. Approximately 98% of deaths are scrutinised by Medical Examiners and where concerns are identified a referral made to the Mortality Surveillance team (a central team of up to four consultants and a nurse with expertise across many specialties). Requests for review are also received from the Trust Patient Safety Team. Each review results in two grades, one for quality of care and one for preventability of the death. Referrals may be made as a result of this review to the Patient Safety Team, Learning Response Panel or back to the parent specialty.

Learning and actions resulting from death reviews include:

- Greater emphasis on checking blood glucose prior to re-commencing enteral nutritional support, particularly when the patient is receiving supplemental insulin.
- Consideration of earlier insertion of nephrostomy tube.

- Development of a new SOP for oxygen prescription at the time of discharge from hospital.
- Review of pathways for transferring complex patients from emergency settings.
- Recommendations for earlier DNACPR discussions and MDT input.
- Recognition of the need for earlier decision making when the patient is deteriorating.
- Wound Photography was not being done as per G119 and processes not understood or actioned at ward level. Wound photography audit and Task and Finish Group established. Training programme for app rolled out and added to current essential wound care training and pressure ulcer policy updated.
- Update of Policy G27: Insertion and Management of Nasogastric Tubes for Feeding, Hydration, and Medication, which now incorporates a mandatory risk assessment for overnight feeding to enhance patient safety.
- Apixaban and other anti-coagulants issues with prescription and administration.
- In paper medical records, coordination of care was not easily identified as it relied on notes being made of conversations and telephone calls between colleagues. This has improved to some extent with the implementation of MIYA although further developments are needed.
- Information about patients prior to and at the time of referral currently relies on the doctor accepting referral to make a summary in the medical record. Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT have led procurement of a single electronic system for all Trusts in the North East & North Cumbria and Patient Pass (<https://www.patientpass.co.uk/>) has been chosen with completion of contracts in process currently. An implementation plan for cardiac, renal, vascular, orthopaedic and other specialty services will follow. This means that information about transferred patients will be much easier to audit and that may lead to improvements in care for this important group of patients with complex needs.
- LeDeR identified DNACPR orders which inappropriate rationale including reference to learning disabilities and epilepsy.
- Mental Capacity Assessments were not consistently completed in cases where patients were documented as confused, nor were they always undertaken prior to applications for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), these concerns have been escalated to the Ward Manager and Matron for further action and oversight.

172 case record reviews and 10 investigations were completed after 31 March 2025 which related to deaths which took place before the start of this reporting period.

1 representing 0.1% of the patient deaths before the reporting period, are judged to be more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient. This number has been estimated using the Structured Judgement Review Plus tool.

1 representing 0.1% of the patient deaths during 2024/25 are judged to be more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient.

Of the 172 case reviews completed 95% (164) were Definitely not Preventable, 3% (5) showed slight evidence of preventability, 0.6% (1) had strong evidence for preventability and in 1% (2) preventability was unable to be graded.

83% (143) showed Good Practice, 6% (10) required room for improvement in clinical care, 8% (13) required room for improvement in organisational care and 2% (4 cases) required room for improvement in clinical and organisational care. 1 case) care was less than satisfactory. In 0.6% (1 case), quality of care was unable to be graded.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

During 2025/26, 1,198 patients of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust died. This comprised the number of deaths which occurred in each quarter of that reporting period:

- 294 in the first quarter.
- 275 in the second quarter.
- 326 in the third quarter.
- 303 in the fourth quarter.

By 31st March 2026, 59 case record reviews have been carried out in relation to 1,198 deaths above. The number of deaths in each quarter for which a case record review or an investigation was carried out was:

- 1 in the first quarter.
- 15 in the second quarter.
- 20 in the third quarter.
- 23 in the fourth quarter.

2 representing 0.00% of the patient deaths during 2025/26 are judged to be due more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient. In relation to each quarter, this consisted of:

- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the first quarter.
- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the second quarter.
- 3 representing 0.1% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the third quarter.
- 0 representing 0.0% of the number of deaths which occurred in the quarter for the fourth quarter.

These numbers have been estimated using the adapted version of the Structured Judgement Review Plus tool.

Of the 59 case reviews completed 78% (46) were Definitely not Preventable, 12% (7) showed slight evidence of preventability, 5% (3) were possibly preventable less than 50/50. In 2% (1) of cases, preventability was unable to be graded.

51% (30) showed Good Practice, 17% (10) required room for improvement in clinical care, 20% (12) required room for improvement in organisational care and 8% (5 cases) required room for improvement in clinical and organisational care. In 3% (2 cases) care was less than satisfactory. In 2% (1 case), quality of care was unable to be graded.

The medical Examiner (ME) Service scrutinizes all inpatient deaths. A proportion of deaths are reviewed using the Structured Judgment Review tool via the InPhase Mortality Module. Findings are presented quarterly to the Trust Safety Panel but triangulation of themes and evidence of learning has been challenging to assemble.

Learning and actions resulting from death reviews include:

- Reviewing arrangements within UHT to improve the reporting, align the themes from Learning from Deaths with the themes from other quality related activity and use these to drive improvements in care.
- Ongoing collaboration with South Tees
- Review of Specialty Mortality and Morbidity work, with a view to capturing this on the InPhase system alongside SJRs
- Expand team of reviewers
- Work towards SJR of 15% of deaths

Areas of good practice noted included a request to prioritise comfort and relief of symptoms; clear discussion with patient of forward plan; good communication with family; early referral to alcohol care team.

Areas of concern noted delays in transfer between sites; delay in management of small bowel obstruction; lack of continuity of care; poor wound management; weights not recorded; Trakcare notes not in order; delay in receiving antibiotics in ED; delay in DNACPR.

26 case record reviews and 0 investigations were completed after 31 March 2025 which related to deaths which took place before the start of this reporting period.

0 representing 0% of the patient deaths before the reporting period, are judged to be more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient. This number has been estimated using the Structured Judgement Review Plus tool.

0 representing 0% of the patient deaths during 2024/25 are judged to be more likely than not to have been due to problems in the care provided to the patient.

Of the 26 case reviews completed 77% (20) were Definitely not Preventable, 15% (4) showed slight evidence of preventability, 5% (2) were possibly preventable less than 50/50, 8% (2) unable to grade.

48% (19) showed Good Practice, 33% (13) required room for improvement in clinical care, 8% (3) required room for improvement in organisational care and 8% (3 cases) required room for improvement in clinical and organisational care. In 5% (2 cases) care was less than satisfactory.

2.3 Reporting against core indicators

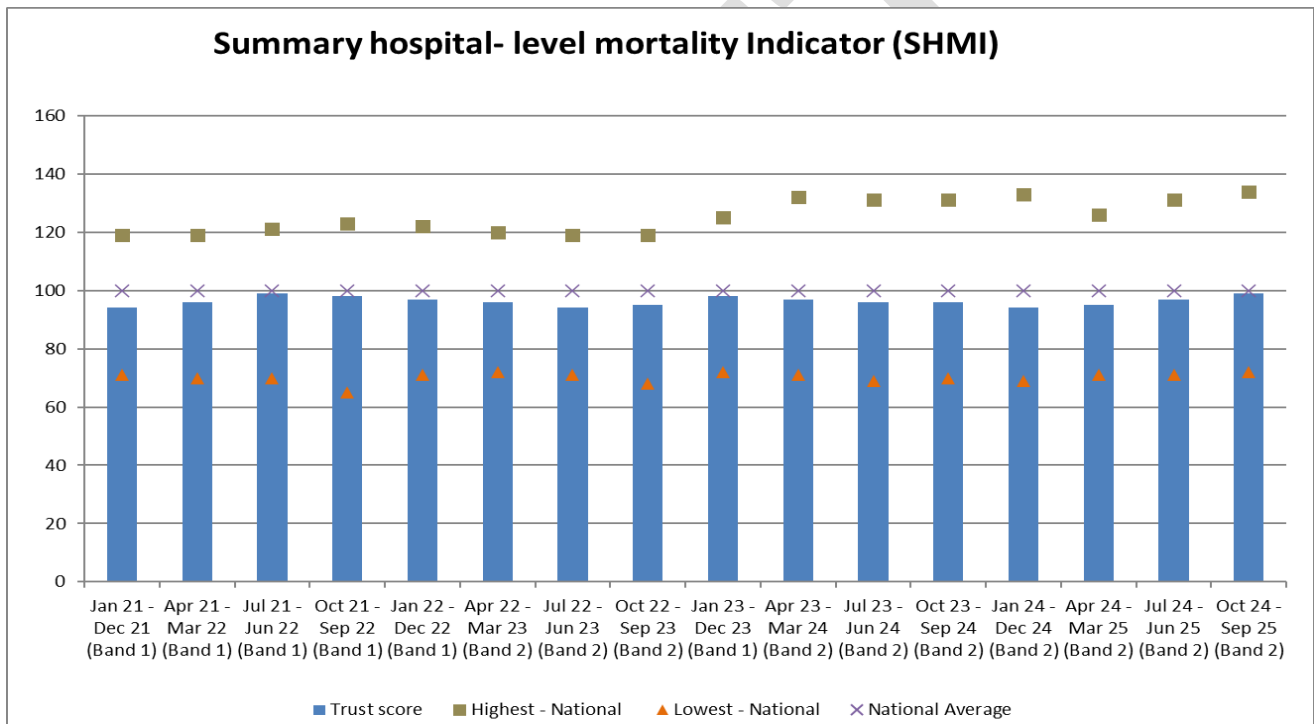
1. Summary Hospital-level Mortality Indicator (SHMI) and Palliative Care Coding

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

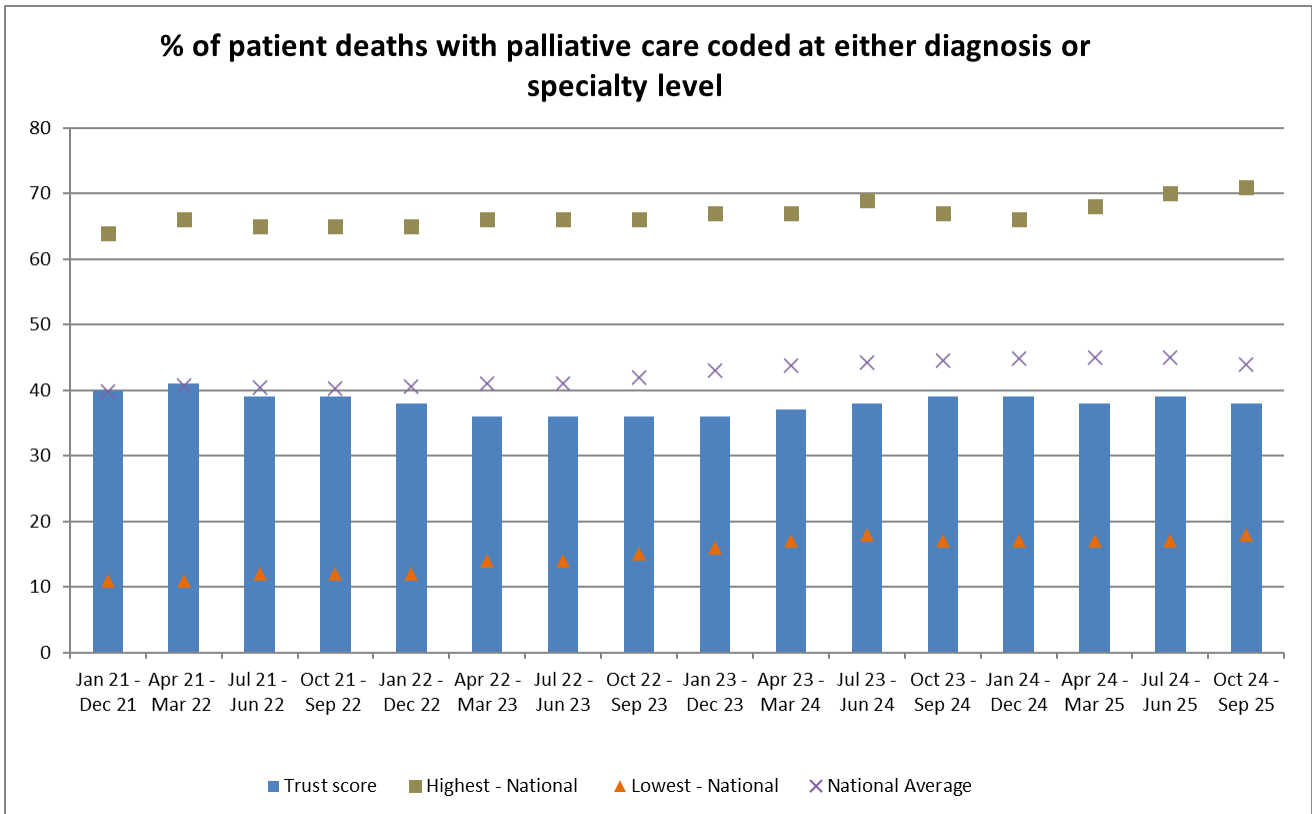
The SHMI indicator provides an indication on whether the mortality ratio of a provider is as expected, higher than expected or lower than expected when compared to the national baseline in England.

SHMI includes deaths up to 30 days after discharge and does not take into consideration palliative care.

The latest SHMI value of 99 (October 2024 to September 2025) continues to reside in the 'as expected' range.



Graph 6 – Summary Hospital-level mortality indicator (SHMI)



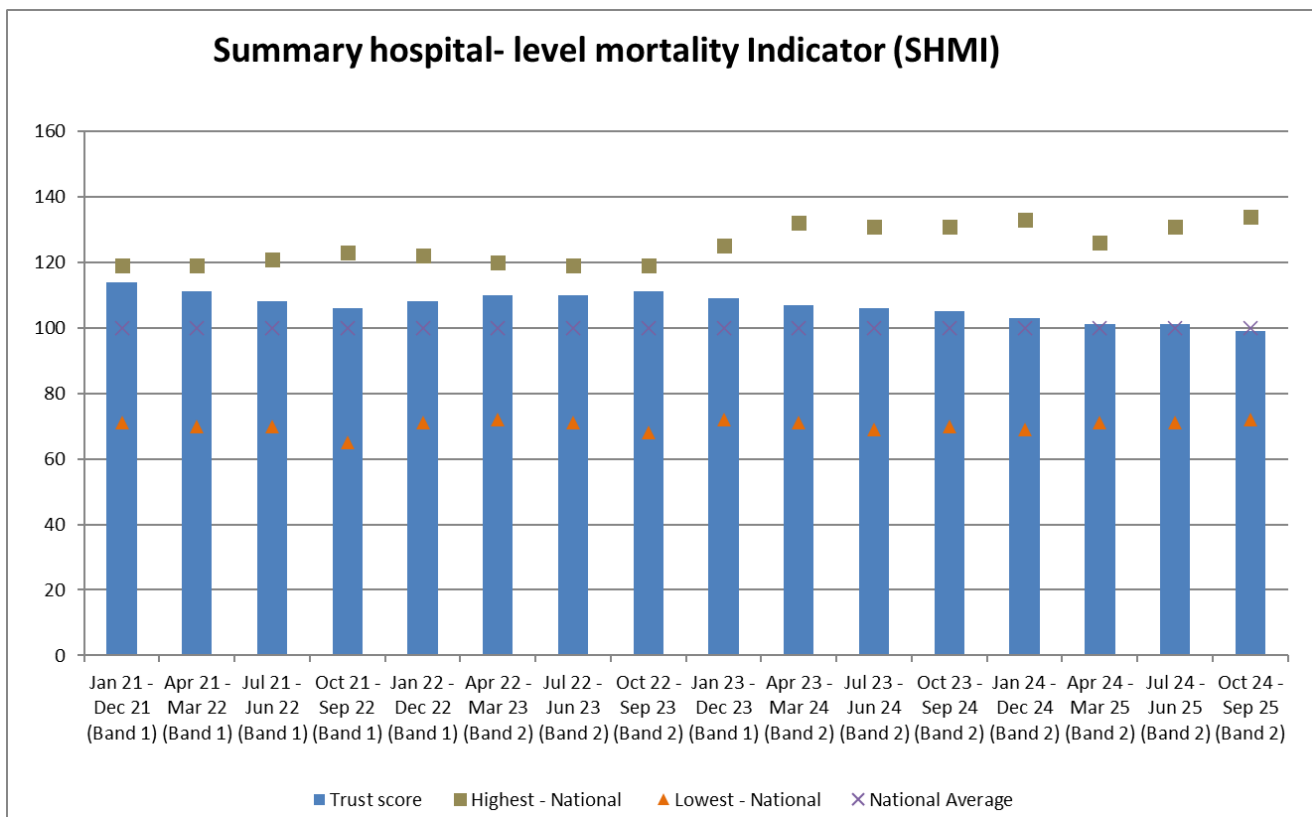
Graph 7 - % of patient deaths with palliative care coded at either diagnosis or speciality level

Learning from Deaths Improvement Work

The following are areas of learning and improvement resulting from mortality reviews:

- Recognition of Dying – Instances of both timely and delayed recognition of dying.
- Recognition of dying is included in palliative care training for all clinical groups. Work is also ongoing to embed a Treatment Escalation Plan within Trakcare to aid timely recognition of the deteriorating patient and aid ceiling of treatment decisions. It was also recognized that this is particularly challenging in patients with dementia and specific teaching on this is proposed.
- The Learning from Deaths team recommended some focused education for medical teams around Heart Failure diagnosis and management, following findings from Structured Judgement Reviews (SJRs).
- Timely recognition of needs and targeted support in patients with a Learning Disability noted as a particular point of good practice and fed back to relevant teams.
- Findings around the timeliness and accuracy of documentation were escalated and disseminated to teams.

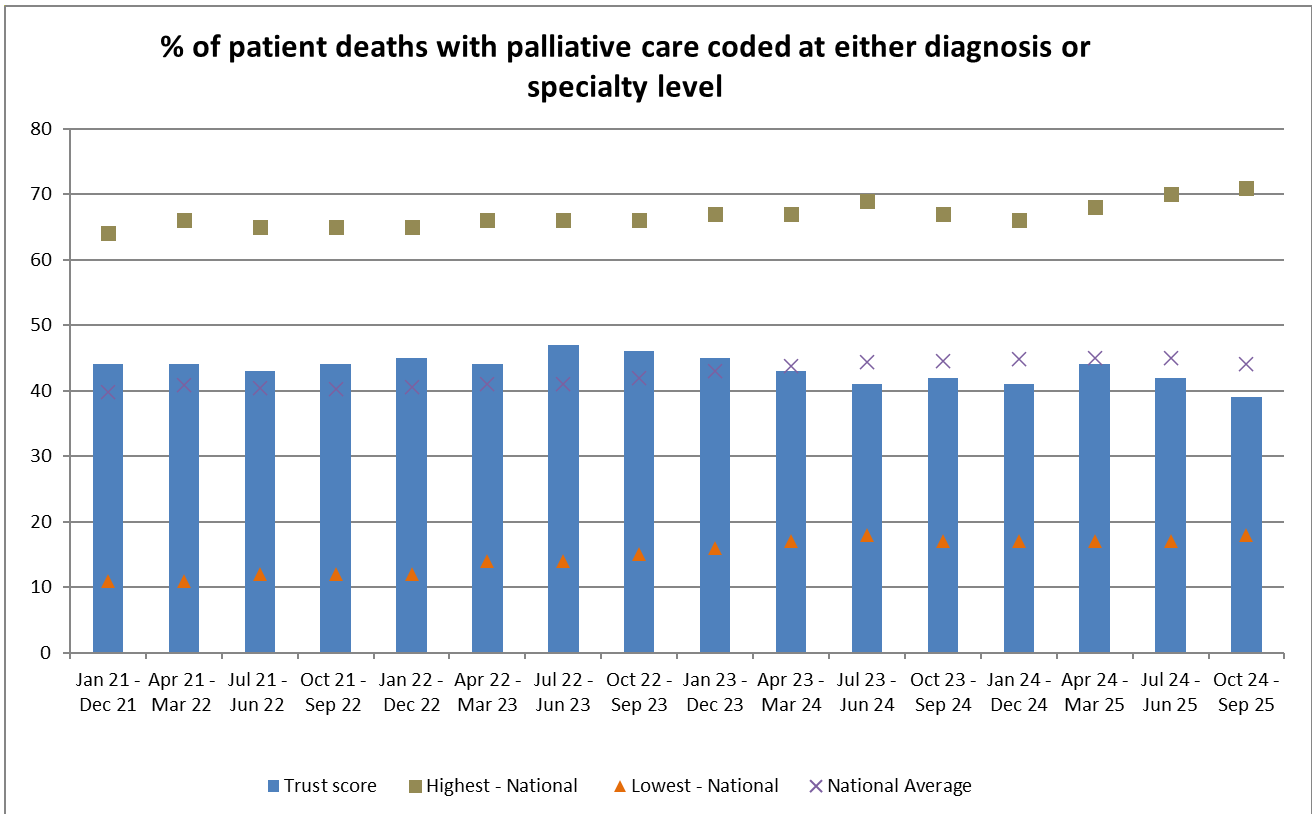
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Graph 8 - Summary Hospital Level Mortality Indicator (Data source: NHS Digital)

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust considers that this data is as described for the following reasons:

- The SHMI is not designed to account for the COVID-19 pandemic and although spells coded for COVID-19 have been removed by NHS Digital from the indicator calculation, the large reduction in the number of admissions to hospital, particularly during wave 1, has had a substantial impact on the expected number of deaths. Since January to December 2023, spells with COVID-19 are included, with a corresponding small increase in deaths and discharges of around 2%. However, SHMI has fallen compared to the pandemic period and is 'as expected' meaning that the number of observed deaths is within the statistical limits, compared to the estimated number of hospital deaths expected given the population of patients cared for in the Trust. The fall in the number of admissions has not been experienced evenly across the country, with areas that had high levels of COVID-19, such as the North-East, experiencing a greater impact.
- Despite the high level of need in the population the Trust serves, the organisation has historically fallen behind other Trusts in recording the number of other medical conditions patients have, alongside the main illnesses being treated. The implementation of electronic records systems has aided in a slow but steady improvement in comorbidity recording over the last six quarters though the Trust remains below the national average.



Graph 9 - % of patient deaths with palliative care coded at either diagnosis of specialty level

The percentage of patient deaths with specialist palliative care coding has been higher than the national average in the last twelve reporting periods at around 43%. This has fallen behind and the Trust is actively engaged in ensuring this ground is made up.

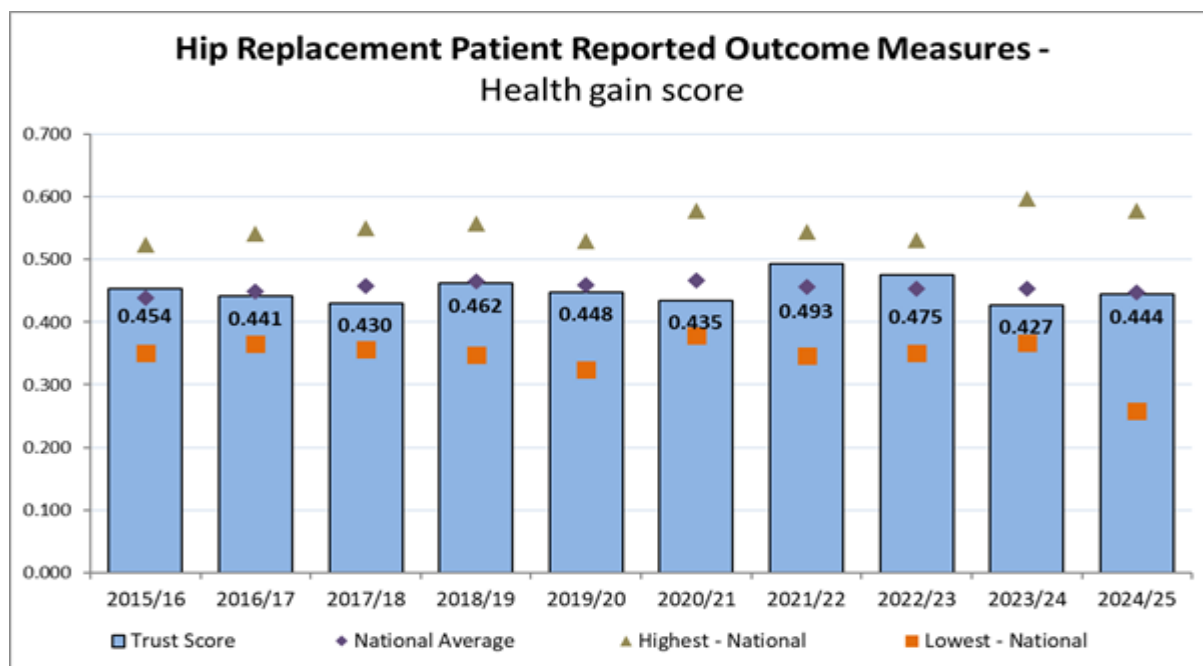
The Trust has taken the following actions to improve the indicators and therefore the quality of its services:

- The Trust has governance committees which monitor and respond to mortality information and the Quality Committee in particular coordinates hospital safety and improvement activity.
- The Trust regularly reviews the range of statistics available to monitor hospital mortality, establishing the Medical Examiner Service in May 2018 (the first in the North-East) to oversee Trust and specialty level case note reviews of hospital deaths so that common themes can be identified, and lessons can be learnt to improve the quality of its services.

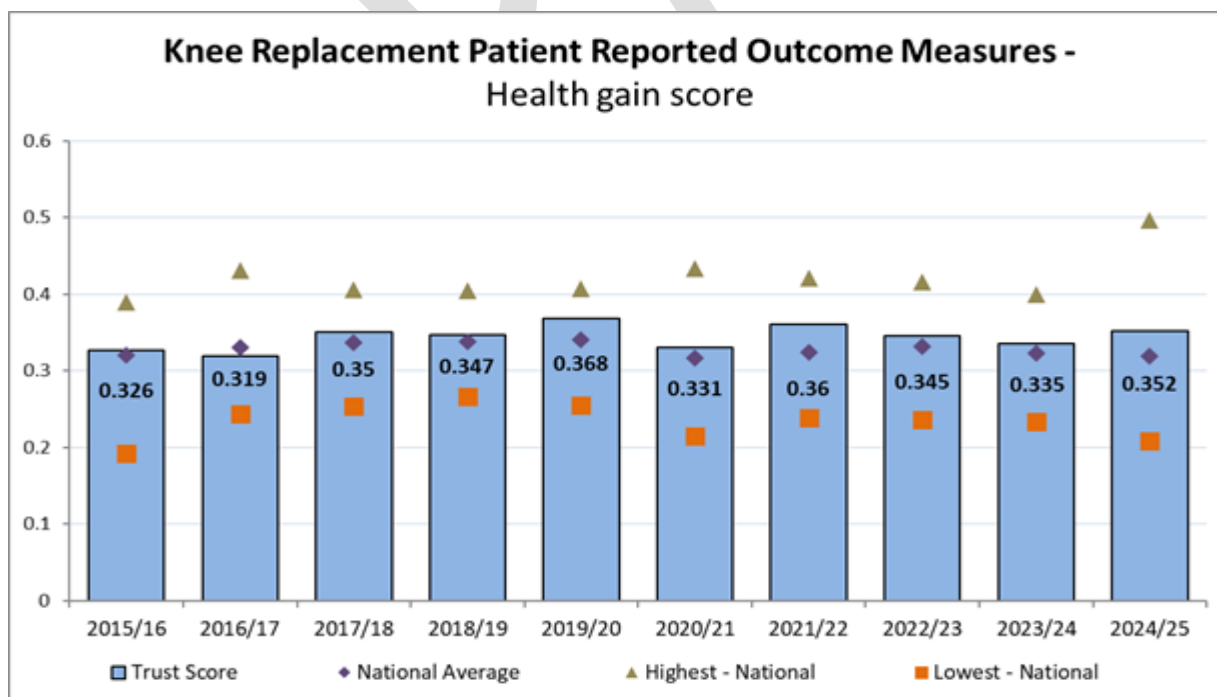
The number of deaths in the Trust is variable from year to year, depending on the severity of respiratory and other seasonal infections each year, and the pattern during the COVID-19 pandemic was unlike any previous year in the Trusts' history. The trend outside the seasonal variations and the pandemic years has remained stable over a long period of time, despite an aging population and increasing complexity of the condition's patients have when admitted to hospital. Work likely to affect mortality rates, particularly in elderly patients admitted to medical wards, includes sustained work on identification and management of deteriorating patients (the National Early Warning Score is electronically recorded in the Emergency Departments and Acute Assessment Units as well as all wards of the hospital), identifying and managing patients with sepsis, prevention of falls, and work identifying patients' level of frailty and providing appropriate support.

2. Patient reported outcome measures

Patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) measure a patient's health status or health-related quality of life through short questionnaires completed before and after a healthcare procedure. They provide an indication of the effectiveness and quality of care provided to our patients. The PROMs score reflects the case-mix adjusted healthcare gain achieved, with higher scores indicating greater improvement. See below data for both STHFT (Graph 10 and Graph 11) and NTHFT (Graph 12 and Graph 13).

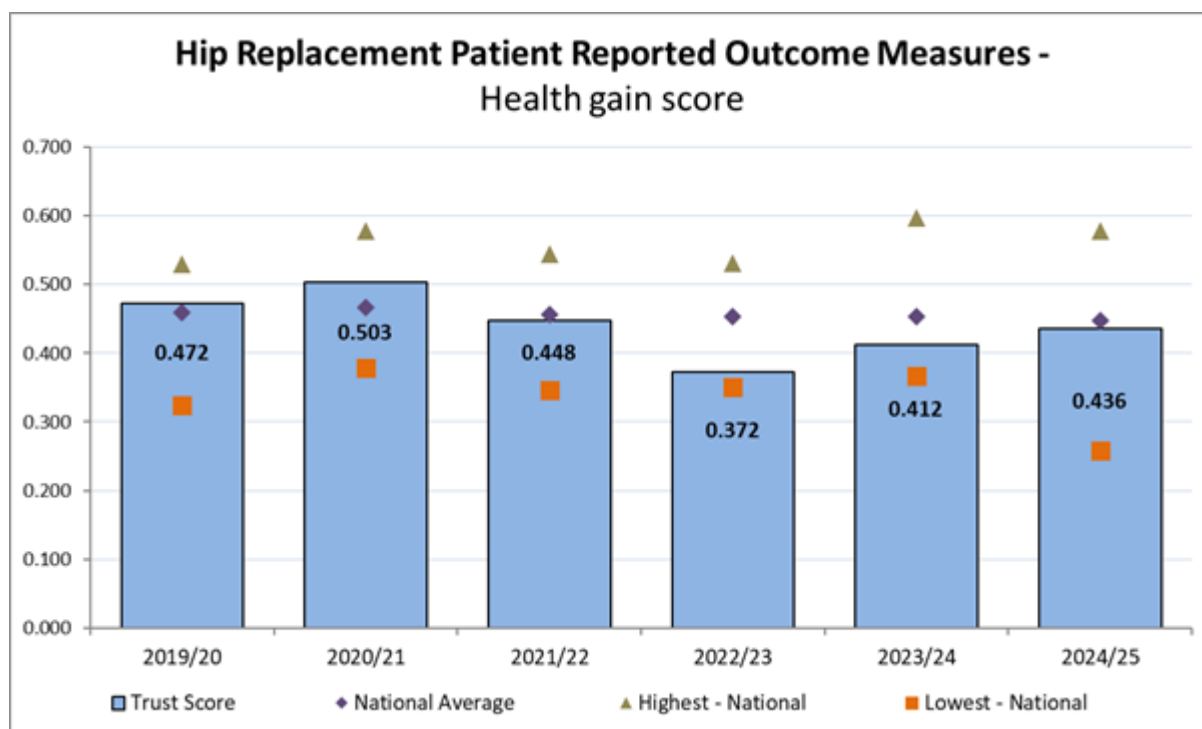


Graph 10 - Hip Replacement Patient Reported Outcome Measures - Health gain score **South Tees**. (Data Source NHS Digital)

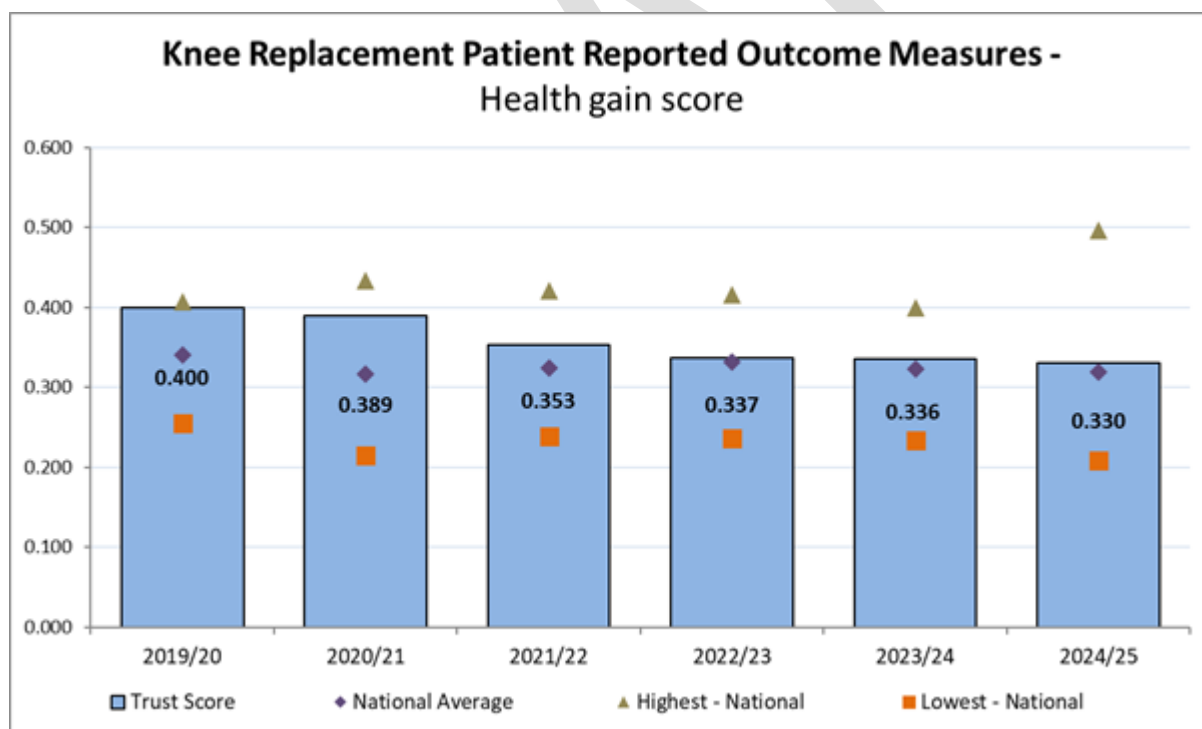


Graph 11 - Knee Replacement Patient Reported Outcome Measures - Health gain score **South Tees**. (Data Source NHS Digital)

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust



Graph 12 - Hip Replacement Patient Reported Outcome Measures - Health gain score **North Tees**



Graph 13 - Hip Replacement Patient Reported Outcome Measures - Health gain score **North Tees**

We consider that this data is as described for the following reasons:

- The health gain scores for hip replacements and knee replacements are in line with the national average for both Trusts.

To continue improving patient outcomes, UHT:

- Provides regular feedback of PROMs to clinical teams

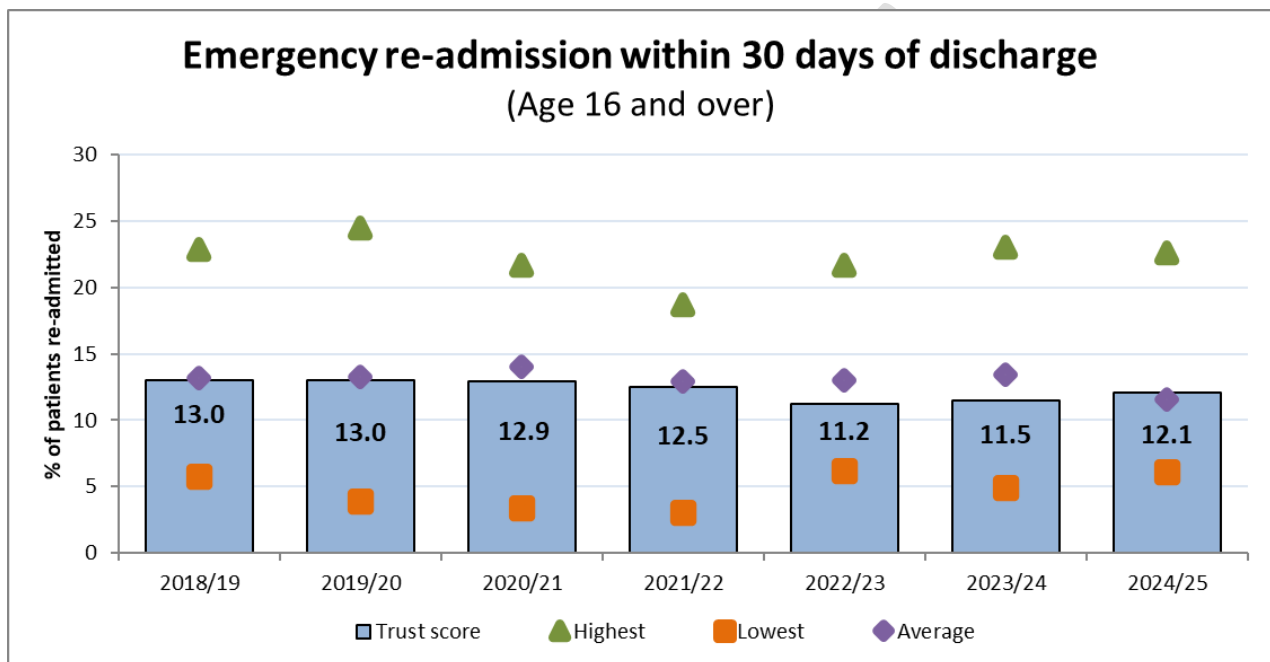
- Benchmarks performance across the NHS and other hospitals in the North-East, using reports from the North-East Quality Observatory Service (NEQOS).

These actions support on-going monitoring and assurance of service delivery.

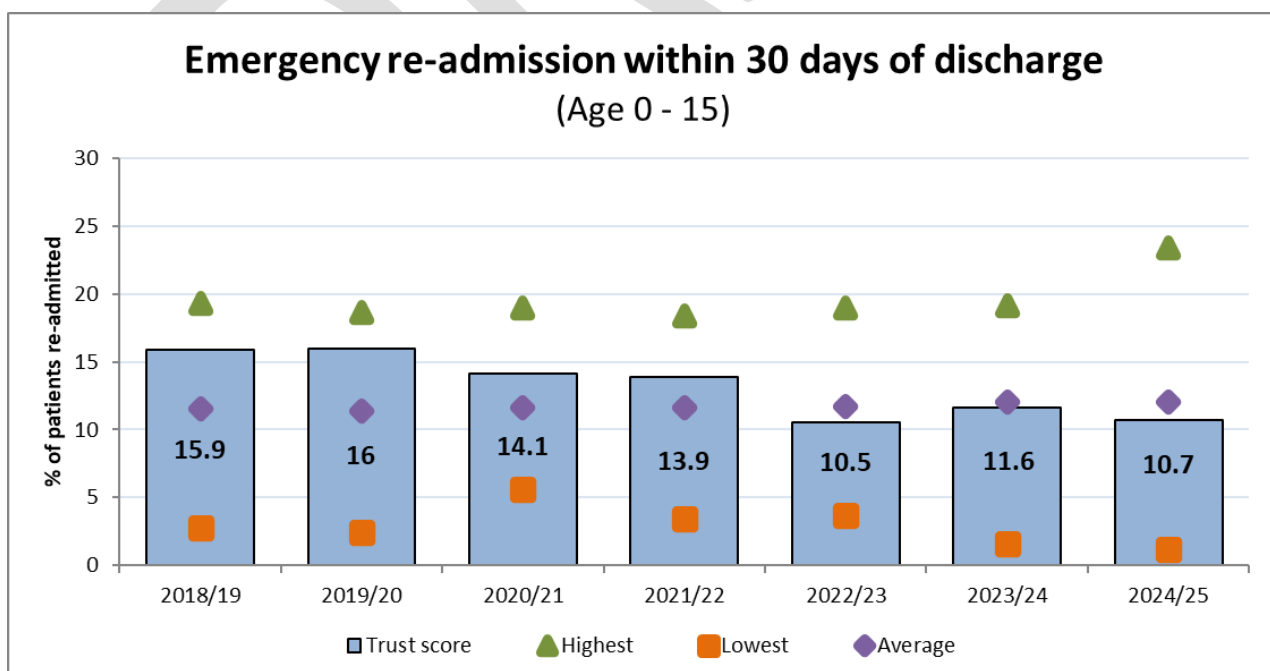
3. 30-day readmissions

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Emergency readmissions within 30 days occur for a range of complex clinical reasons; however, a lower rate of readmission is generally considered an indicator of safe, effective and well-coordinated care.



Graph 14 - Emergency re-admission within 30 days of discharge (age 16 and over)



Graph 15 - Emergency re-admission within 30 days of discharge (age 0- 15)

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust considers that this data is as described for the following reasons:

- Readmissions for patients aged **16 and over** increased from **11.5% in 2023/24** to **12.1% in 2024/25**.
- Readmissions for patients aged **0–15** decreased from **11.6% in 2023/24** to **10.7% in 2024/25**.

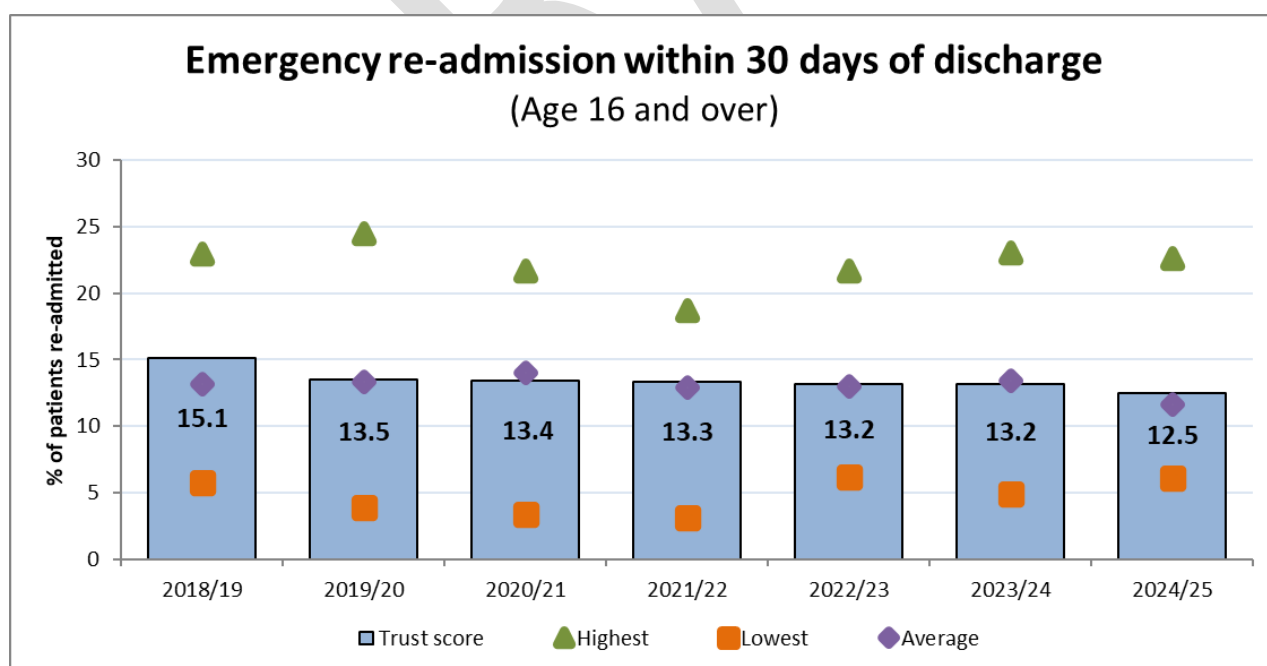
The Trust continues to focus on reducing avoidable emergency readmissions. A dedicated project group has been established to review readmission data in detail. Comprehensive analysis has been undertaken by speciality, Human Resource Group (HRG), Operational Procedure code and diagnosis code, alongside benchmarking against regional and national peers. Findings have been presented through executive governance processes to determine areas requiring further investigation or audit.

Key areas identified include:

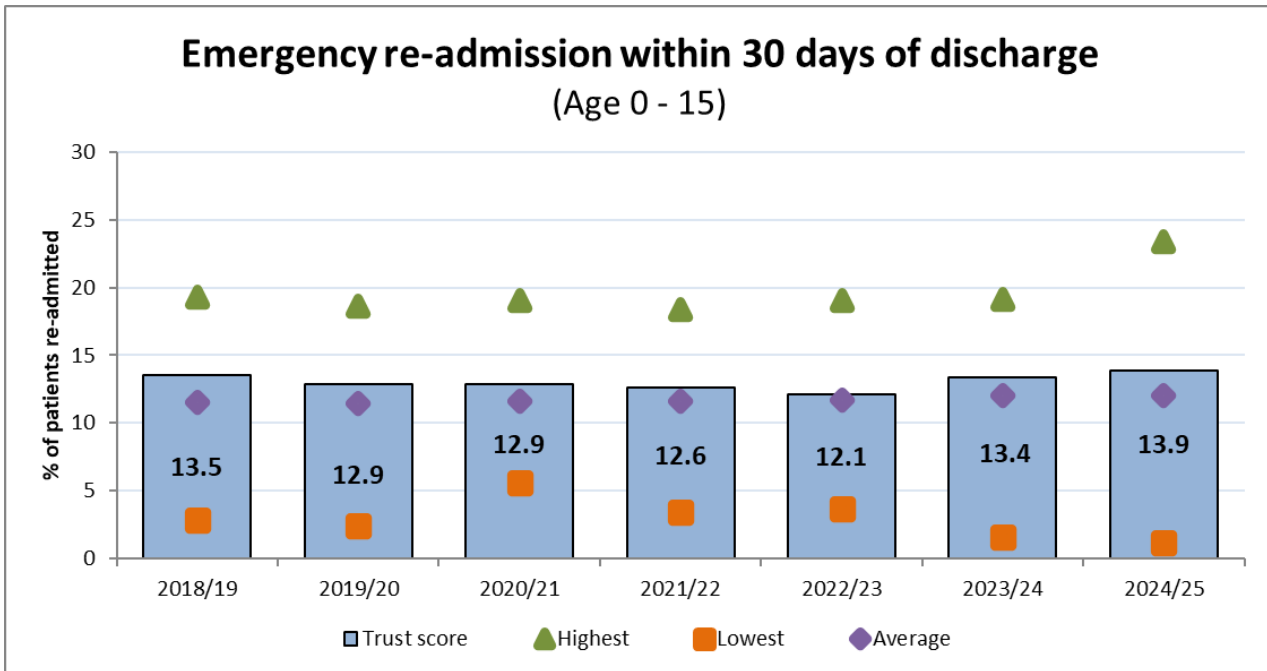
- Specialties for further review: Urology, Bariatric Surgery, Intensive Care Medicine, Endocrinology and Medical Oncology.
- Medical HRG outlier: Vascular procedures and disorders (spell chapter Y) at 13.9%, 3% above regional and 4.8% above national averages.
- Clinical themes: COPD, Pleural Effusions, Sepsis and Diabetes, particularly among patients with high comorbidity scores (9+ conditions).
- Surgical HRG outlier: Endocrine and metabolic system surgery (spell chapter L) at 18.9%, 7.8% above regional and 8.5% above national averages.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

As in other organisations, a proportion of emergency admissions cannot be avoided; however, lower readmission rates are associated with safer discharge, continuity of care and effective post-hospital support.



Graph 16 - Emergency re-admission within 30 days of discharge (age 16 and over)



Graph 17 - Emergency re-admission within 30 days of discharge (age 0- 15)

The North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust considers that this data is as described for the following reasons:

- Readmissions for patients aged **16 and over** decreased from **13.2% in 2023/24 to 12.5% in 2024/25**.
- Readmissions for patients aged **0–15** increased from **13.4% in 2023/24 to 13.9% in 2024/25**.

The established readmissions project group is supporting ongoing improvement. Detailed analysis has been undertaken by speciality, Human Resource Group (HRG), Operational Procedure code and diagnosis code, supported by benchmarking against regional and national comparators. Initial audit work has focused on COPD and respiratory patients, with outcomes shared through executive governance forums.

Areas highlighted for further review include:

- Specialties for further investigation: General Surgery, Colorectal Surgery, Paediatrics and Neonatal Critical Care.
- Medical HRG outlier: Skin, Breast and Burns (spell chapter J) at 19.9%, 11.7% above regional and 7.3% above national averages.
- Clinical themes: Diabetes, COPD, Sepsis and Pancreatic disorders, particularly among patients with high comorbidity scores (9+).
- Surgical HRG outlier: Respiratory system surgery (spell chapter D) at 20.6%, 7.3% above regional and 9.1% above national averages.

4. Responsiveness to the personal needs of its patients during the reporting period

NHS Digital has not published any data since the 2021 data included in the last Quality Account.

5. Inpatient surveys

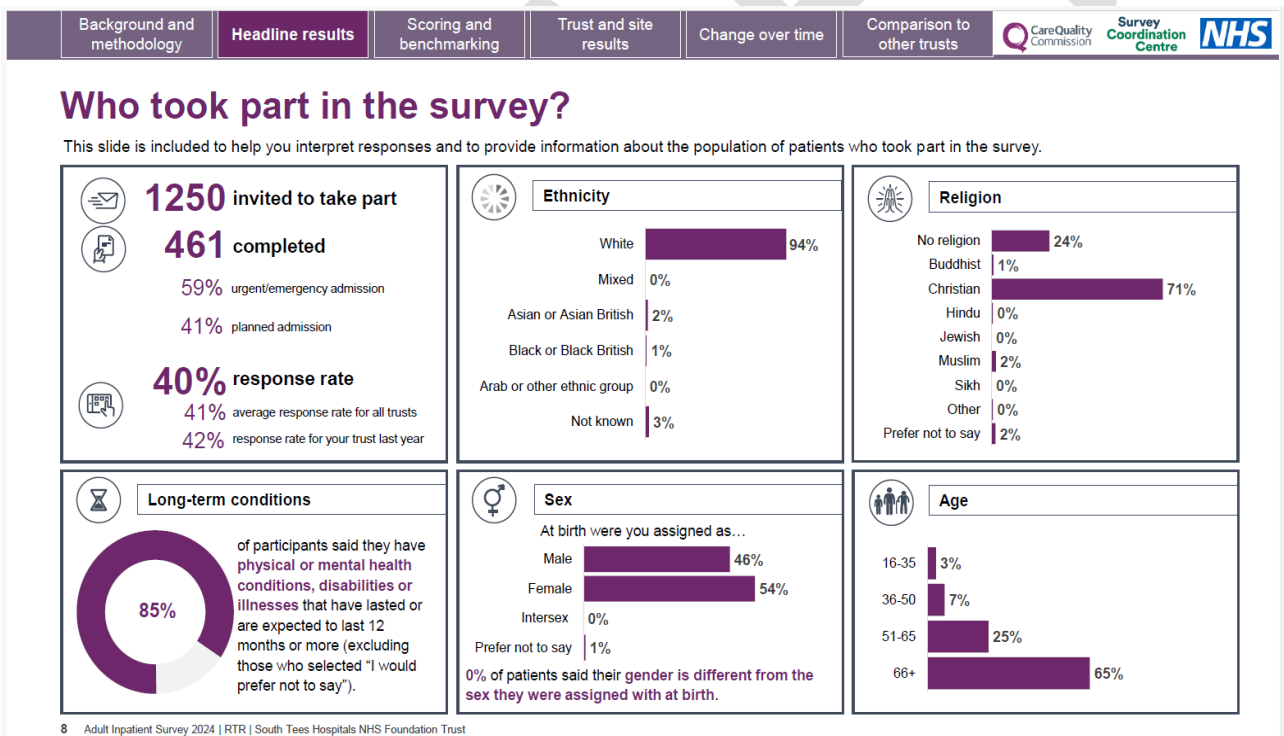
University Hospitals Tees (UHT) participates in a range of national patient experience surveys coordinated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) report separately for national survey results.

Published survey reports are reviewed to assess performance against previous years, local comparators and national averages. Where opportunities for improvement are identified, action plans are developed and monitored through the Experience of Care Council and the Quality Assurance Committee.

National Adult Inpatient Survey

The most recent National Adult Inpatient Survey was published by the CQC on 9 September 2025. The survey included responses from 62,444 patients across 131 acute NHS trusts in England, with a national response rate of 41%. Eligible participants were adults aged 16 years or over who spent at least one night in hospital during November 2024, excluding maternity and psychiatric admissions.

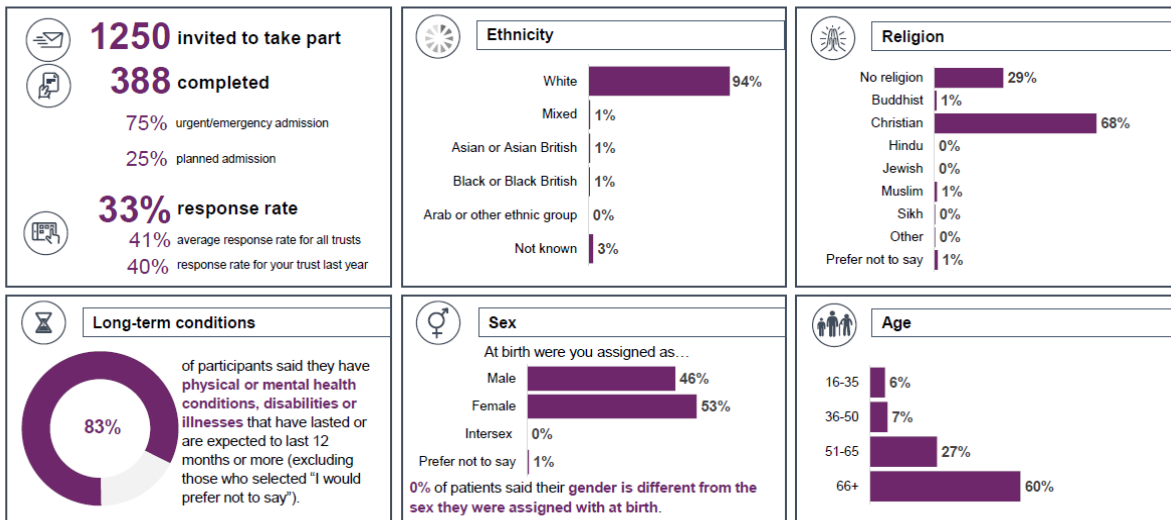
STHFT achieved a response rate of 40% (461 responses from 1,250 invitations).



NTHFT achieved a response rate of 33.3% (388 responses from 1,250 invitations).

Who took part in the survey?

This slide is included to help you interpret responses and to provide information about the population of patients who took part in the survey.



8 Adult Inpatient Survey 2024 | RWJ | North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Demographic profiles at both Trusts were consistent with previous years, with the majority of respondents aged over 66 and from a White ethnic background.

Survey performance

STHFT performed **better than expected** in the domains of basic needs, care and treatment, and leaving hospital, and **somewhat better than expected** for overall experience. Performance in all other domains was **about the same** as comparable trusts. No areas were rated worse than expected.

NTHFT performance was **about the same** as other trusts across all survey domains, with one question scoring worse than expected, relating to nurse staffing levels.

Free-text comments were analysed at both Trusts. Overall, 65% of comments at STHFT and 56% at NTHFT were positive. Positive themes focused on staff care and treatment, while areas for improvement included elements of the care pathway and hospital environment.

Improvement actions

A joint action plan was developed focusing on:

- **Workforce and staffing oversight**, including safer staffing processes, workforce assurance meetings and targeted recruitment activity
- **Discharge processes**, including discharge working groups, improved checklist compliance, new patient information, volunteer follow-up calls, system-wide collaboration and improved monitoring through dashboards
- **Medication processes**, particularly safe and timely medicines reconciliation at discharge

Progress against these actions continues to be monitored through established governance arrangements.

National Cancer Patient Experience Survey

The National Cancer Patient Experience Survey was published on 18 July 2024, based on patient experiences between April and June 2024. The national response rate was 50%. Response rates were 49% at NTHFT (350 responses) and 50% at STHFT (723 responses).

Overall ratings of care remained high, with NTHFT scoring 8.8 and STHFT scoring 9.0 out of 10. Both Trusts performed above the expected range in several areas relating to staff communication, support, information provision and involvement of patients and families.

Key findings and actions

Both Trusts identified opportunities to improve communication with patients regarding waiting times for diagnostic results. As a result:

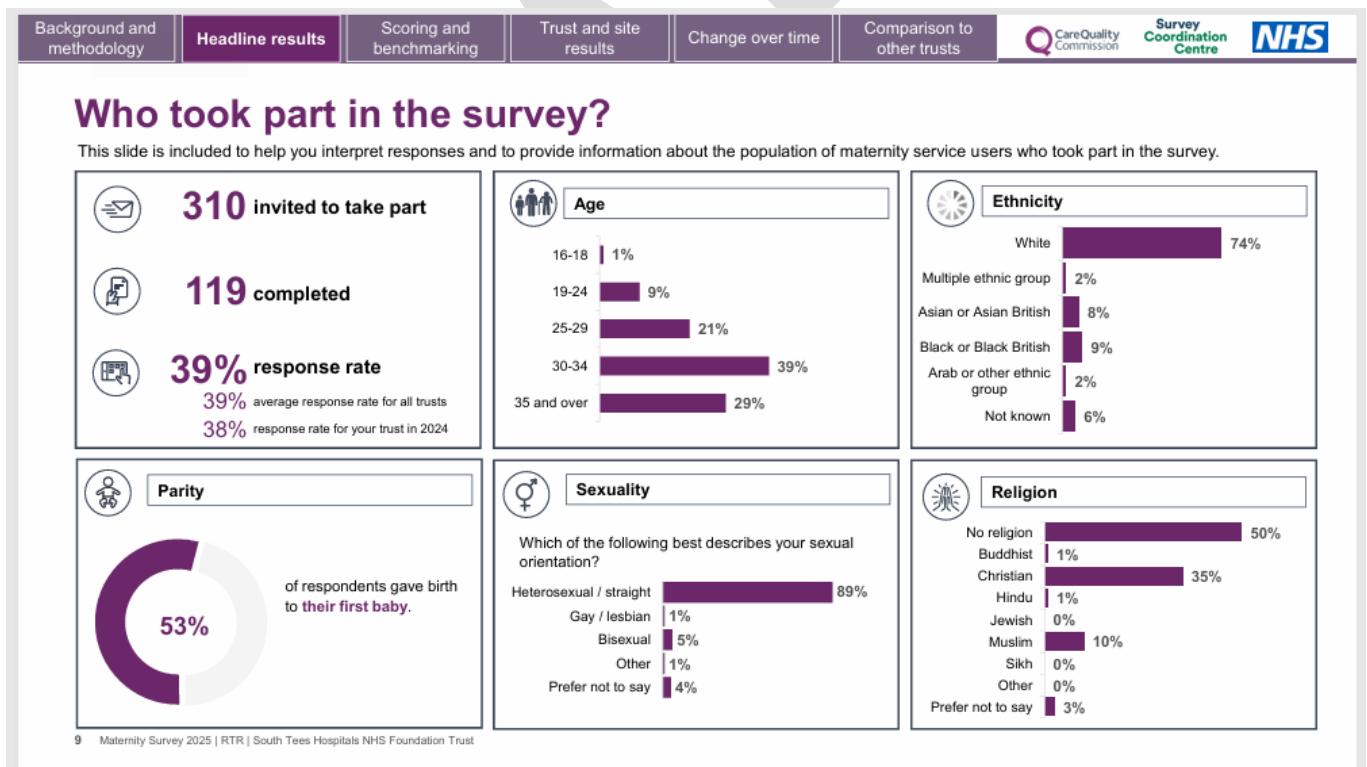
- Task and finish groups have been established across cancer pathways
- Reviews of nurse-led clinic provision are underway to improve capacity and access
- Tumour-specific action plans have been developed, with targeted focus areas including prostate, skin and upper gastrointestinal pathways

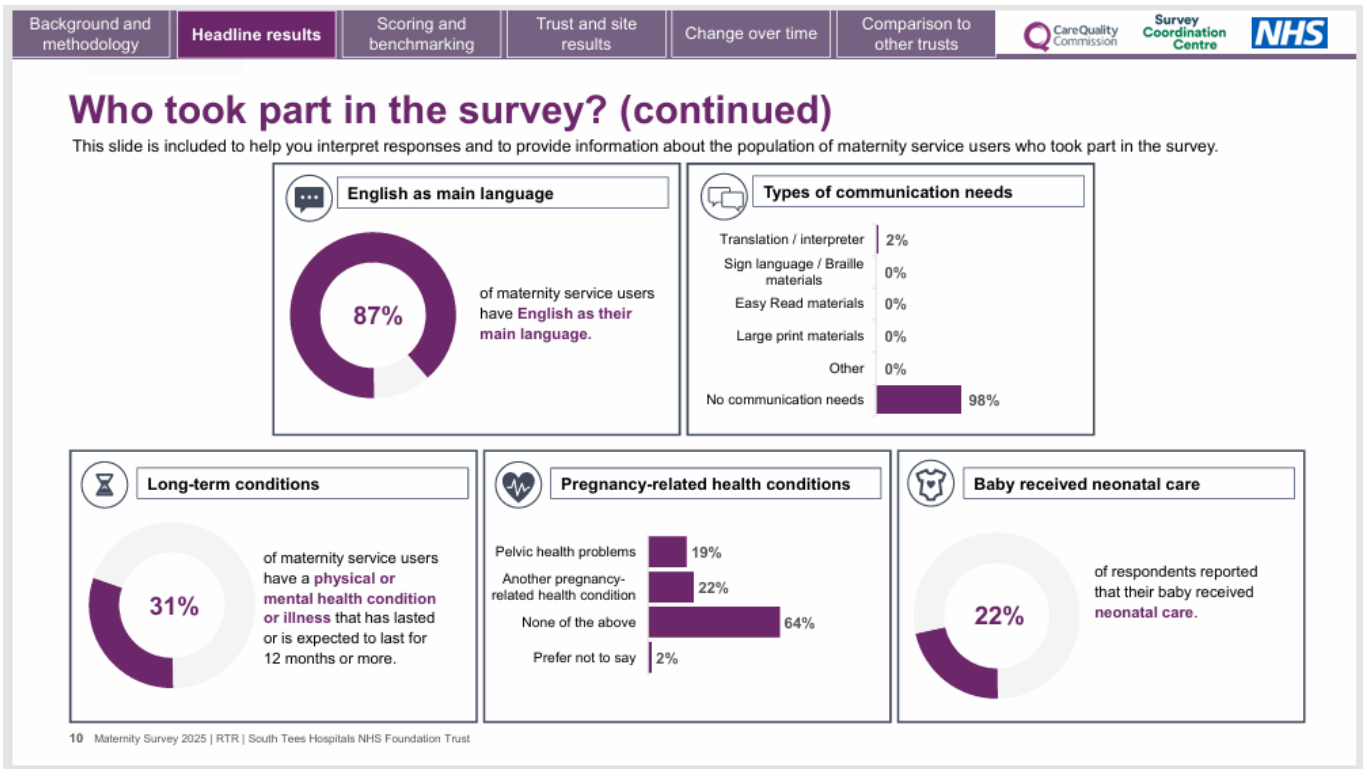
Oversight of these actions is maintained through cancer governance structures and the Experience of Care Council.

National Maternity Survey

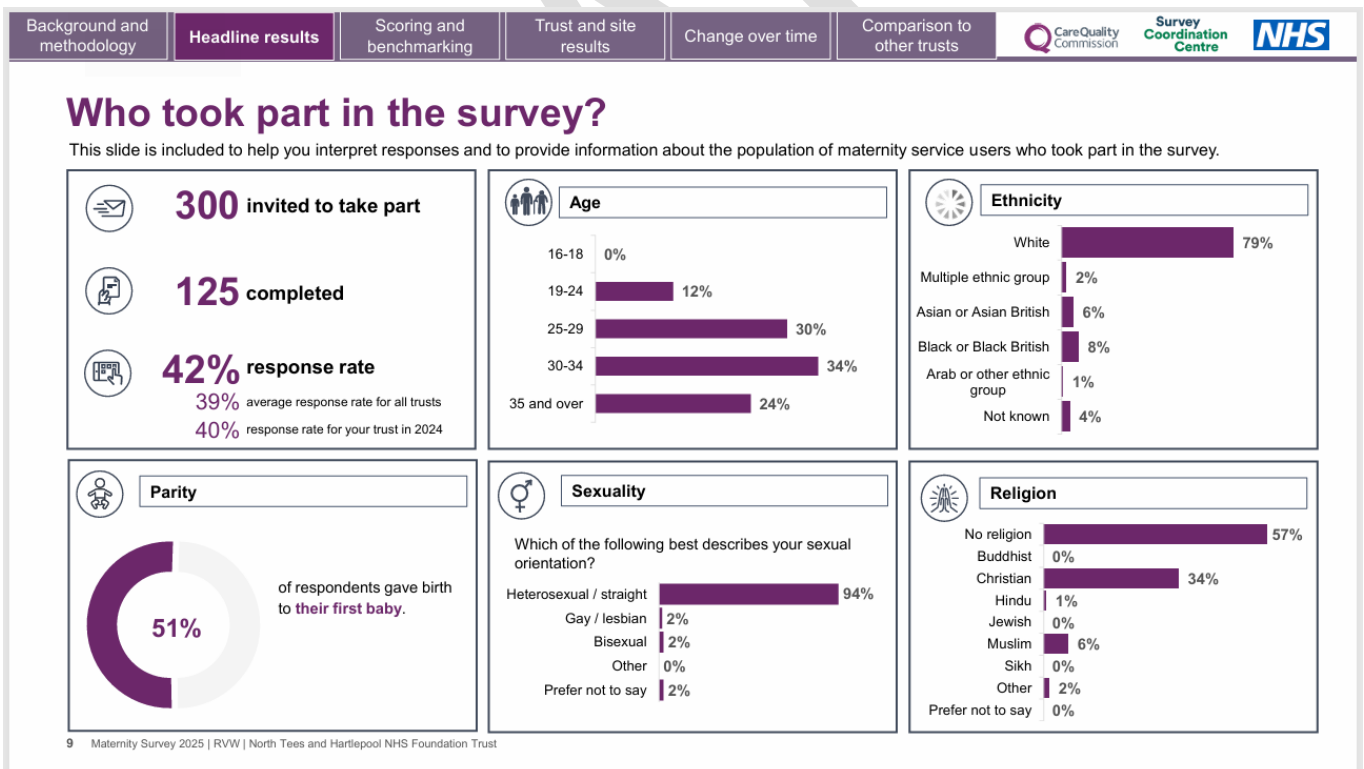
The National Maternity Survey was published in December 2025 and captured experiences of people giving birth in February 2025.

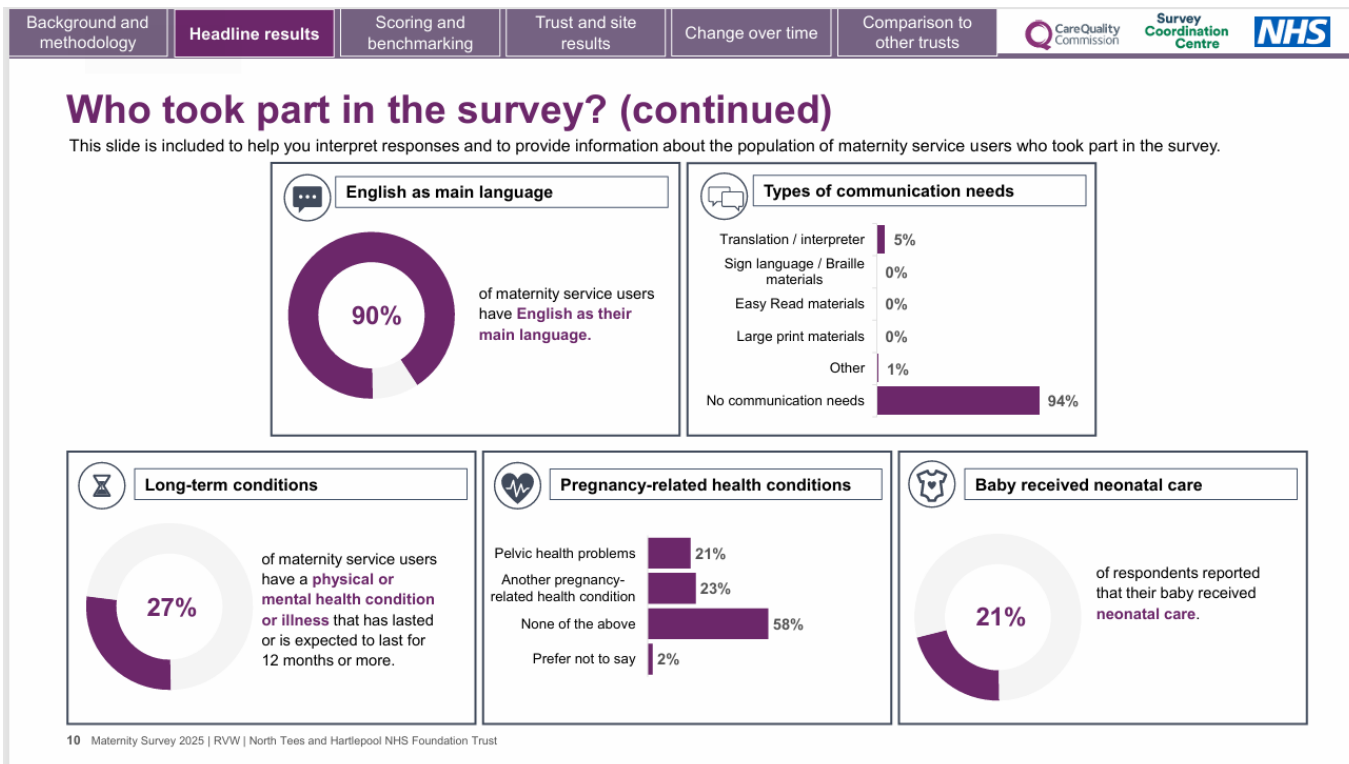
STHFT achieved a response rate of 39%





NTHFT received a response rate of 42%.





Both Trusts performed **about the same as other trusts** across the majority of survey questions, with areas of strong performance and no statistically significant worse-than-expected scores for STHT.

NTHFT identified areas for improvement relating to communication, involvement in decision-making and pain management.

Improvement actions

Action plans were developed in collaboration with clinical teams and include:

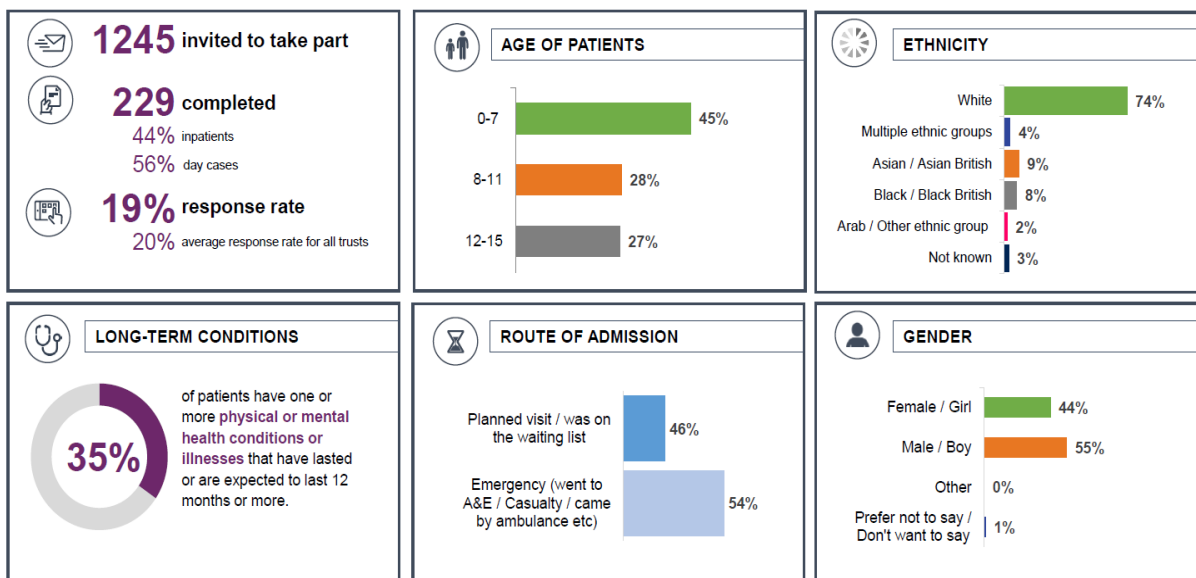
- Improved access to contact information via BadgerNet
- Enhanced multidisciplinary team training
- Improved communication support for patients whose first language is not English
- Reviews of electronic prescribing and mental health referral processes
- Strengthened infant feeding support

National Children and Young People's Survey

The 2024 Children and Young People's Survey recorded responses from 120 NHS trusts nationally.

Who took part in the survey?

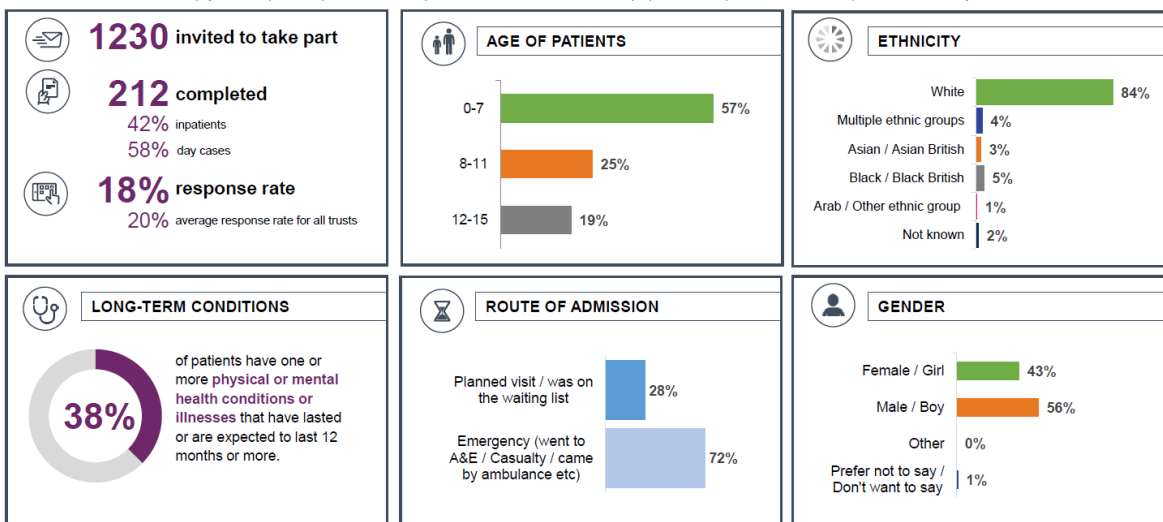
This slide is included to help you interpret responses and to provide information about the population of patients who took part in the survey.



8 Children and Young People's Patient Experience Survey | 2024 | RTR | South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Who took part in the survey?

This slide is included to help you interpret responses and to provide information about the population of patients who took part in the survey.



8 Children and Young People's Patient Experience Survey | 2024 | RWW | North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Both STHFT and NTHFT performed well compared with national averages, particularly in areas relating to compassionate care, communication and overall experience.

Survey comments highlighted positive experiences of staff kindness, play facilities and ward environments. Areas for improvement included waiting times, post-operative care, discharge information and support for children with additional needs.

Improvement actions

A UHT wide action plan has been established, focusing on:

- Ward environment and co-horting
- Play and activity provision
- Communication about waiting times
- Food availability outside mealtimes
- Discharge information using digital and CYP-friendly formats
- Improved support for children with additional needs

Progress is monitored through the Experience of Care Council.

Governance

The Experience of Care Council is responsible for overseeing and monitoring action plans arising from national patient experience surveys with oversight from the Quality Assurance Committee.

6. Staff Friends and Family Test

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

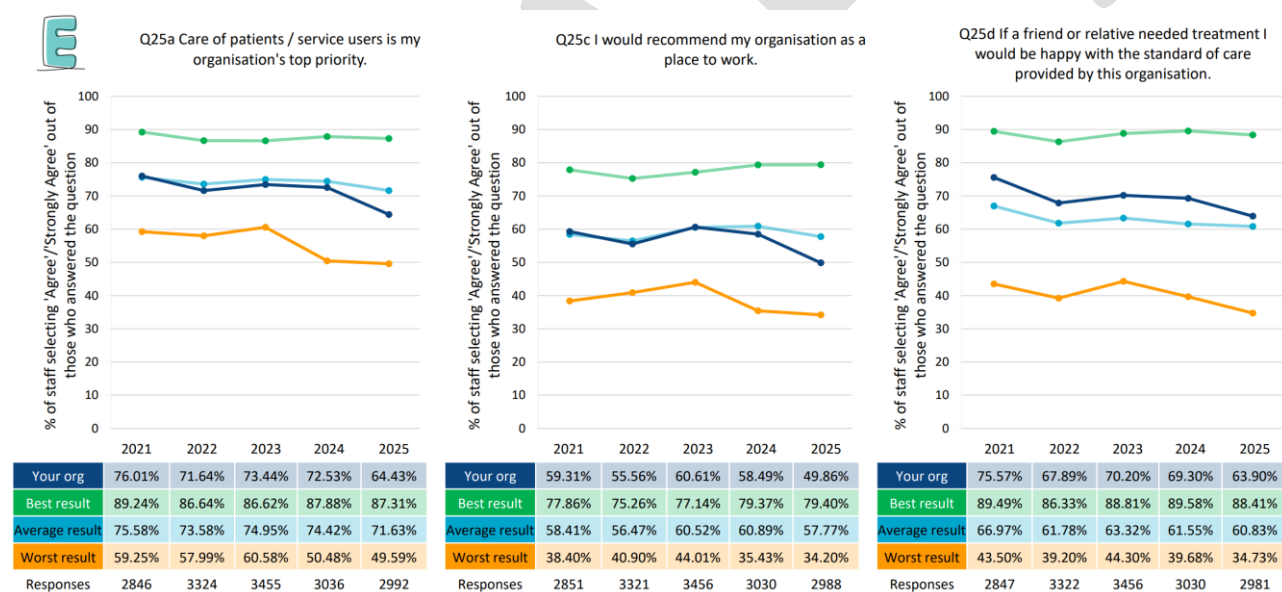


Figure 7 - NHS Staff Survey results relevant to staff friends and family test (Data source: NHS Staff Survey benchmark report 2025)

The South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has seen a decline in the following areas in 2025:

- Recommending the organisation as a place to work.
- Care of patients/service users is my organisations top priority.
- If a relative or friend needed treatment, I would be happy with the standard of care.

We have reported the lowest scores for these questions over the past 5 years, this is in line with the national average results.

However, we have remained above average for the response to the question ‘if a relative or friend needed treatment, I would be happy with the standard of care’.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

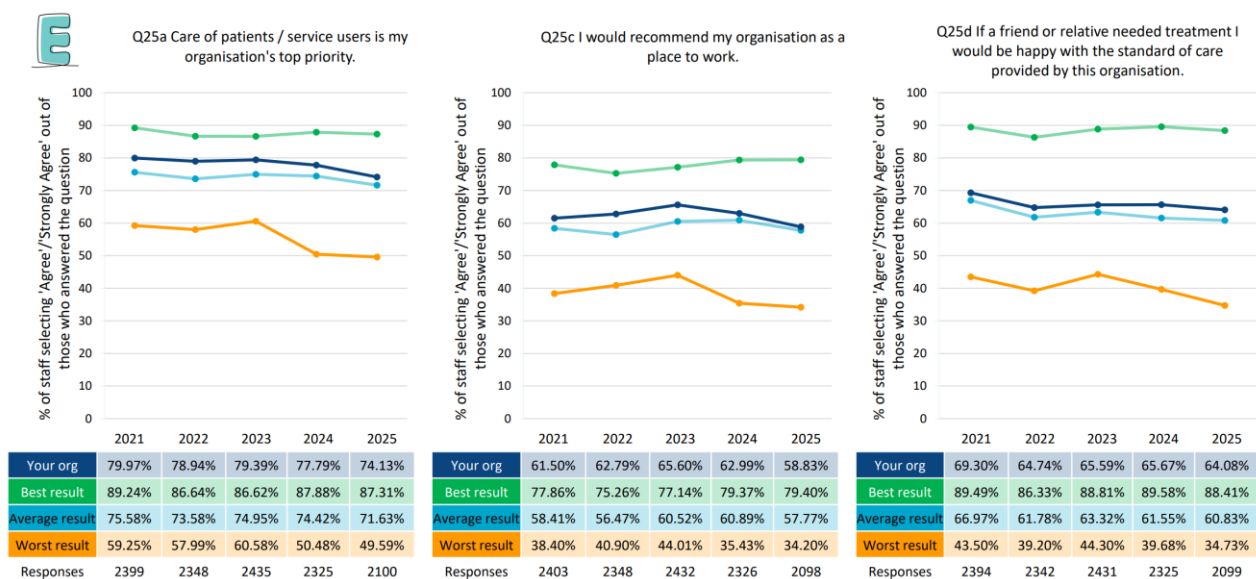


Figure 8 - NHS Staff Survey results relevant to staff friends and family test (Data source: NHS Staff Survey benchmark report 2025)

The North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust considers that this data is as described for the following reasons:

The Trust has shown a slight decline in the following friends and family test sections:

- Recommending the organisation as a place to work
- Care of patients/service users is my organisations top priority
- If a relative or friend needed treatment, I would be happy with the standard of care
-

However, we have remained above the sector average across all three reported questions.

STHFT and NTHFT, working together as University Hospitals Tees, intend to take the following actions to further improve this percentage and thereby the quality of its services.

- **Strengthening local accountability and staff engagement:** Clinical Service Units (CSUs) will develop clear, measurable people plans incorporating their 2025 survey results. These plans will be discussed with teams, include specific actions to address areas of concern, and be reviewed quarterly to ensure progress is visible and sustained.
- **Making Group transformation meaningful at frontline level:** Through the University Hospitals Tees collaboration with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, the Trust will ensure that transformation programmes demonstrate tangible improvements in patient care, staffing resilience, and service quality. Regular updates and case studies will be shared with staff to clearly show how Group working benefits patients and colleagues.
- **Reinforcing patient care and staff wellbeing as core priorities:** The Trust will increase visible leadership engagement, share regular quality and safety updates with teams, and strengthen wellbeing and workforce support initiatives via various briefings, bulletins, and other communications. This will ensure staff feel supported, listened to and

confident that delivering high-quality patient care remains the organisation's primary focus.

7. Venous thromboembolism risk assessments

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends that all patients admitted to hospital should be assessed for their risk of developing venous thromboembolism (VTE). Patients at higher risk can then be treated with appropriate prophylactic medication to reduce the risk of developing VTE. This measure shows the percentage of eligible inpatients who were risk assessed. A high percentage score is good, with a national target of at least 95% patients being risk assessed.

Historic data collection at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) was hampered by paper-based risk assessments which needed to be individually logged for each patient. Throughout 2024, electronic prescribing and note keeping, including electronic VTE risk assessment, was introduced throughout STHFT. This has led to more reliable capture of completed VTE risk assessments in comparison to previous paper-based risk assessments.

National data collection, previously on hold since the COVID-19 pandemic, resumed in 2025. Figures for the current 2025-2026 year are:

Q1 : 94.9% (South Tees)	95.7% (North Tees & Hartlepool)
Q2 : 95.6% (South Tees)	95.5% (North Tees & Hartlepool)
Q3 : 95.3% (South Tees)	95.5% (North Tees & Hartlepool)
Q4 : 95.72% (South Tees)	94.83% (North Tees & Hartlepool)

Ongoing challenges at STHFT are data capture on wards which do not currently use electronic VTE risk assessment, and data capture of patients treated at satellite sites.

With the development of University Hospitals Tees, future data collection will need to consider both Trusts, initially requiring a review of the data collection processes at both sites to ensure that similar methods are being followed.

VTE continues to be a high clinical priority in University Hospitals Tees. VTE risk assessment data continues to be reviewed and discussed at biannual Thrombosis Committee meetings with escalation to the Clinical Effectiveness Group where appropriate. We also review all cases of hospital acquired VTE, giving feedback to clinical teams where appropriate. The Thrombosis Committee, currently based at STHFT, plans to move to a group meeting with NTHFT colleagues, going forward.

8. Clostridioides difficile (*C. difficile*) Infections rates

C. difficile is a bacterium that is found in the gut of around 3% of healthy adults. It seldom causes a problem as it is kept under control by the normal bacteria of the intestine. However certain antibiotics can disturb the bacteria of the gut and *C. difficile* can then multiply and produce toxins which cause symptoms such as diarrhoea.

The Trust reports healthcare associated *C. difficile* cases to UK Health Security Agency via the national data capture system against the following categories:

- Hospital onset healthcare associated (HOHA): cases that are detected in the hospital 2 or more days after admission (where day of admission is day 1), and

- Community onset healthcare associated (COHA): cases that occur in the community (or within 2 days of admission) when the patient has been an inpatient in the trust reporting the case in the previous 4 weeks.

The Trust considers that this data is as described for the following reasons:

- The Trust is required under the NHS Standard Contract to minimise rates of *C. difficile* infection so that it is no higher than the threshold level set by NHS England.
- The data below reflects the ongoing work within the Trust in relation to *C. difficile* infection.

The Trust reported **225** trust-attributable cases for the 2024-25 period. This is a significant increase in cases and is mirrored across the region and nationally. The annual threshold for 2025-26 was 188 cases. The Trust is reporting 190 cases for the period 2025-26, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is reporting higher and North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust are under trajectory

The Trust continues to implement several actions to improve the number of *C. difficile* cases:

- The Trust has a comprehensive improvement plan for the prevention of hospital associated infections including *C. difficile* cases, which is supported by the Clinical Service Units with the ownership of their own internal action plan and is monitored through the IPC governance routes via the Infection Prevention and Control Operational and Strategic Groups and reported through to the Quality Oversight Group and Quality Assurance Committee.
- All trust attributed cases are reviewed by an MDT approach and are individually discussed at weekly MDT meetings and ward rounds if the case is an inpatient. The cases are reviewed and themes identified by the IPC team.
- Membership of the Northeast and North Cumbria ICB ‘Deep Dive’ around *C. difficile* continues with further diagnostic sessions planned.
- The Trust has increased cleaning provision in line with the national cleaning standards and continues to maintain these standards of increased cleaning, HPV remains the gold standard and is therefore requested on all *C. difficile* cases upon discharge or transfer.
- Membership of NHS England national ‘Deep Dive’ around *C. difficile*. This has involved a diagnostic visit from Global IPC Specialists on 27th March to support with this.

Staff continue their efforts to control and reduce opportunities for infections to spread, whether we treat people in our clinical premises or in their own homes. The importance of adherence to high standards of hand hygiene has continued to be a core element of our strategy.

The following table identifies the number of hospital and community onset cases of *C. difficile* reported by our laboratory.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Hospital onset-Healthcare-associated	128 & 74 = 202	146 & 79 = 225	131 & 59 = 190
Community- onset associated	69 & 20 = 89	83 & 19 = 102	49 & 43 = 92

Table 11 - Trust *C. difficile* cases 2023-26

9. Patient safety incidents

The National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) was decommissioned on 30 June 2024. Both Trusts have successfully implemented the Learning from Patient Safety Events (LFPSE) reporting platform and moved away from the historical manual uploading process required by the National Reporting and Learning System.

The LFPSE system created a single national NHS system for recording patient safety events. It introduces improved capabilities for the analysis of patient safety events occurring across healthcare, and enables better use of the latest technology, such as machine learning, to create outputs that offer a greater depth of insight and learning that are more relevant to the current NHS environment.

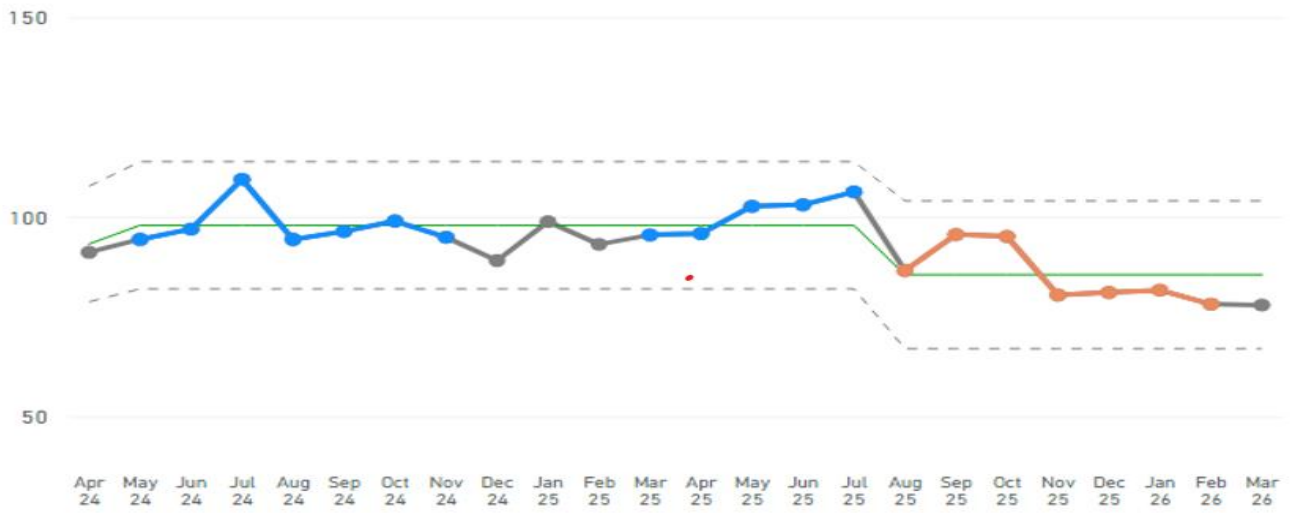
National LFPSE data for quarter 3, 2025/26 reports recording rates for acute Trusts ranging between 13 and 202 incidents per 1000 bed days and in community Trusts the rate was between 1 and 16 incidents per 1000 care contacts.

From the national data set, the North Tees and Hartlepool Trust rate for this period is 81.8 and South Tees is 83.8. UHT data is displayed in Graph 18 and Graph 19 below, this varies from the national data, as not all locally reported events are uploaded to the national system. The Trusts are in regular communication with the national patient safety team to support the resolution of any issues being identified in the new system and its interface with the UHT system.

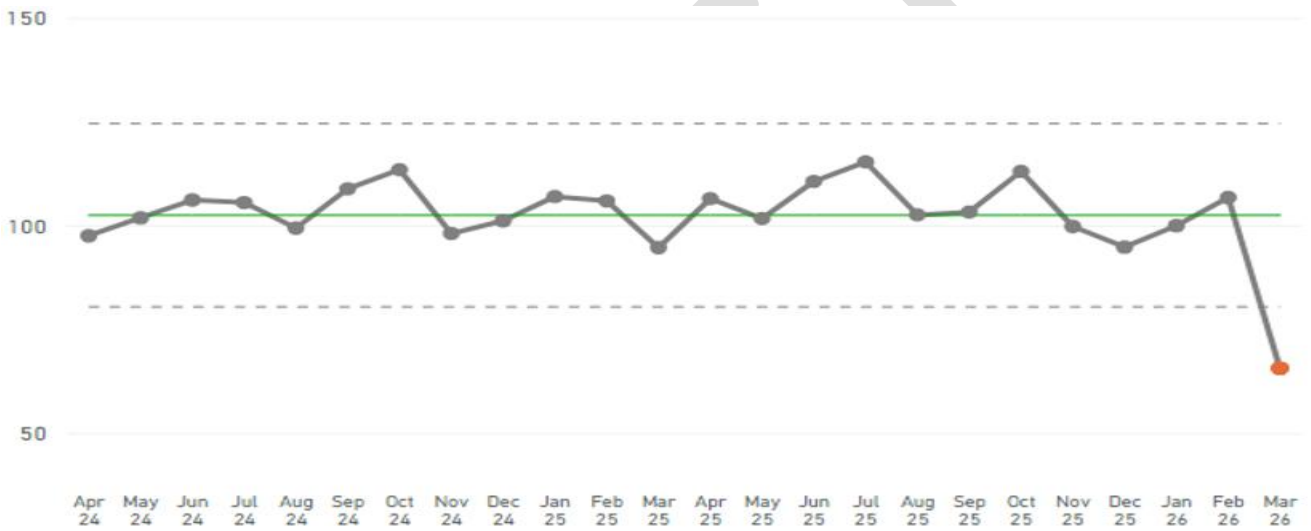
Once fully functional, LFPSE will;

- Make it easier for staff across all healthcare settings to record safety events, with automated uploads from local systems to save time and effort, and introducing new tools for non-hospital care where reporting levels have historically been lower.
- Collect information that is better suited to learning for improvement than what is currently gathered by existing systems.
- Make data on safety events easier to access, to support local and specialty-specific improvement work.
- Utilise new technology to support higher quality and more timely data, machine learning, and provide better feedback for staff and organisations.

We have included some more recent related data from our internal data reporting below.

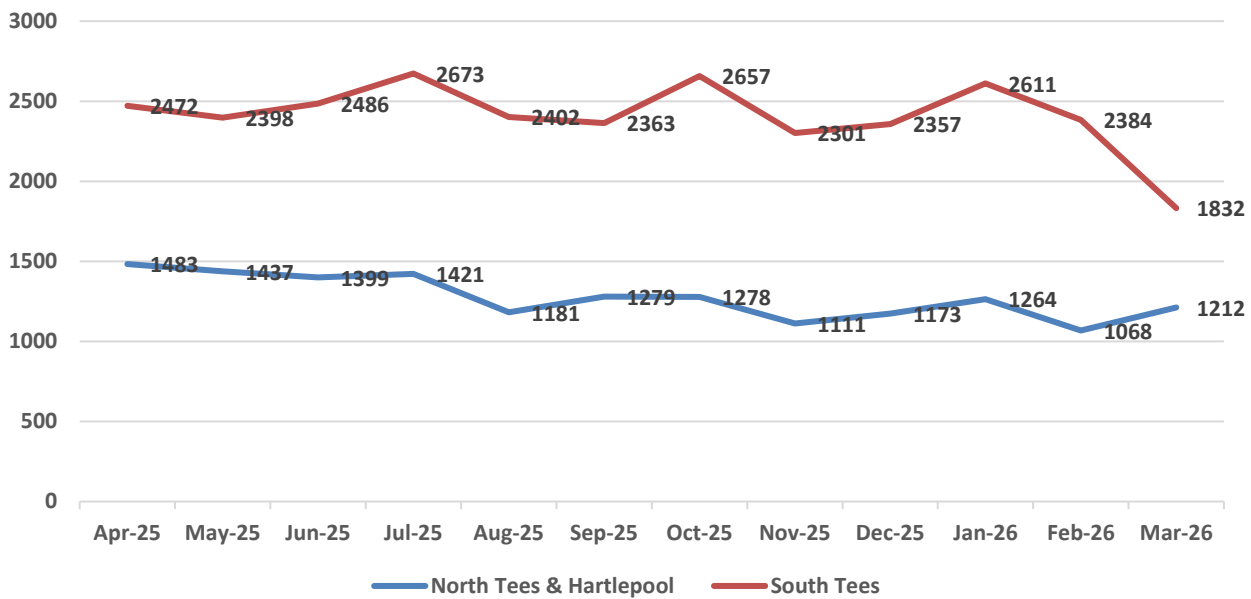


Graph 17 – North Tees & Hartlepool Foundation Trust incident reporting rates by per 1000 bed days.



Graph 18 – South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust incident reporting rates by per 1000 bed days

Incident Reporting by Trust



Graph 19 – Actual incident reporting numbers for each Trust.

UHT implemented a joint incident reporting system during March 2026. This change will integrate the incident reporting for both organisations into a single system, Healthcare Guardian, which had previously been introduced at NTHFT. This change will support wider analysis of patient safety incidents across the Group and will enhance the joint approach towards learning and quality improvement activities. The joint system has been developed to reflect the UHT Clinical Service Unit (CSU) structure which will support incident reporting and allow more in-depth analysis into trends and risks within their individual departments; as well as supporting the overall analysis across the Group. The drop in the incidents per 1000 bed days at NTHFT from November 2025 could be a result of the CSU structure being implemented without the incident reporting system being updated. The impact of the new system is being monitored closely.

During 2023-24, NTHFT had seen a reduction in incident reporting following the introduction of the new system; this trend was reversed gradually during the following year and over this financial year incident reporting had been consistent at around 1200 per month. The introduction of the new reporting system at South Tees was predicted to have a similar impact on incident reporting; this is reflected in the March 2026 data in the charts provided above; however, it is noted that data already being analysed for April 2026 has already shown this has started to be reversed.

There is ongoing activity to support the staff using the system and to ensure safety incidents are reported appropriately. It is acknowledged that a positive safety culture is associated with increased reporting and as such, the Trusts are continuously monitoring the frequency of event reporting and striving to increase reporting in all areas.

Promoting the reporting all events (incidents, near misses and good care) regardless of the level of harm will enhance awareness of both known and emerging risks, identify themes and trends, and provide valuable insight into preventing future harm. One of the key parts of promoting incident reporting is to ensure staff are provided with feedback when they have taken the time to report an incident. The new incident reporting system will support the monitoring of

direct feedback, currently it has only been monitored at NTHFT, during 2025-26 24% of staff who reported incidents had feedback given; this is in comparison with 4% for the previous year.

Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF)

Both Trusts transitioned to the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework on 29 January 2024, replacing the previous Serious Incident (SI) framework.

In line with the ethos of PSIRF the Trusts are building a learning and improvement culture where staff, patients, families, carers, and all who engage with the Trust are encouraged to share their experiences and their concerns. The Trust recognises that learning comes from understanding what goes wrong (incidents), what nearly goes wrong but is “saved” by the actions of those involved (near misses) and also what goes well, despite the daily challenges of healthcare (good care). The Trust promotes the reporting of all episodes of care where there is potential for learning and improvement.

A critical part of PSIRF is the engagement of patients and their families/ carers in any investigation; understanding what has occurred from their perspective can give the organisation a different view and often a different approach towards making improvements. Over recent years, the UHT Group has provided training to over 120 staff to fulfil the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) role, the latest cohort was in February 2026. The FLOs provide support to patients and families by providing a compassionate approach towards communications that can be very difficult and distressing; this helps link into the investigation team who are looking at the care provided.

During 2025-26, an external evaluation of the Group's implementation of PSIRF has been completed; the report identified positive progress and made recommendations to strengthen the Group's approach to patient safety, with improvement actions developed. These form the measures within one of the Quality Priorities (please see Section 2.1) and will be supported by the development of the UHT PSIRF plan and policy.

Never Events

Across UHT, we reported eight Never Events during 2025-26, one at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and seven at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. These included six “retained foreign body” incidents and two wrong site procedures.

Never Events have previously been investigated using Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII) methodology, as outlined in the Patient Safety Incident Response Plans (PSIRP).

Following consultation with the national team in relation to the level of investigation undertaken for each Never Event and how undertaking a lengthy PSII investigation for each fit with the proportionate response methodology established in PSIRF. As part of the overall consultation and change NHS England have advised that whilst they still need to be reported as Never Events, the investigations can be undertaken using a variety of options dependant on the overall impact and learning identified. As a result, three Never Events during 2025-26 are being investigated as After Action Reviews, an option which supports learning but also releases the capacity for clinical teams to implement agreed changes in practice and gain assurance that these have been established.

NHSE is currently undertaking a review of the Never Event list to determine if there are truly strong and systemic barriers in existence to prevent these incidents from occurring. The list is likely to change and therefore future data may not be comparable.

Year	STHFT	NTHFT
2025-26	7	1
2024-25	5	1
2023-24	3	0
2022-23	7	4
2021-22	4	2

Table 11 - Number of Never Events reported annually since 2021-22 (NHSE data)

Learning Response:

During 2025-26, both Trusts have been collaborating to bring safety processes into a single methodology; as such a joint PSIRF plan and policy are in the final stages of development and will be published during quarter 1, 2026-27.

The UHT plan and policy will reflect the changes and promote timely reporting, response and management of safety events. The review and investigation of events is focused on identifying opportunities for learning and improvement to prevent future harm, using a systems-based approach to investigation, and incorporating human factors analysis and quality improvement methodology. The quality assurance of event data is promoted at all stages of review and response to reflect the most up to date information known about the event.

The UHT safety processes have been integrated during 2025-26 to consider information relating to any incidents where there may be significant learning and any incidents moderate harm or above. Safety incidents where there needs to be an in-depth investigation are reviewed through the Learning Response Panel, chaired by the Medical Director or Director of Nursing. This panel agrees the level of investigation and confirms the application of duty of candour regulations. Where there is any discrepancy, the clinical team are asked to provide further details for review and discussion.

Incidents that meet the national requirements for reporting are managed in line with PSIRF guidance (NHSE, 2022). Any event that is identified as requiring a PSII or an alternate learning response will be presented at a monthly Patient Safety Review Panel on conclusion of the response. The panel will include multiprofessional representatives (clinical and non-clinical) from each CSU to ensure shared learning, broad discussion and appropriate challenge. The Chief Medical Director or Chief Nurse chair this panel when PSII's are presented to gain assurance around learning and improvements; following this the reports are then presented through the Quality Oversight Group and Quality Assurance Committee. Where safety recommendations are identified, these will be considered by the appropriate CSU and for SMART actions to be identified. Where these are linked to the relevant safer care group, such as the Falls, Tissue Viability or Acutely Ill Patient groups. These can then be incorporated into the relevant improvement plan and monitored to completion. As this process has been implemented there have been adjustments made in the process; as the Group Trust develops the joint PSIRF plan and policy they will be updated to provide rationalised details in relation to the incident management and oversight processes.

The Group works in close collaboration with the local CQC inspectors and the ICB in relation to incident reporting and regularly communicates in relation to incidents meeting the national reporting requirements and also regarding overall trends in incident reporting.

The national analysis of information undertaken by NHSE / LFPSE identifies where actions need to be taken in relation to national trends. This analysis can initiate a national safety alert. The Trust is fully compliant with all National Patient Safety Alerts that have been published in relation to this analysis. Processes are in place to ensure there is continual review of processes in order to provide on-going assurance and during 2025-26 these processes are to be aligned across the Group with the implementation of a Central Alerting System (CAS) module in Healthcare Guardian.

Improvement response

Where the causal factors of an event are well understood, the burden of undertaking an in-depth investigation can outweigh the learning to be gained. Where possible there have been additional fields developed in Healthcare Guardian to support gathering of specific information within proformas or checklists. The data can then be collated and analysed by the relevant UHT safer care groups and incorporated into the appropriate framework or improvement plan. Where new or emerging issues are identified a group or cluster of events can be reviewed using a thematic approach to identify additional learning.

10. Patient Friends and Family Test

Examining feedback from patients gives the organisation a direct insight into what is working well, and not so well, in the way we deliver care. From the feedback we can share across the organisation examples of good practice in order to learn and make improvements.

Local Trust Surveys and Friends and Family Test (FFT).

There are currently 64 local patient surveys in South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and 20 local patient surveys in North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) being utilised, covering all wards, departments, and community services. The Patient Experience Team reviews all responses.

The family and friends test question is included in the majority of our local surveys. It invites feedback on the overall experience of using a service and offers a standardised range of responses. When combined with supplementary follow-up questions, the family and friends test provide a mechanism to highlight both good and poor patient experience, and results can be compared with other trusts.

Data from April 2025 to January 2026 shows we are above the national average for the percentage of people with a positive experience of inpatient, A&E / UTC, Outpatient, and Community Services. Tables 1 & 2: Inpatient, A&E/UTC, Outpatient, Community and Maternity FFT results benchmarked against national results (April 2025 – January 2026). Data source NHS England.

At STHFT the inpatient, A&E, outpatient and community family and friends test surveys show we are above the national average (Table 13). The Maternity family and friends test surveys patients at four touchpoints (antenatal, birth, postnatal inpatient, and postnatal community). The results show we above the national average in 3 touchpoints, except for the postnatal ward care.

At NTHFT, the Maternity family and friends test surveys overall results are above the national average for 3 of the touch points (Table 14), except for antenatal care, which is slightly below the national average.

		2025/26 – STHFT			
		Response Rate		% positive experience	
		Trust	England	Trust	England
Inpatient		19%	21%	96%	95%
A&E		8%	9%	82%	79%
Outpatient		16%	15%	95%	94%
Community		8%	4%	98%	94%
Maternity	Antenatal			93%	92%
	Birth	14%	13%	95%	92%
	Postnatal ward			90%	92%
	Postnatal community			92%	93%

Table 13 – South Tees Hospitals Foundation Trust FFT percentage positive 2025/26

		2025/26 - NTHFT			
		Response Rate		% positive experience	
		Trust	England	Trust	England
Inpatient		10%	21%	94%	95%
A&E		4%	9%	84%	79%
Outpatient		35%	15%	95%	94%
Community		5%	4%	96%	94%
Maternity	Antenatal			91%	92%
	Birth	5%	13%	98%	92%
	Postnatal ward			96%	92%
	Postnatal community			100%	93%

Table 14 – North Tees & Hartlepool Foundation Trust FFT percentage positive 2025/26

Our aim is to increase our response rates to our patients' surveys across all healthcare setting, providing patients the opportunity to give their feedback at any point in time. We will also move towards utilising a single system to record local patients' surveys and the FFT, ensuring patients are consistently provided the opportunity to give feedback on their experiences of care.

3. Overview of quality of care and performance indicators

3.1. Overview of quality of care

I. Accreditation

The South Tees Accreditation for Quality of Care (STAQC) programme was established in July 2020, to provide a comprehensive assessment and assurance of the quality of care within all clinical areas.

Accreditation is linked with organisational success, enhanced patient experience and increased staff morale. The STAQC Accreditation Programme is a framework designed to drive clinical excellence by aligning service standards with the CQC Quality Statements. This is achieved through a culture of continuous improvement, empowering strong leadership, reduction of unwarranted variation, and promotion of positive engagement with both staff and patients.

The programme focusses on individual service reviews as part of an ongoing programme of work that will not only provide the opportunity for the organisation to celebrate the good work across our services but to understand the compliance with the fundamental standards of care aligned to the Care Quality Commission Quality Statements. The programme is to ensure that we address any areas of non-compliance through wraparound support but most importantly provides robust follow up to assure the support has worked and the changes have been sustained.

There are 246 ward, teams and departments that are eligible for accreditation. All teams undertaking STAQC are required to complete a preliminary self-assessment against the STAQC standards, which are also aligned to the CQC quality statements. From this starting point the STAQC team role is to support and enable ward and department leaders to make the necessary changes to practice, to meet the STAQC standards. The self-assessment document then becomes a work plan and is not fully completed until the point of diamond accreditation. The STAQC team act as enablers and empower the clinical teams to reflect, act and take ownership of the required changes and agree together an improvement plan and readiness for formal accreditation.

There are specialist accreditation tools for inpatients, theatres, paediatrics, maternity, departments, critical care and community areas. In 2025 updated versions of the inpatient, department, theatre, community and critical care standards were launched which align to the Care Quality Commission Quality Statements. There is a continued work plan through 2026/27 to continue to update the existing standards remaining, for maternity, paediatrics and accident and emergency.

There has been a continued focus during 2025 to continue with embedding the STAQC accreditation programme into all clinical areas. Baseline accreditations have continued as a starting point to the formal process, providing clinical areas with a robust action plan and expected timebound actions required to achieve either a gold or diamond accreditation.

Post accreditation assurance checks continue monthly to all diamond areas accredited, with a touch point for managers to offer support and guidance if required. This has proved successful in maintaining standards and keeping patient safety and quality of care delivery a focus for all frontline staff in a coordinated manner. In 2025 the reaccreditation processes have been further developed and across the year has been embedded into practice to ensure standards are maintained. All accredited areas will be formally reaccredited every 3 years.

Total achievements at end of year			Key actions for STAQC team
	24/25	25/26	
Diamond accreditations	56	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain a comprehensive work plan, transparent to all teams • To continue to roll out new updated standards aligned to quality statements • To maintain a constant focus on shared ownership • To undertake research/service evaluation into the impact of the programme • To ensure the reaccreditation process remains embedded
Gold accreditations	66	60	
Baseline accreditations	34	37	
Reaccreditation baselines	0	18	
Reaccreditations	0	20	
Percent of organisation		49%	

Table 15 – STAQC accreditations by level of achievement

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

The Clinical Quality Accreditation Framework (CQAF) was refreshed in July 2024, evolving from the previous Appreciative Support Programme. This update enabled stronger alignment with the Trust's four key ambitions—each reflecting our organisational objectives, the Fundamental Care Standards, and CQC regulatory requirements.

These ambitions are:

- Patient safety
- Clinical effectiveness
- Patient experience
- Well-led services

This initiative forms part of our ongoing commitment not only to celebrate the excellent work taking place across our services but also to ensure sustained compliance with the fundamental standards of care, aligned to CQC quality statements. The programme provides structured support through individual clinical area visits, helping teams progress on their journey towards achieving an outstanding rating. It also strengthens triangulation of data, enabling a holistic view that enhances assurance from ward to board.

To date, eight acute ward areas have been reviewed through the programme. These reviews have supported the identification and resolution of non-compliance issues through a comprehensive support framework. Where required, structured improvement plans have been introduced, accompanied by robust follow-up measures to ensure changes are effective and sustained over time.

The Trust remains committed to supporting clinical teams as they move from delivering good care to consistently providing outstanding care for our patients. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, empowering strong and effective leadership, reducing unwarranted variation, and promoting meaningful engagement with both staff and patients, we aim to continually enhance the quality of care provided.

We are now exploring options to optimise resource utilisation to accelerate programme delivery, as well as developing an approach that will enable the framework to be extended across community services.

Forward plans for Accreditation

The long term aspiration for University Hospitals Tees is to bring a single accredited programme across the group. Our aim is to create greater equity and consistency, ensuring all sites moving through the accreditation process receive the same level of support, guidance and are celebrated.

DRAFT

Introducing our Clinical Service Units

The achievements of 2025–26 demonstrate what is possible when clinical expertise, strategic vision and community collaboration come together under one shared purpose.

Showcasing Family Health Services (Clinical Service Unit 1)

Throughout the year Family Health Services have evidenced many things to celebrate as areas of good practice that have improved patient care and experience. Recognition of staff contribution in these developments has also been highlighted through awards and patient experience feedback.

Accreditation and service improvement

In maternity services, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) achieved Stage 2 accreditation in the Baby Friendly Initiative standards from UNICEF UK. This focuses on ensuring an educated workforce, confirming that staff are trained and competent in supporting infant feeding, managing challenges, and facilitating close, loving relationships. The next steps will be to work towards level 3 accreditation.

The number of pregnant women who used to smoke has reduced from 17% in 2022 to 6% across University Hospitals Tees in 2025. This is thanks to a national smoke-free pregnancy incentive scheme.



Smoking is an addiction that many people struggle with. By providing individualised care to our patients, including face-to-face appointments before and after birth, providing nicotine replacement therapy and vapes and an incentive scheme, parents-to-be have been supported in stopping smoking giving their babies the best start in life.

At NTHFT ongoing work to improve the environment for families experiencing bereavement was further enhanced by the wonderful donation of a bespoke painting by local artist Mackenzie Thorpe.



In Children and Young People Services at NTHFT, the paediatric diabetes team achieved positive outlier status in the National Paediatric Diabetes audit (NPDA). The team were awarded a membership award by Investing in Children following an external evaluation of the service and with the involvement of children and young people.

Parents of babies staying in The James Cook University Hospital's neonatal unit are now receiving free meal vouchers thanks to the Volunteers' Coffee Lounge. Parents often spend many hours on the neonatal intensive care unit with their child when they are sick or born premature, long after mum has been discharged from maternity care. During this time, they often forget to eat and drink, and when they do it can be very costly.



Research from the charity BLISS, in 2022, estimated that families with a baby in neonate care face an average additional financial burden of £405 per week. The new initiative provides parents with meal vouchers to ensure they stay nourished during long hours at their child's bedside.

Education and research

In Gynaecology, the Urogynaecology Unit at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT), with support from NTHFT has been recognised as a National Training Centre for subspecialty training in urogynaecology, one of around only 10 in the country .

At NTHFT, Paediatric and Neonatal Research have recruited time to target to all open studies in 2025/26. The Paediatric Department is the second highest recruiter in the North East.

In Children and Young Peoples Services, the Cystic Fibrosis Service, who continue to be an independent Cystic Fibrosis Centre, and the Children's Respiratory team are presenting both nationally and internationally. This year they are presented in;

- The National King's Paediatric Respiratory Service Conference in London.
- European cystic fibrosis conference Lisbon.
- National royal college of paediatrics conference in Birmingham.
- European respiratory conference in Barcelona.

Katie Metcalf, Paediatric Educator at STHFT has presented work on tracheostomy care on a national children and young people webinar.

Our Paediatric Educators have developed a training resource on the management of Diabetic Keto Acidosis in Children, which has been adopted regionally as the baseline teaching for all staff via the Operational Delivery Network for Paediatric Critical Care.

Award-Winning Care

We are very proud of all the staff who have been nominated for, or won awards, from across Family Health Services.

Grace Murray, Digital Midwife, recently accepted a baby lifeline UK MUM award (maternity unit marvels) at a special reception at the House of Commons in recognition of the service improvement brought about by her pioneering work with the Good Things Foundation to provide

maternity patients with data loaded SIM cards. This model is now being adapted throughout the England.



The new digital data service is up and running, with community midwives managing referrals for data support to digital midwives Grace Murray and Laura Stephenson.

Grace Murray commented: “The NHS Long Term Plan recommends that all women should have access to their maternity records, by providing free data we are ensuring that this recommendation is achievable.

In the first University Hospitals Tees Love Admin awards in October 2025,

Rebecca Anderson who works with children and young people was the winner in the ‘Contribution to patient care’ due to her compassionate approach and going the extra mile for young patients and their families.



Georgina Hicks , who works in children and young people services won the ‘AdministrativeAssistant of the year award’ for her work in introducing multiple sytems to support care delivery

In the annual Nightingale awards, several staff across Family Health Services were nominated and won awards :

- Clare Welford, manager of the Childrens Hub at Friarage Hospital Northallerton was successful in winning the Leadership award.
- Jennifer Hooley, Midwife, was the overall winner in the Patient Experience award.
- The CYPED team at STHFT were awarded the annual Children and Young People award for their outstanding resilience and commitment.

Maternity bereavement services at STHFT were finalists in the National Royal College of Midwifery awards, which was a wonderful recognition of the hard work from the team in providing a compassionate and supportive services to families at the most difficult time in their lives.

Showcasing Digestive Health, Urology and General Surgery (Clinical Service Unit 2)

Robotic Surgery

At South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust an additional robot was leased in October 2025 which has enabled the surgical teams within Digestive Health, Urology and General Surgery to extend its robotic programme which in turn has improved the cancer pathway and outcomes for patients. The Trust has been able to secure this additional asset on a permanent basis and therefore the improvements made are forecast to continue.

JAG (Joint Advisory Group (on GastroIntestinal (GI) Endoscopy) Accreditation

The North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Endoscopy Service was reaccruited by the Joint Advisory Group on Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (JAG) for its highest standard of achievement. The reaccruitation follows a recent annual review and highlights the dedication of the endoscopy team.



Northern Endoscopy Training Academy (NETA) Academy Awards 2025

The North Tees and Hartlepool Endoscopy Team achieved notable success at the Northern Endoscopy Training Academy (NETA) Academy Awards 2025, winning the “**The Team of the Year**” award in recognition of the outstanding teamwork, high-quality patient care, and contribution to endoscopy training across the region. In addition, two of our Advanced Clinical Endoscopist were individually honoured with the “**Clinical Trainer of the Year Award**”, reflecting excellence in training, mentorship, and workforce development.



NETA Academy Awards 2025

Hope congratulations to our winners and runners-up at the NETA Academy Awards, and thank you for the outstanding work you continue to deliver across the region.

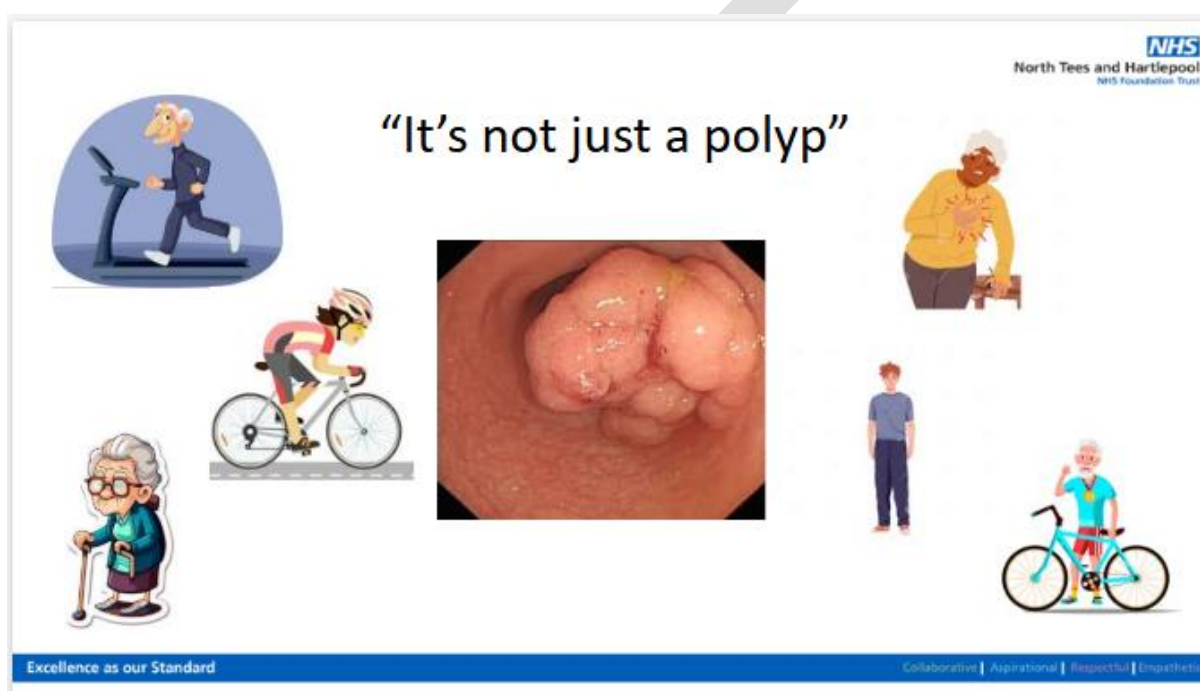
Category	Winner	Runners Up
Surgical Trainee of The Year	Catherine Strong	Karl Foster
General Trainee of The Year	Jeevan Sam	Peter Pfenbergast
Clinical Endoscopist Trainee of The Year	Jessica Taylor	Daniel Flint
General Trainer of The Year	Ciano Parker	James Hampton
Surgical Trainer of The Year	Suzanne Reinwohl	Sarajay Harrison
Clinical Endoscopist Trainer of The Year	Lesley-Anne Gibb & Angela Lee	Natalie Tindale
Practice Educational/Supervisor Training Lead of The Year	Sophie Whitlock	Wendell Ligurno
Training Lead of The Year	Mo Eddine	Rosin Bevan
Training/ICA of The Year	Emily Brown	Andrea Slacey
Manager/Supervisor of The Year	Susan McConnell	Karen Prokask
Family and General Staff of The Year	Laura Atkinson	Janet Jennings
Team of The Year	North Tees & Hartlepool Endoscopy Team	Goldhead Endoscopy Training Team
Innovator of The Year	Fraser Brown & Ella Mackintosh for EndoLab	

We would like to thank our external judging panel; this would not have been possible without their help in reviewing and scoring the fabulous nominations:
 Katie Bowers – Manager of the Yorkshire Endoscopy Training Academy
 William Ramblers – Consultant Paediatric Radiologist and HDI Academy Clinical Lead
 Matt Rutter – Consultant Gastroenterologist, Clinical Lead NENC Endoscopy Network
 Emma Carter – Diagnostic Programme Manager, North East and Cumbria Provider Collaborative

Transforming Gastrointestinal Cancer Outcomes through Prevention, Early Diagnosis and Digital Innovation

Following the completion of the roll out of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Centre younger age and lower FIT threshold extension programmes in 2024 and 2025 respectively, the service has continued to transform the service by ensuring early diagnosis translates into optimal outcomes by establishing a dedicated complex polyp MDT where decisions are made with patients and their families, following through thorough risk and benefit discussions. This greatly enhances patient experience.

In addition, there is a joint Tees-wide Complex Polyp MDT, ensuring patients across Teesside have access to advanced decision-making and the entire array of endoscopic and surgical treatments for pre-malignant or early malignant polyps.



The service has benefited from having a wide-ranging clinical group who can perform all options of endoscopic therapies available. This includes Endoscopic Mucosal Resection (EMR), Endoscopic Submucosal Dissection (ESD), endoscopic Full Thickness Resection (eFTR) and endoscopic mucosal debridement.

Complementing this, South Tees Hospital Endoscopy service has developed nurse-led colon capsule and capsule sponge pathways to expand minimally invasive diagnostics to improve early diagnosis, reduce reliance on invasive traditional endoscopy and make better use of capacity within the endoscopy service.

All these developments improve accessibility, patient convenience and service efficiency, across the Tees Valley while supporting earlier diagnosis and better use of endoscopy capacity.

Gastroenterology Service

The Hepato–pancreatico-biliary (HPB) team at North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust have received national recognition for the best practice and innovative services they provide. The team has access to the most up to date endoscopy equipment to deliver complex HPB procedures.

They provide approved training courses for colleagues across the country, patient education days on pancreatitis, a lead role in research and host a dedicated HPB medicine trainee every year. This drive for improvement and innovation continuously benefits optimal care for our patients.

Urology Services

The urology service has made significant improvement in its prostate and haematuria cancer pathways throughout 2025/26 through a multi-disciplinary approach to triage and nurse led pathways to speed up the diagnostic process across both sites. It is recognised that there are still more improvements to be made to get the service where we know it should be.

A new nurse led service for Transperineal biopsies was introduced at Hartlepool Hospital which brings this in line with services at The Friarage Hospital and Redcar Primary Care Hospital and reducing the need to have a general anaesthetic procedure. This has been further improved with a TULA service (Trans Urethral Laser Ablation) procedure, which can safely and more comfortably deal with larger bladder tumours for the first treatment and without a general anaesthetic, or stopping blood thinners. This service is going from strength to strength; we currently have capacity for 15 biopsies per week and we are in the process of adding in monthly lists for those patients who need a general anaesthetic for the biopsy. We currently have 3 trained nurses carrying out the biopsies with another nurse due to start her training in May.

Within North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals, multidisciplinary team specific clinics have been introduced every week which speeds up appointments for results following a multidisciplinary team meeting. Across South Tees Hospitals, having secured regional Cancer alliance funding, we have trialled the introduction of cancer navigators to virtually manage patients through the pathway. This allows results to be fed back to patients in a more real time way. This has also been overseen by the introduction of a new role to Urology Nurse Consultant to lead and oversee pathway improvements.

Due to these improvements and the work to increase robotic capacity, we have recently treated our first patient with prostate cancer with Robotic surgery with 62 days of the referral from GP, which is a real milestone in our improvement journey.



Alcohol Detox Service

The inpatient detox bed at UHNT was established on the 1st June 2024, the service has continued to demonstrate positive outcomes for patients from this time. Overall, the detox programme has a success rate of 91.1%. There have been no further relapses in this quarter. Over all 8 relapses from June 2024.

The plan is to provide an inpatient detox bed at Jame Cook University Hospital in 2026/27 which will further support the Tees Valley population.

Ward/ Department Accreditation

The Accreditation programme (detailed in Section 3.1) is a quality improvement framework that evaluates clinical areas against standards including safety, patient experience and leadership. All departments across the Clinical Service Unit are on their journey for Accreditation and have either had their baseline assessment or achieved Gold award.

DRAFT

Showcasing Trauma & Orthopaedics, Reconstructive & Plastic Surgery, ENT, OMFS, Dermatology & Ophthalmology Services (Clinical Service Unit 3)

The Ophthalmology team based at James Cook Hospital have been trying to address some of the challenges faced by their patient group by making their pathway through the department easier to follow and understand.



The Ophthalmology team have devised a video to guide patients through their department and understand what they can expect from their appointment. This includes an introduction to the department manager, and a map and directions to the department.

As the Ophthalmology estate is spread over several areas patients with reduced sight sometimes find it challenging to navigate. The video explains how to check in for appointments, and who to go to for guidance if unsure, the video goes on to explain assessments such as visual acuity, measurement of eye pressure and the administration of eye drops and what to expect.

The team discuss the use of virtual clinics and explain that some tests may be completed and then reviewed by the Ophthalmologist in the virtual clinic. The different disciplines within the department are explained in the video and include Orthoptists and Optometrists so patients are aware they may see several team members during their appointment.

For patients requiring surgery the department also conducts a pre-assessment clinic in readiness for surgery. Patients are made aware their time in the department can vary between 30 minutes to 4 hours depending on the teams they need to see. The team plan to play the video on loop in the waiting area's and to share with their patients prior to attending the department, the patients also have access to a QR code that takes them to the Trust Ophthalmology page where there are more useful links and information.

Fiona Klimczak was moved to tears when clinicians switched on her new hearing implant. Fiona, 60, was the first patient at James Cook University Hospital to receive a transcutaneous bone conduction implant (BCI) and she says it has changed her life. Fiona had suffered with severe hearing loss for 13 years after reoccurring infections caused damage to both of her ears.

“Losing my hearing had a big impact on me. I lost confidence, felt I couldn’t contribute when in group situations, as I couldn’t hear people properly, and was constantly saying ‘I’m sorry can you please repeat that’, time after time, or mishearing words which was awful.”

Fiona, who now works as an assessor and internal verifier for a local training provider, says she often felt like an outsider and did not want to socialise. She also had to give up working in classroom situations as she could not hear the groups of students properly.

Fiona tried traditional hearing aids but the sound quality was not great. Then in 2016 she met ENT (ear, nose and throat) surgeon Anirvan Banerjee who explained that her left ear was so damaged it needed surgery to replace the ear drum.

She underwent ear surgery in 2017, 2018 and 2023 but continued to have issues with infections from her hearing aids. Further surgery saw her have a bone anchored hearing aid fitted in 2024 which produced promising results, but her body rejected it shortly afterwards leaving her devastated. After much discussion the James Cook team decided Fiona was a good candidate to try a new transcutaneous device – the Sentio Ti Implant. Fiona knew she had to give it a go and Mr Banerjee carried out the surgery at the Middlesbrough hospital in August 2025.

“Family and friends told me that they thought I was mad to want to put myself through a further surgery, but I felt like this was my last hope at getting some hearing back,” said Fiona.

“I was only in hospital for half a day; the surgery went smoothly and my recovery was quick with no side effects or complications.”

A small titanium implant was secured under the skin behind and above Fiona’s ear which connects to an external processor that is discreetly worn on the head. The device uses a magnetic connection to transmit sound, bypassing the damaged middle ear by vibrating the skull and sending sound vibrations directly to the inner ear.

Absolutely priceless

Fiona said it was such an emotional moment when the sound processor was switched on for the first time: “They asked ‘can you hear me’ and I got tearful and said ‘I can hear you’. I was overwhelmed with joy and felt quite emotional as I could hear clearly.



“I was amazed when I was driving back to my home when a song came on the radio that I recognised from years ago, I heard different riffs and bars in the music which I had never heard before. When walking outside it was wonderful when I heard all different bird songs. I feel connected to the world again, and don’t have to worry about missing conversations or having to laugh falsely when I had missed a joke being told. I don’t have to have subtitles on the television, or the TV volume turned up high. And to be able to hear my granddaughters talking to me, without me second guessing as to what they have said, is absolutely priceless. I feel very fortunate, honoured and privileged to have been the first patient to have had this successful surgery at The James Cook University Hospital. It’s changed my life.”

Reconnecting people

Mr Banerjee said: “Fiona has lived with hearing loss for many years, and seeing her hear clearly again, and the emotion that came with that moment was incredibly moving. Helping her reconnect with her family, her confidence and the world around her is a powerful reminder of why this work matters so much.”

Fiona added: "My heartfelt thanks go to Mr Banerjee and audiologist Lisa Kennedy. I am forever grateful for their care, dedication and support in helping me to hear again."

DRAFT

Showcasing Theatres, Anaesthetics & Critical Care Services (Clinical Service Unit 4)

Since coming together as University Hospitals Tees, Theatres, Anaesthetics and Critical Care Services have made significant progress in strengthening patient safety, improving workforce capability, and enhancing the quality of care delivered across University Hospitals Tees. This section outlines the key developments, achievements, and priorities that demonstrate our commitment to high-quality, safe and patient-centred care.

1. Workforce Development and GPICS Compliance

A major focus this year has been improving workforce capability in line with national standards. Extensive work has been undertaken to align services across both acute sites with the *Guidelines for the Provision of Intensive Care Services (GPICS)*, leading to improved compliance across North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. This has included:

- Strengthening skills and competency frameworks
- Increasing access to mandatory and specialist clinical training
- Enhancing clinical leadership capacity
- Supporting multi-professional learning and service-wide development

These improvements ensure that workforce structures are better aligned to national best practice, supporting safer and more efficient patient care and improving long-term sustainability.

2. Martha Rule Implementation – A Nationally Recognised Pilot Site

University Hospital of North Tees has played a pivotal role in advancing the implementation of Martha's Rule, participating as a Phase 2 pilot site. The Trust has been recognised at NHS England level as an exemplar for the progress achieved to date.

Key achievements include:

- Establishing clear escalation pathways for patients and families
- Enhancing staff awareness through targeted training
- Improving response times to clinical deterioration
- Ensuring that patients and their families feel empowered to raise concerns

This work reinforces the organisation's commitment to partnership working with patients and their carers, and ensures safety concerns are responded to promptly and effectively.

3. STACQ Accreditation Across Multiple Departments

Departments across James Cook University Hospital and the Friarage Hospital have now achieved accreditation, demonstrating robust governance, safe practice, and adherence to nationally recognised quality standards. This work will continue with a bespoke Theatre Accreditation where work has now commenced.

This accreditation reflects:

- Strong clinical governance processes
- Consistent use of evidence-based practice
- High-quality patient assessment and monitoring
- A culture of continual improvement

The achievement of accreditation across multiple service areas highlights the progress made in embedding high-quality, standardised care across the organisation.

4. Safety Culture: Embedding High-Quality Communication

Strengthening safety culture remains a major priority. Although there are established mechanisms in place such as huddles, debriefs, case reviews and structured meetings, these have not always been used consistently or embedded in a way that fully supports our staff and patients pathways.

The pressures on services over the past year have created challenges in maintaining strong communication and reliable safety processes. Teams have highlighted that operational demands, staffing pressures and rapid changes across services have made it difficult to sustain regular safety conversations and to ensure that learning is shared effectively.

In response, the Clinical Service Unit (CSU) is now placing renewed emphasis on developing a more positive, transparent and reliable safety culture. This includes:

- Reassessing the consistency and quality of safety huddles and debriefs and refreshing the WHO checklists and local variability
- Enhancing the safety culture with weekly group wide CSU safety meetings
- Improving the visibility and accessibility of learning from incidents and near-misses
- Strengthening psychological safety so all staff feel confident to speak up – the change from “Stop I am not happy” to “please can we have a safety pause”
- Ensuring leadership presence is supportive, visible and focused on learning
- Embedding clearer structures for feedback loops so staff understand outcomes of reported concerns

This intensified focus reflects University Hospitals Tees commitment to acknowledging where improvement is needed and taking proactive steps to create safer, more supportive and better-connected teams. Building a stronger safety culture is now a forward priority, and will be a key area of monitoring and development over the year ahead.

5. Patient Experience: High Levels of Positive Feedback

The CSU continues to receive a large volume of compliments from patients and carers. Themes emerging from positive feedback include:

- Staff professionalism and kindness
- Efficiency and timeliness of care
- Clear communication
- Holistic support for patients and families

This reinforces the organisation’s commitment to delivering compassionate, patient-centred care, and highlights the dedication of the workforce under demanding conditions.

6. Opening of the Friarage Surgical Centre and Future Surgical Network Development

A major milestone was the successful opening of the Friarage Surgical Centre, which has now been operational for nine months. Early outcomes have been highly positive, including:

- Improved patient flow
- Enhanced surgical capacity
- Reduced cancellations
- Increased ability to ring-fence elective procedures

Building on this success, the next strategic step is the development of a Tees Valley Surgical Network, bringing together the Hartlepool Surgical Centre in order to:

- Optimise elective surgical pathways
- Improve resilience and service sustainability
- Reduce waiting times across the system

This reflects a forward-looking approach that aligns local service transformation with national elective recovery priorities.



7. New Maternity Theatre, Robotic Theatre and Recovery Developments

As part of last year's theatre refurbishment programme, the STHFT opened three major new facilities: a new maternity theatre, a dedicated robotic theatre and a state-of-the-art recovery area. These developments represent significant investment in modernising surgical and obstetric care and ensuring services are delivered in high-quality, safe and efficient environments.



The new maternity theatre provides a purpose-built space with improved layout, updated equipment and enhanced infection-prevention measures, supporting safer and more efficient management of urgent and elective obstetric procedures. Staff report that the new environment has strengthened workflow and reliability during time-critical care.

The new robotic theatre has expanded STHFT surgical capability by enabling advanced minimally invasive procedures. This improves precision, supports quicker patient recovery and reduces the need for patients to travel elsewhere for specialist surgery.

The purpose-built recovery area offers a modern, calm and efficient environment with improved staff visibility, enhanced monitoring capacity and increased space, providing a safer and more responsive setting for postoperative care.

These facilities mark an important milestone in STHFT's commitment to modernising its surgical estate and ensuring patients across the region benefit from contemporary, future-ready clinical environments.

8. Sharing Good Practice Across the Region

We have continued to take a proactive role in sharing best practice with partner organisations. Several Hubs and regional Trusts have visited to observe models of care, governance processes, and improvements implemented locally.

This collaborative approach:

- Supports cross-system learning
- Strengthens professional networks
- Encourages alignment to high-quality standards
- Reinforces the Trust's role as a leader in service improvement

Summary

Across all areas, our Clinical Service Unit has demonstrated strong progress against its quality ambitions. The focus on workforce development, safety culture, accreditation, patient experience, and strategic service redesign has created a strong foundation for future improvement. These achievements show a continuing commitment to delivering safe, effective and compassionate care for patients across the region.

Showcasing Cardiovascular Services (Clinical Service Unit 5)

Introducing a Day 1 discharge programme (D1DP) following thoracic surgery supported by a dedicated community thoracic surgery service.

Background

The expansion of lung cancer screening has led to increased detection of early-stage lung cancer suitable for surgical resection, placing additional pressure on thoracic surgical services. Prolonged hospital length of stay (LOS) limits bed capacity, increases costs, and exposes patients to avoidable hospital-associated risks.

Our established Community Thoracic Service, launched five years ago, has already demonstrated measurable reductions in LOS and readmission rates through structured home-based postoperative review. However, provision was previously limited to a single community visit, restricting discharge before post-operative day (POD) 2.

To safely implement a Day-1 Discharge Programme (D1DP), funding was secured from the Northern Cancer Alliance to expand the service. Two key roles were introduced in April 2025: a Day 1 Discharge Coordinator and a Prescribing Specialist Community Thoracic Physiotherapist (AHP).

This enhanced workforce supports additional home visits on post operative day 3 to 5 and weekly follow-up for up to four weeks post-surgery. The expanded model enables earlier identification of postoperative concerns, timely intervention, and sustained patient reassurance at home.

Results: Demonstrated Success After 6 Months of introducing D1DP

1. Significant Reduction in Length of Stay

- Mean LOS reduced from 4.9 to 3.4 days ($p = 0.0028$)

This represents a clinically and statistically significant improvement in efficiency without compromising safety.

2. Cultural Shift Towards Early Discharge

- Post-operative Day 1 discharge: 51/193 patients (26.4%)
- Post-operative Day 1 or 2 discharge: 106/193 patients (54.9%)

This reflects a substantial and sustained shift in discharge practice utilising Discharge Coordinator who increases opportunities for mobilising patients post thoracic surgery, supported by robust community follow-up.

3. Safe Complex Discharges

- 40/193 patients (20.7%) were discharged with a chest drain in situ
- Supported by Advanced Nurse Practitioner led clinics and specialist community review
- 67% of patients received a home visit the day after discharge

This demonstrates confidence in managing higher acuity patients safely in the community setting.

4. Maintained Safety Profile

- Readmissions reduced to 6.7% (13/193), Compared to 8.4% in 2024 (p = 0.61)

Although not statistically significant, this represents maintained or improved safety despite earlier discharge and increased case complexity.

5. Exceptional Patient Experience

- Patient feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting: Compassionate communication, confidence in early discharge, value of specialist physiotherapy and reassurance from structured follow-up

***“Kindness, compassion and communication – all three demonstrated at all times.”
“I was a lot happier being in my own home... knowing the support was in place was very reassuring.”***

“Physio changed everything and is a must!”

“The team have gone above and beyond and are the best at what they do.”

The service provides seamless care from pre-assessment, inpatient treatment (ward/HDU), to structured home follow-up; ensuring continuity across the entire surgical pathway.

6. System Impact and Financial Success

The D1DP has resulted in an estimated 606 bed days saved annually with projected financial benefit.

These savings encompass both reduced index admission duration and prevention of avoidable readmissions.

The programme directly supports the ambitions of *the NHS 10 Year Plan for England (2025)* and *The National Cancer Plan for England (2026)* by transferring safe postoperative care into the community while maintaining clinical quality and patient satisfaction.

Summary

This model represents a sustainable, patient-centred transformation of thoracic surgical recovery pathways with multidisciplinary collaboration (ANPs, physiotherapy, discharge coordination), a dedicated community workforce expansion, structured early review and rapid escalation pathways, a clear cultural shift supporting post operative day 1 discharge along with robust prospective data monitoring.

The Day-1 Discharge Programme demonstrates that early discharge following lung resection can be delivered safely and efficiently with high patient satisfaction when supported by a dedicated specialist community thoracic service. The programme has achieved significant reduction in LOS, increased POD1 discharges, safe management of complex patients at home, maintained low readmission rates, high patient-reported satisfaction and meaningful financial and capacity benefits.

Achievements to date



Showcasing Cancer Institute (Clinical Service Unit 6)

Hitting Our Mark: Impact of achieving the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark (MQEM)

The Macmillan Quality Environment Mark (MQEM) is a nationally recognised award that recognises the world-class care provided to patients by hospitals and celebrates environments that provide the highest standards of care. Developed by Macmillan Cancer Support, it assesses how well healthcare environments meet the holistic needs of people living with cancer, focusing on the design and use of space, the user journey, service experience and the extent to which the voices of people affected by cancer shape services. Achieving MQEM demonstrates that our services provide clear organisational commitment to delivering cancer care environments that support dignity, privacy, comfort, and emotional wellbeing alongside high-quality clinical treatment.

Within our Cancer Institute Clinical Services Unit (CSU), all clinical areas have achieved the highest possible MQEM rating of five stars. This represents a significant achievement and reflects consistent excellence across inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic and treatment environments. Five-star status indicates that our environments not only meet but exceed the MQEM quality statements, providing spaces that are welcoming, calm, accessible and responsive to the needs of people living with cancer as well as their families and carers.

The impact of achieving MQEM status across all clinical areas is wide-ranging. For patients and those close to them, it provides assurance that care is delivered in environments designed around their lived experience. Attention to lighting, wayfinding, privacy, noise, accessibility and comfort helps reduce anxiety at what is often a highly stressful time. Feedback gathered as part of the MQEM assessment confirms that high-quality environments positively influence how safe and supported people feel throughout their cancer journey.

Some of the improvements found include a revamped garden, cancer coordinators appointed, installation of light boxes in waiting area and quiet room, upgraded signposting for patients etc.

MQEM status strengthens confidence among stakeholders, regulators and partners. The framework is recognised by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as evidence of good practice in the delivery of patient-centred environments. Achieving and sustaining five-star ratings across the Clinical Service Unit demonstrates effective leadership and a culture that values continuous improvement. It highlights the Cancer Institute as a leader in providing high-quality cancer care environments at both a regional and national level.

The assessment process itself has had a positive impact on staff engagement and service development. MQEM places strong emphasis on co-production, ensuring that people with lived experience of cancer are involved in shaping and reviewing services. This approach has empowered teams to listen actively to feedback, reflect on practice and implement meaningful improvements. As a result, staff report increased pride in their working environments and a stronger sense of shared ownership for quality and patient experience.

Sustaining five-star MQEM status across all clinical areas reinforces our University Hospitals Tees Cancer Institute commitment to delivering holistic, person-centred cancer care. It demonstrates that we recognise the physical environment as a critical component of quality, safety, and compassion. By embedding MQEM principles into ongoing planning and development, we ensure that our environments continue to evolve in line with patient needs, supporting excellent experiences and outcomes for everyone who accesses our services.

Showcasing Clinical Support Services (Clinical Service Unit 7)

Cardiac CT one stop imaging

Collaborative working with our Cardiology colleagues has enabled us to facilitate two one-stop CT cardiac sessions at the Friarage Hospital each week. The patients attend Radiology and undergo their pre-appointment assessment with the cardiology team nurses and then have their CT cardiac imaging. The imaging is then “hot” reported and the patient receives their CT cardiac results at the same visit with a copy to take to their GP. This drives down multiple patient visits across both specialties and improves diagnostic waiting times.

Prostate pathway

Our Prostate pathway has significantly improved since implementation of collaborative working throughout Radiology and Urology. The impact of this has seen the patient pathway reduced consistently by an average of 21 days.

Aims/Objectives

- To support faster diagnosis of prostate cancer through eliminating unnecessary steps along the pathway
- Compliance with 28-day faster diagnosis standard, improving performance and better supporting patients not requiring cancer treatment through expedited notification of no cancer diagnosis
- Compliance with 62-day treatment standard, improving trust cancer performance and patient outcomes

Outcomes/Impact

- Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) equipment and additional capacity has allowed patients to be scanned closer to home which has led to improved patient satisfaction
- Higher specification of MRI equipment and software has supported improved image quality and aligned standards of imaging to that regionally
- Supporting NTHFT urology patients through MRI team scanning their prostate patients within CDC hub
- This is a good example of teamwork and shared ownership.

AI Chest x-ray Software

Background

The AI Diagnostic Fund (AIDF) is a time-limited NHS England programme designed to increase diagnostic capacity, reduce reporting backlogs and support earlier lung cancer diagnosis through the deployment of AI. Under AIDF, STHFT implemented Harrison CXR AI (formerly Annalise Enterprise CXR) as a fully embedded clinical decision-support and worklist triage solution. The solution is fully integrated within existing electronic workflows and deployed trust-wide.

Current position

STHFT is using chest x-ray AI (artificial intelligence) at scale to support AI-enabled triage of chest x-rays.

The Artificial Intelligence software currently assists with:

- Prioritising worklist-automated detection triage and reporting assistance- comparison tool
- Flags urgent or abnormal studies for priority review

- Integration to PACs in use currently
- Potential to assist in reducing the number of critical findings

How we could utilise this further:

- Generation of reporting templates to help with efficiency in reporting turn-around times
- Utilise Secondary Capture, giving access to Radiographers to support out of hours with flagging critical findings for urgent reports
- Utilise Secondary Capture, giving access to all clinicians to provide enhanced confidence in bedside chest x-ray interpretation
- Utilise Secondary capture to help reduce the recalls to the Emergency Department; discharged at point of care where critical finding has not been picked up prior to a radiological report thus reducing costs and the burden on the Emergency Department and reduced length of stay

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Showcasing General & Emergency Medical Services (Clinical Service Unit 8)

Our Urgent Emergency Care (UEC) Services

Why is this important:

Front of house urgent and emergency care, often referred to as the 'front door' of the hospital is critical for managing patient flow, improving clinical outcomes, and reducing crowding in emergency departments (ED). By providing rapid assessment, specialised care for frailty, and same-day assessment and treatment, these services ensure that patients receive the right care, in the right place with the most appropriate clinician, avoiding unnecessary admissions.

UEC standards aim to reduce clinical risk through a shared responsibility and enhance patient experience through more timely assessment and appropriate clinical pathways. The key standards are 4 hour compliance - longer waits are known to increase patient mortality, 12 hour waits – over 65 year olds and those presenting with mental health concerns are more likely to experience long waits, and category 2 ambulance handover – improving flow will release ambulance crews to attend sick patients in the community more timely.

What we achieved in 25/26:

A new estate for the Emergency Assessment Suite at University Hospital of North Tees



Based on consistent compliance against these standards we received national UEC incentive funding which allowed us to develop a bespoke emergency assessment environment designed to overcome previous challenges with patient flow and clinical capacity. The new Assessment Suite reviews on average 55 patients per day and takes direct ambulance arrivals through paramedic pathways, bypassing ED. This shared responsibility for emergency pathways has led to consistent high achievement of the 4 hour standard and 70% of patients reviewed are discharged home within the

same day without a hospital admission.



Co-located Urgent Treatment Centre at James Cook University Hospital (JCUH), 1 year on

Our co-located urgent treatment centre at JCUH was 1 year old in April 2025. The service is provided through collaboration with partners in North East Ambulance Service and Hartlepool and Stockton GP Federation and both NTHFT and STHFT. It helps people access the right service in the right place according to their needs allowing the Emergency Department (ED) to focus on the most unwell patients. The design provided a new environment which increased the physical capacity across the combined ED, as well as the creating a new reception / streaming desk and modifications to ED waiting area for improved patient experience. Within its first year the service saw over 60,000 patients providing urgent treatment for a range of minor injuries and illnesses, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 94% of patients seen, assessed and treated within 4 hours.



Summary and next steps:

Over 2025/2026 we have seen enhancement of the estate and processes that have led to continuous improvement and outcomes for patients using our UEC pathway. During the challenging winter months, we have seen a reduction in over 45 minute ambulance handover delays by 52% at STHFT and 35% at NTHFT and improvements in our overall 4 hour performance. Continued focus on ensuring timely, effective and safe treatment for patients experiencing acute health issues, aiming to improve outcomes for patients and supporting the overall efficiency of emergency care services across University Hospitals Tees. Access to emergency services, regardless of location or time, the enhancement of same day assessment areas across specialities and the quality of care provided based on standardised clinical guidelines and protocols remain key priorities. The emphasis on patient safety and experience ensuring patients are treated with dignity and respect is fundamental.



Our staff supporting patients with spinal cord injuries fundraised throughout 2026 to facilitate bespoke events with our spinal cord injury patients. The team strive daily to promote a positive approach with this group of patients.

Patient story:

A stroke survivor has credited NHS teams for helping him regain his life.



During the five weeks that Matthew spent at the Friarage Hospital, he was offered support by a multi-disciplinary team to regain his independence. This comprised physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, rehabilitation nursing and medical team and dietitians, who ensured Matthew was on the pathway to regain his independence.

Thanks to the specialist support, Matthew was discharged from the Friarage Hospital after five weeks, during which he was also referred to the early supported discharge (ESD) team – where he received extensive support from the comfort of his home.

My dad only had an hour left for his life - Mechanical Thrombectomy



An NHS worker is urging people to be aware of a condition that can cause severe brain damage if not treated within four and a half hours – after her dad was on the cusp of losing his life.

Dr Whitehouse, consultant in stroke and geriatric medicine, and her team promptly administered thrombolysis, a medical treatment using “clot-busting” drugs to dissolve blood clots and restore blood flow. The clot-busting drug did not work for Thomas and he was urgently sent to The James Cook University Hospital to undergo mechanical thrombectomy to remove the clot. Thomas successfully underwent the procedure at 4.35 pm.

Comment from patient “I am so grateful to the doctors, nurses, consultants and stroke teams at University Hospital Tees, as i know they ruched to see me when I arrived and made me and my family understand how little time I had for my life to be saved’

Summary and next steps:

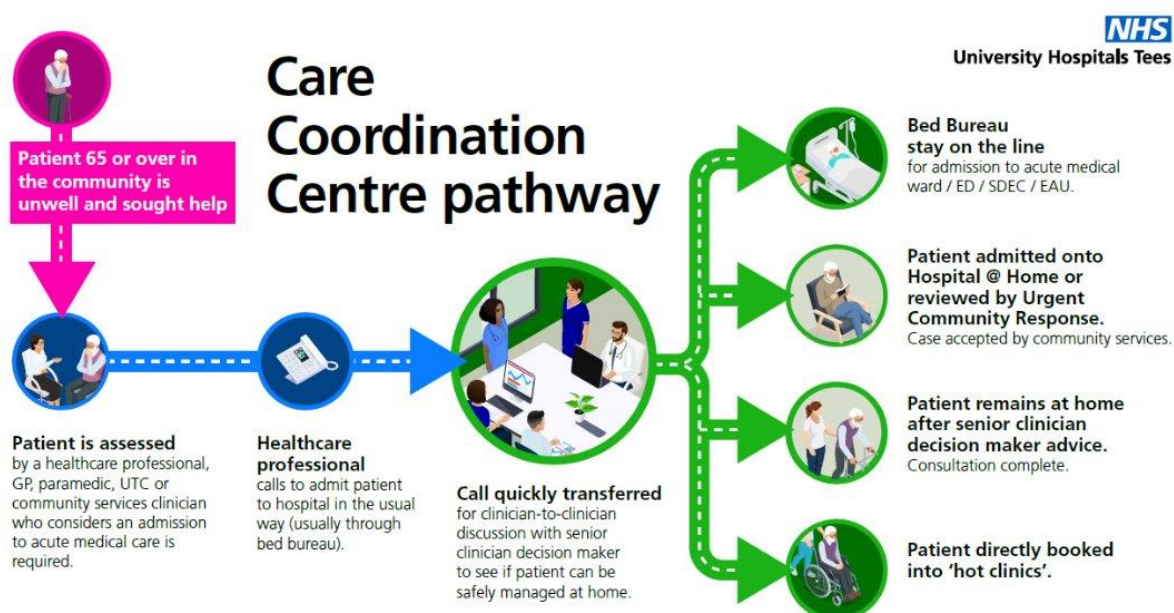
CSU 9 have devised a one to five year priority plan, with Clinical Service Unit colleagues and engagement through patient forums and focus groups. Initial one year priorities include horizontal integration of stroke services and pain services across UHT while providing consistent care and experience for our patients and staff alike. The emphasis being our fundamental ethos of delivering safe care with compassion.

Showcasing Community & Neighbourhood Health Services (Clinical Service Unit 10)

Too many frail older people are conveyed to hospital when their needs could be better met in their own homes. This leads to poor patient experience and overcrowded emergency departments. The Care Co-ordination Centre (CCC) pilot aimed to address this problem by bringing together urgent and emergency care, community health and social care services.

The pilot lasted for three months over winter 2025/26; serving the four districts of Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton and Hartlepool. All requests for admission to hospital from GPs, paramedics or other healthcare professionals for patients aged 65 and over were directed to a senior decision maker at the CCC to have a clinical conversation about whether the patient can safely be cared for by community services instead of coming into hospital.

The calls were via the bed bureau (STHFT) and Integrated Single Point of Access (NTHFT) which were the existing contact points for requesting an admission to hospital.



The senior decision makers were mostly secondary care consultant from emergency or acute medicine. These hospital doctors worked hand in hand with senior community nurses to signpost patients to the appropriate place. Where needed, urgent social care could also be arranged. This was an invaluable opportunity to learn about the each other's worlds. The main alternative route was to Hospital at Home. More than 1,000 calls were screened and a quarter of patients entirely avoided hospital.

Close working with partners in ambulance services, primary care, secondary care and community services was key to ensuring the most appropriate care was given in a timely manner for every patient.

The aim of the pilot was to reduce pressure on our emergency departments and demand on hospital beds while also improving patient experience and helping increase independence. Patient feedback from those successfully managed in their own environment was excellent.

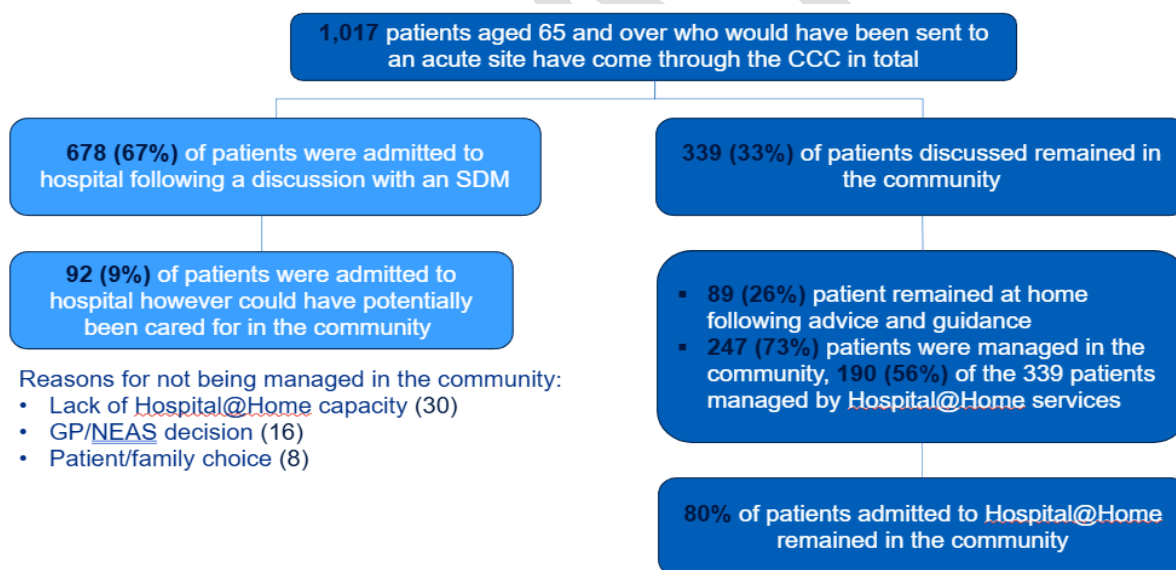
What was the impact?

Data analysts were part of the pilot team and every care journey has been tracked in detail. 33% of calls wanting to admit to hospital were offered an alternative such as Hospital at Home or community response, 89 were given advice and guidance.

Of the 1,071 patients who would have been sent to an acute site:

- 736 patients (69%) were admitted to hospital which was appropriate for what they were presenting with
- 335 patients (33%) remained in the community. Of these patients:
 - 89 patients remained at home following advice and guidance or referred to another community service.
 - 246 patients received a community response of which:
 - 187 received care from the Hospital at Home service
 - 52 patients have received a community response from other services
 - 7 patients were referred into outpatient services

Our analysis of the statistics also showed 80% of patients managed by community services remained at home. The pilot was undoubtedly successful but a parallel audit with North East Ambulance Service found that even more patients could have avoided conveyance to the emergency departments. A continuous quality improvement approach was used. Issues were captured daily and solutions found so that improvements could be made to improve the service.



What happens next?

The personal, organisational and system benefits from this pilot are now informing our plan for future services. There were clear benefits of closer working between community and acute teams, as well as with the ambulance service, that will continue to improve our urgent care response for patients.

All calls made to CCC were recorded, which allowed for learning and feedback to clinicians. There are a number of care pathways that were identified that can be changed to prevent patients from having to attend hospital.

The CCC pilot demonstrated that with senior clinical decision making at a consultant level, community services being horizontally integrated and Hospital at Home teams being appropriately resourced 40% of patients aged 65 and over that are typically for medical admission could be managed at home. This could have a significant impact on the long-term outcomes, support the requirement to move services out into community and provide the right pathway at the right time for patients who need this most.

Further recommended models of CCC need to include working in collaboration with ambulance services, acute and emergency medicine teams and system level integrated working. We are analysing where the most impactful intervention will be, with hope that CCC will become a permanent part our offer for patients.



3.2 Performance against key national priorities

FINAL VALIDATED DATA WILL BE AVAILABLE IN READINESS FOR PUBLICATION – JUNE 2026 ONCE APPROVED BY NHSE

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Single Oversight Framework Indicators	Standard / Agreed Trajectory	2024-25 Performance	2025-26 Performance	Achieved
A&E: maximum waiting time of 4 hours from arrival to admission/transfer/discharge (YTD)	77.87%	75.6%		
Receipt of two week wait / screening referral to date patient is informed of a diagnosis (FDS) or ruling out cancer (YTD)	78.38%	71.1%		
31-day wait from decision to treat/earliest clinically appropriate date to treatment of cancer (YTD)	91.95%	82.6%		
62-day wait from urgent GP referral for urgent suspected cancer or breast symptomatic referral or urgent screening referral or consultant upgrade to first definitive treatment of cancer (YTD)	64.27%	61.2%		
Maximum time of 18 weeks from point of referral to treatment in aggregate, patients on incomplete pathways (March end)	65.02%	60.24%		
Referral to Treatment 52 Week Waits (March end)	515	1,542		

Table 16 – STHFT Single Oversight Framework Indicators

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundaton Trust Single Oversight Framework Indicators	2022-23	2023-24 Performance	2024-25 Performance	2025-26 Performance
A&E: maximum waiting time of 4 hours from arrival to admission/transfer/discharge (YTD)	N/A	84.78%	85.53%	
Receipt of two week wait / screening referral to date patient is informed of a diagnosis (FDS) or ruling out cancer (YTD)	80.71%	78.18%	78.74%	
31-day wait from decision to treat/earliest clinically appropriate date to treatment of cancer (YTD)	96.49%	96.60%	96.06%	
62-day wait from urgent GP referral for urgent suspected cancer or breast symptomatic referral or urgent screening referral or consultant upgrade to first definitive treatment of cancer (YTD)	70.20%	64.87%	66.98%	
Maximum time of 18 weeks from point of referral to treatment in aggregate, patients on incomplete pathways (March)	75.54%	71.15%	75.46%	

Referral to Treatment 52 Week Waits (March)	38	218	171	
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Table 17 – NTHFT Single Oversight Framework Indicators

Key findings:

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3.3 Additional required information

Seven-day services

Ten NHS Seven Day Hospital Services Clinical Standards were developed in 2013 to support providers of acute services to deliver high quality care and improve outcomes on a seven-day basis for patients admitted to hospital in an emergency. Providers have been working to achieve all these standards, with a focus on the four priority standards identified in 2015 with the support of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. These were selected to ensure that patients have access to consultant-directed assessment (Clinical Standard 2), diagnostics (Clinical Standard 5), interventions (Clinical Standard 6) and ongoing review (Clinical Standard 8) every day of the week. Details of all the clinical standards are available at: [NHS England » Seven Day Services Clinical Standards](#). It is good practice that Trust Boards assess, at least once a year, whether their acute services are meeting the four priority standards, using guidance published in February 2022.

A full assessment against these standards was completed for South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) in September 2022.

Repeat audit March 2026 shows that STHFT remains in a position of not being comprehensively compliant with Standard 2, 'consultant review for all new admissions within 14 hours', in every specialty throughout the week. This is due to more limited duration consultant presence on-site at weekends in specialities with smaller numbers of emergency admissions. The Trust is assured of timely senior clinical assessment for patients admitted as an emergency onto acute admissions wards and when the patient is unwell or deteriorating. The Trust wide roll out of electronic patient records (EPR) enables monitoring of the timely assessment and review of patients. Further work on data quality and systematic use of the EPR is required.

The Trust is also assured that arrangements are in place for daily senior review in acute wards, and that there is safe access to diagnostic and consultant-led interventional services over the seven-day period, demonstrating compliance with these standards. In addition, the Trust is working with regional provider and commissioning colleagues to implement 7-day access to the mechanical thrombectomy hyper-acute stroke intervention, as a national clinical priority.

Freedom to speak up



Background to the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

The National Guardian Office (NGO) and the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (FtSUG) role was established in 2016 following the events at Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and the recommendations from the subsequent inquiry led by Sir Robert Francis. The Francis Report raised 290 recommendations. One of the recommendations was to have a designated person who was impartial and independent working in every Trust. This role would facilitate staff to speak to in confidence about concerns at work including any public interest disclosure. It was acknowledged that staff should be listened to, taken seriously and not suffer detriment as a result of speaking up.

Philosophy

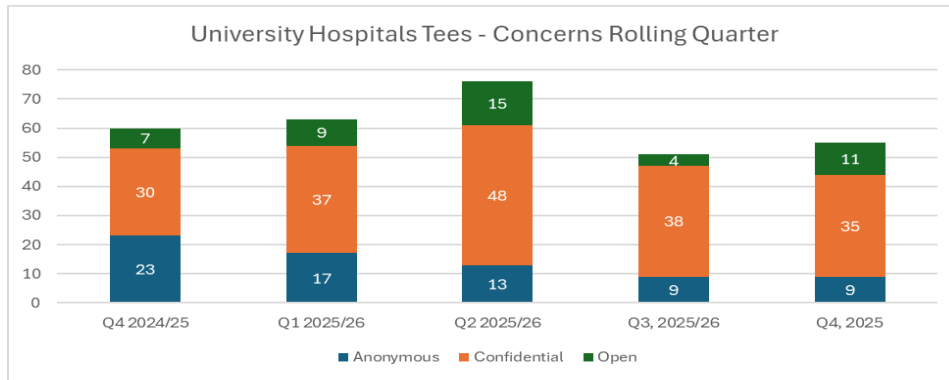
The Freedom to Speak Up (FtSU) ethos aims to help promote and normalise the raising of staff concerns ultimately for the benefit of patients and workers. Speaking up not only protects patient safety but can also improve the lives of workers by listening to what they need to be able to do their job, so that they can deliver an excellent service.

The FtSUG Team at University Hospital Tees (UHT) continue to develop and establish frameworks ensuring that we support staff to do the best job that they can and to keep patients safe, through the delivery of high-quality services. Offering a robust service that empowers workers to speak up about anything that concerns them and then using this feedback to inform future strategies and support our continual learning and improvement. If there are any behaviours or acts which harm the services the Trust delivers, we have both a duty and right to speak up.

UHT progress 2025-2026:

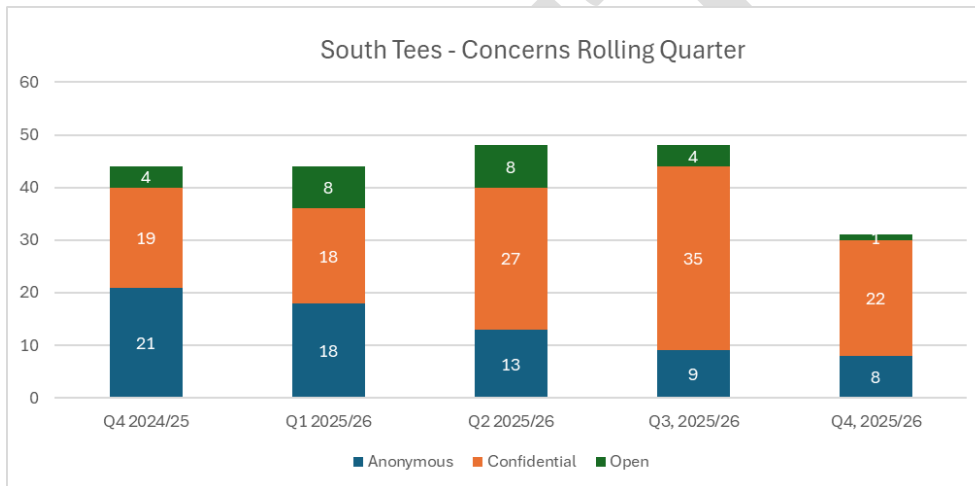
The FtSUG Team works to improve the Speaking Up Culture throughout the organisation by raising awareness of FtSU and other routes by which colleagues can raise concerns, tackling barriers to speaking up and by ensuring that issues raised are used as opportunities for feedback, learning and improvement continues to develop.

Graph 21 shows that 245 concerns were raised with the FtSUG Team from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026 compared to 217 in 2024/25. This is an overall increase of 12.90%. The number of concerns raised anonymously decreased in 2025/26 to 48 (19.59%) compared to 62 (28.57%) in 2024/25



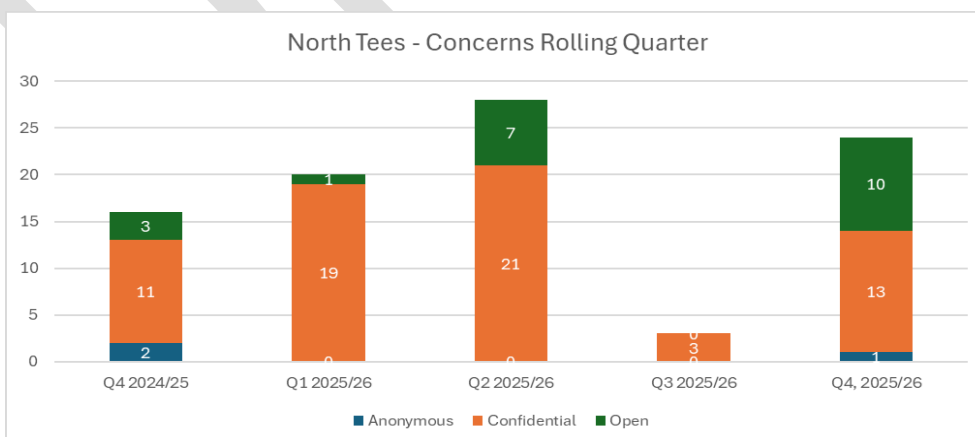
Graph 21 – FtSU concerns raised

Graphs 22 and 23 show the data broken down by South Tees NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT).



Graph 22 – STHFT FtSU concerns

There was a decrease in reporting at STHFT in Q4, 2025/26 of 35.42%.

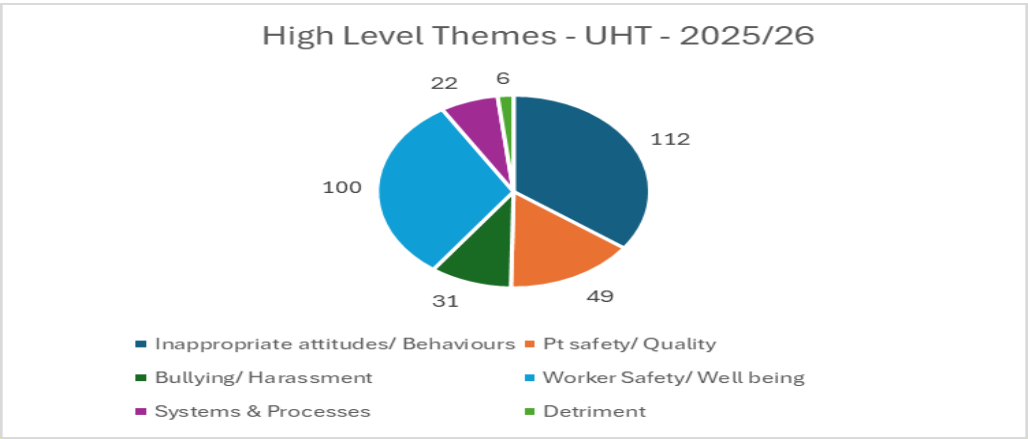


Graph 23 – NTHFT FtSU concerns

There was a significant reduction in reporting at NTHFT in Q3 2025/26 by 89%, but levels of reporting returned to normal levels in Q4.

Graph 24 below shows the high-level themes for UHT recorded against the concerns received in 2025/26 (*one concern can have a number of high-level themes*). Inappropriate
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attitudes/behaviours was the highest reported detailed theme. This mirrors the national picture where it is the most reported concern for the 2nd consecutive year from NGO data 2024/25.



Graph 24 – High level themes UHT

Figure 9 provides a breakdown of the more detailed themes across UHT. It is worth noting that North Tees only started to report detailed themes in Q2 2025/26.

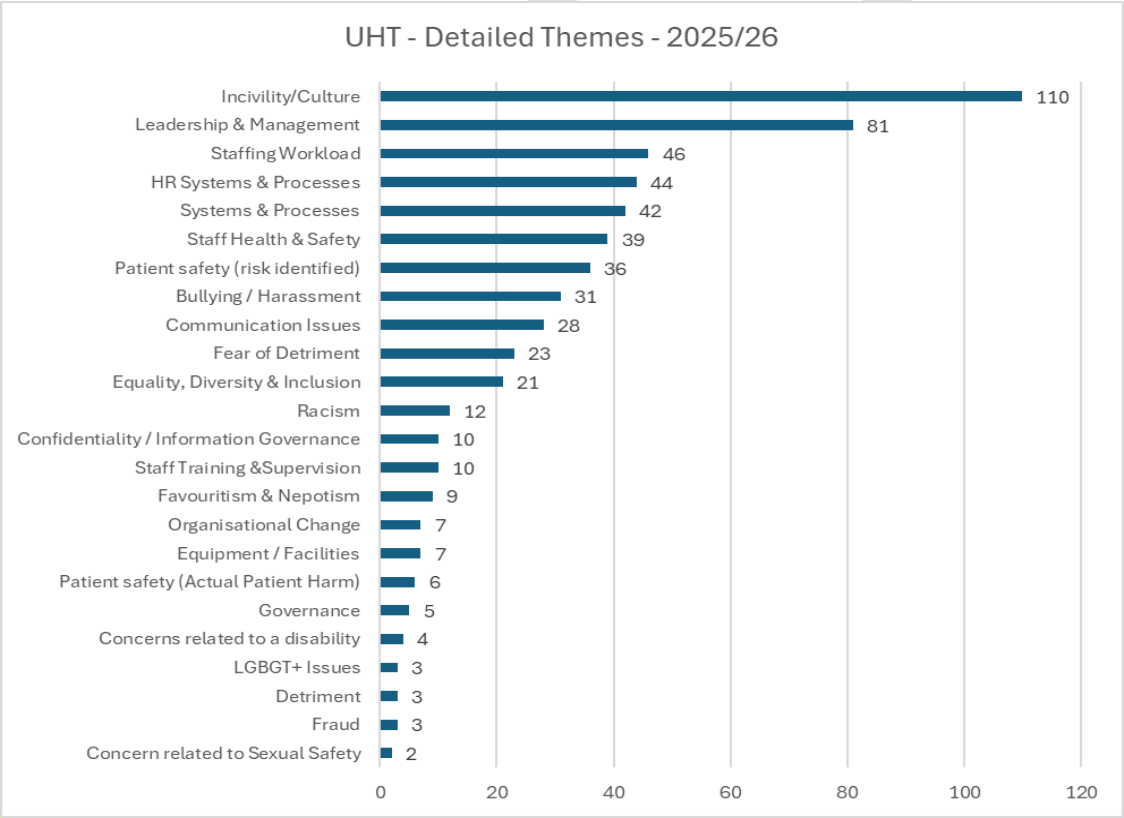


Figure 9 – Themes breakdown UHT

Proactive work

As part of the proactive work the FtSUG team continue to promote the role via promotional platforms, team meetings, floor walking, and ward visits maintaining a high presence across UHT sites. The team have also developed and provided workshops, student awareness sessions at university sites, trust welcome event, care certificate, international staff events, directorate, audit meetings and Speak Up week. The team complete regular peer reviews to ensure effective and consistent provision of the speak up service, triangulation of the annual staff survey is also completed to review the data complete focused walkabouts and events.

All modules of the FtSU e-learning “Speak Up”, “Listen Up” and “Follow Up” are available via the electronic staff record (ESR) for all staff. The modules aim to promote a consistent and effective FTSU culture across the system which enables workers to speak up and be confident they will be listened to, and action taken. FtSUG’s will be able to monitor compliance and triangulate this data alongside other sources of information to support focused work. The last available figures in August 2025 showed that 61% of staff had completed the three different elements of FtSU training since it went live in October 2024.

Every October the NGO, together with FtSU’s, leaders, managers and workers across the healthcare sector, celebrate Speaking up. This year the event was held over a week and worked to raise awareness of FtSU and make speaking up business as usual for everyone, with staff making pledges to how they will continue to support speaking up across the organisation.



The guardians have a focus on continued professional development as a team and individually. Over the past twelve months all four FtSUG have completed Restorative Practitioner Facilitator training. One guardian has completed a Coaching Apprenticeship Level 5 and another guardian is due to complete in 2026. One guardian is a mental health first aider and completed refresher training in Q2 2025.

The UHT FtSUG team attend regular regional network meetings to support with benchmarking, guardian support, national updates. A UHT FtSUG is a co-chair of the regional network.

Feedback

Feedback from some concern raisers across UHT is shown below:-

“I wanted to reach out to thank you for your support - it truly means a lot, as I feel it’s the only support I have right now”

“Thank you for your support, it really has helped me get my head (and my conscience) together.

Thank you again for your time, I feel as if a big weight has been lifted off my shoulders by speaking with you”.

“Happy for you to close the case, I’ve had no further issues. Thanks again for your help”.

“I am utmost grateful for your time and energy you put into this, I cannot thank you enough, I really appreciate you, thank you for the love, thank you for your care, thank you for your time thank you for giving me the chance to speak up”.

“Thank you for your support, really appreciated”

“Thank you for your support and signposting me to the appropriate team”

“Thank you for being so supportive and a great benefit for all of the team, following your discussions”

Future Plans

Over the next twelve months the guardians have identified several opportunities, including:

- A single reporting system that can be utilised across the Group model. To align our services we have purchased the Healthcare Guardian (previously Inphase) app for FTSU and are on the schedule for this to be implemented for Quarter 2 (September 2026).
- A review of the Freedom to Speak up reflection and planning tool with the board. This is a useful self-assessment tool that will help us navigate our service both strategically and operationally, and to help us focus on key priorities within the new organisational structure.
- Continued development and expansion of the Freedom to Speak Up champion network across University Hospital Tees, through a fair recruiting process, as per National Guidance. Freedom to Speak Up champions are trained, can attend quarterly network meetings, can have informal bi-annual 1-2-1s and are asked to support staff and signpost and collect high level themed data for triangulation.
- Following the DASH review, the NGO is due to disband in June 2026. Conversations are still happening nationally to determine what the local, regional and national responsibilities will be with regards to speaking up. The guardians at University Hospital Tees will ensure that all recommendations are implemented.

Resident grade doctors rota gaps and plans to manage

Organisations are reminded that Schedule 6, paragraph 11b of the Terms and Conditions of Service for NHS Doctors and Dentists in Training (England) 2016 requires: “a consolidated annual report on rota gaps and the plan for improvement to reduce these gaps shall be included in a statement in the Trust's Quality Account”.

University Hospitals Tees remains firmly committed to delivering safe, effective, and sustainable medical staffing across all clinical services. Ensuring our resident doctors are supported through well-designed and resilient rotas is fundamental to this, enabling them to thrive in an environment that promotes high-quality training, personal development, and safe clinical practice.

Our rota governance processes are now well established with strong collaboration between departments, rota teams, Clinical Rota Leads, and the Chief Medical Officer's Office. We draw consistently on multiple sources of intelligence, including exception reporting trends, GMC National Training Survey outcomes, and feedback from both resident doctors and educational supervisors, to ensure early identification of pressures and timely, proportionate action. This collective approach places safety, wellbeing, and quality at the centre of our decision-making.

While rota gaps remain in a number of specialties, these are reflective of the broader national and regional workforce picture. Common factors include training programme vacancies, increased out-of-hours demand, work restrictions, and onboarding delays. Services continue to respond positively, using a combination of internal and bank locums, cross-cover arrangements, duty adjustments, and targeted recruitment to non-training roles. Our Locally Employed Doctors continue to play a vital role in supporting service stability in areas facing long-term training vacancies.

Current rota gaps:

Specialty	WTE gaps by rota tier		Mitigation
	North Tees	South Tees	
Anaesthetics	0.4 x Tier 1 3.5 x Tier 2	6.0 x Tier 1	Mix of Internal/bank locums and local recruitment to non-training posts, enhanced rota oversight and daily workforce huddles.
Acute Medicine	1.0 x Tier 1 1.0 x Tier 2		Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Cardiothoracic Surgery	N/A	1.0 x Tier 2	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Colorectal	N/A	1.0 x Tier 1	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Diabetes & Endocrinology	0.2 x Tier 2		Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements Note: 1 x Tier 1 North Tees training gap not included as back-filled by locally employed resident doctor.

Emergency Medicine	1.2 x Tier 1 4.6 x Tier 2		Internal/bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross-cover arrangements
Ear Nose & Throat	N/A	1.0 Tier 1	Internal/bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross-cover arrangements
Gastroenterology	0.3 x Tier 1	1.0 x Tier 2	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
General Medicine - FHN	N/A	2.0 x Tier 2	Mix of Internal/bank locums and local recruitment to non-training posts.
Geriatric Medicine	1.4 x Tier 1 0.6 x Tier 2	1 x Tier 2	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Haematology	0.2 X Tier 2		Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Neurology	N/A	1.0 x Tier 1	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Neurosurgery	N/A	1.0x Tier 1 1.0 x Tier 2	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	2.7 x Tier 1		Mix of Internal/bank locums and local recruitment to non-training posts. Note: 1 x Tier 2 North Tees training gap not included as back-filled by locally employed resident doctor.
Orthopaedics	1.0 x Tier 2		Mix of Internal/bank locums and rota/duties adjustment
Paediatrics	1.3 x Tier 1 3.4 x Tier 2	6.0 x Tier 2	Mix of Internal/bank locums and local recruitment to non-training posts.
Renal	N/A	2.0 x Tier 2	Mix of Internal/bank locums and rota/duties adjustment
Respiratory	0.6 x Tier 1 0.2 x Tier 2		Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Stroke	1.0 x Tier 1		Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements
Surgery	0.2 x Tier 2		Adjustment of duties and enhanced oversight by Clinical Rota Lead. Note: 2 x Tier 1 North Tees training gaps not included as

			back-filled by locally employed resident doctors.
Urology	N/A	2.0 x Tier 1	Internal and bank locums, adjustment of duties, and cross cover arrangements

Table 16 – Rota gaps

Across Emergency Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Paediatrics, less-than-full-time (LTFT) trainees consistently account for 50%-80% of the resident workforce. While LTFT arrangements support trainee flexibility, they also create operational pressures, particularly in rota design and sustainable service delivery. Their predominantly short-term nature (typically 6-12 months) further limits the ability to secure reliable backfill and maintain continuity. Growing variability in LTFT patterns continues to increase scheduling complexity.

Exception reporting remains an important tool in monitoring workload, contractual compliance, and the broader impact on education and training. The Trust was among the early adopters of the national improvements to reporting systems, making it simpler and more accessible for doctors to raise concerns. The rise in exception reports from August 2025 aligns with national expectations and reflects improved engagement and confidence in the process rather than a deterioration in working conditions.

Exception Reporting	Aug 2024 – Jul 2025		Aug 2025 – Jan 2026	
	North Tees	South Tees	North Tees	South Tees
Number of exception reports	202	537	299	1049
Exceptions marked as an immediate safety concern	4	14	7	14
Number of fines due to safe working hours breaches	15	27	28	28

Table 17 – exception reporting

The Guardians of Safe Working provide regular assurance to the People’s Committee and other professional forums, with discussions between Resident Doctors, BMA representatives, and the Chief Medical Officer’s Office remaining constructive and focussed on shared solutions. Guardian funds accrued through fines (£3,060 North Tees, £2,713 South Tees) will be reinvested to further strengthen doctor wellbeing and the training environment.

Rota performance continues to be monitored through a triangulated approach, ensuring timely action, promoting staff wellbeing, and supporting a safe, consistent learning environment in line with national standards.

To continue strengthening our medical workforce and improving the experience of our resident doctors, we will progress a number of strategic priorities:

- Enhancing rota forecasting and performance reporting
- Embedding routine, specialty-level rota reviews
- Advancing the rollout of a unified e-rostering and exception-reporting platform across University Hospital Tees

These improvements will enhance data quality, increase visibility of service pressures, and support more proactive workforce planning. Above all, they reinforce our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and high-quality learning and working environment, fully aligned with our organisational values.

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11. Annex 1: Statements from commissioners, local Healthwatch organisations and overview and scrutiny committees

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12. Annex 2: Statement of directors responsibilities for the quality report

The directors are required under the Health Act 2009 and the National Health Service (Quality Accounts) Regulations to prepare Quality Accounts for each financial year.

NHS Improvement has issued guidance to NHS foundation trust boards on the form and content of annual quality reports (which incorporate the above legal requirements) and on the arrangements that NHS foundation trust boards should put in place to support the data quality for the preparation of the quality report.

In preparing the quality report, directors are required to take steps to satisfy themselves that:

- the content of the quality report meets the requirements set out in the *NHS foundation trust annual reporting manual 2018/19* and supporting guidance *Detailed requirements for quality reports 2018/19*.
- the content of the quality report is not inconsistent with internal and external sources of information including:
 - board minutes and papers for the period April 2024 to March 2025.
 - papers relating to quality reported to the board over the period April 2024 to March 2025.
 - feedback from commissioners dated 17 May 2024.
 - feedback from governors dated 21 May 2024.
 - feedback from local Healthwatch organisations dated 10 May 2024.
 - feedback from overview and scrutiny committee dated 12 June 2024.
 - the trust's complaints report published under Regulation 18 of the Local Authority Social Services and NHS Complaints Regulations 2009, dated 31 May 2023.
 - the latest national patient survey published February 2024 (Maternity).
 - the latest national staff survey published 7 March 2024.
 - the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion of the trust's control environment dated 25 June 2024.
 - CQC inspection reports dated 24 May 2023 and 19 January 2024 (Maternity).
- the quality report presents a balanced picture of the NHS foundation trust's performance over the period covered.
- the performance information reported in the quality report is reliable and accurate.
- there are proper internal controls over the collection and reporting of the measures of performance included in the quality report, and these controls are subject to review to confirm that they are working effectively in practice.
- the data underpinning the measures of performance reported in the quality report is robust and reliable, conforms to specified data quality standards and prescribed definitions, is subject to appropriate scrutiny and review.
- the quality report has been prepared in accordance with NHS Improvement's annual reporting manual and supporting guidance (which incorporates the quality accounts regulations) as well as the standards to support data quality for the preparation of the quality report.

The directors confirm to the best of their knowledge and belief they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the quality report.

27 June 2026

Derek Bell, Chairman

27 June 2026

Stacey Hunter, Chief Executive

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13. Annex 3: Glossary of terms

18 Week RTT (Referral to Treatment)

This refers to the right to start your consultant-led treatment within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral, unless you choose to wait longer, or it is clinically appropriate that you wait longer. The Trust monitors this monthly.

A&E

Accident and Emergency usually refers to a hospital casualty department where patients attend for assessment.

Acute

A condition of short duration that starts quickly and has severe symptoms.

Allied Health Professional (AHP)

Professionals (other than nurses) who work in health care teams to make the health care system function by providing a range of diagnostic, technical, therapeutic and direct patient care and support services that are critical to the other health professionals they work with and the patients they serve.

Assurance

Confidence, based on sufficient evidence that internal controls are in place, operating effectively and objectives are being achieved.

BadgerNet

BadgerNet is an electronic clinical system for maternity and neonatal care.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)

All ethnic groups except white ethnic groups; it does not relate to country origin or affiliation.

Board of Directors (of Trust)

The role of the Trusts board is to take corporate responsibility for the organisation's strategies and actions. The chair and non-executive directors are lay people drawn from the local community and accountable to the Council of Governors. The chief executive is responsible for ensuring that the board is empowered to govern the organisation and to deliver its objectives.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) replaced the Healthcare Commission, Mental Health Act Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection in April 2009. The CQC is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. It regulates health and adult social care services, whether provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations. Visit: www.cqc.org.uk

Clostridioides difficile infections (CDI)

Clostridioides difficile infection (CDI) is caused by a type of bacteria and is an important cause of infectious diarrhoea in healthcare settings and in communities.

Clinical audit

Clinical audit measures the quality of care and services against agreed standards and suggests or makes improvements where necessary.

Clinical Service Unit

A clinical management structure adopting a leadership approach of director of clinical services, nursing services and operations underpinned by clinical and nursing leads for each specialty

Clinician

Professionally qualified staff providing clinical care to patients.

Commissioners

Commissioners are responsible for ensuring adequate services are available for their local population by assessing needs and purchasing services. Services are commissioned by integrated care boards and are overseen by NHS England on a regional basis.

Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN)

'High Quality Care for All' document included a commitment to make a proportion of providers' income conditional on quality and innovation, through the Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) payment framework.

Consultant

Senior physician or surgeon advising on the treatment of a patient.

Council of Governors

The Governors help to ensure that the Trust delivers services which meet the needs of patients, carers, staff and local stakeholders.

Duty of Candour

The duty of candour is a statutory (legal) duty to be open and honest with patients (or 'service users'), or their families, when something goes wrong that appears to have caused or could lead to significant harm in the future. It applies to all health and social care organisations registered with the regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in England.

Elective

A planned episode of care, usually involving a day case or inpatient procedure.

Electronic Patient Record

Digital based notes record system which replaces a paper-based recording system. This allows easier storage, retrieval and modifications to patient records.

Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (EPMA)

Allows prescriptions to be transmitted and populated electronically, replacing paper and faxed prescriptions.

Emergency

An urgent unplanned episode of care.

Eolas

A mobile app and storage platform of hospital specific guidelines, protocols and medial resources.

Fall

A fall is defined as an unintentional/unexpected loss of balance resulting in coming to rest on the floor, the ground, or an object below knee level.

Foundation Trust

A type of NHS Trust in England that has been created to devolve decision-making from central government control to local organisations and communities, so they are more responsive to the needs and wishes of their local people. NHS foundation Trusts provide and develop healthcare according to core NHS principles – free care, based on need and not on ability to pay. NHS Foundation Trusts have members drawn from patients, the public and staff, and are governed by a Board of Governors comprising people elected from and by the membership base.

Getting it Right First Time (GIRFT)

A national NHS programme aimed at improving patient care and efficiency by reducing unwarranted variations in clinical practice across hospitals

A mechanism to provide accountability for the ways an organisation manages itself.

Health care associated infections (HCAI)

These are infections that are acquired because of healthcare interventions. There are a number of factors that can increase the risk of acquiring an infection, but high standards of infection control practice minimise the risk of occurrence.

Healthcare Guardian

An electronic incident and risk management system.

Healthwatch

Healthwatch are the national consumer champion in health and care. They have been given significant statutory powers to ensure the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services.

HQIP (Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership)

The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership was established in 2008 to promote quality in healthcare, and in particular to increase the impact that clinical audit has on healthcare quality improvement.

HSMR (Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratio)

This is a scoring system that works by taking a hospital's crude mortality rate and adjusting it for a variety of factors – population size, age profile, level of poverty, range of treatments and operations provided, etc. It is possible to calculate two scores – the mortality rate that would be expected for any given hospital and its actual observed rate.

Inpatient

Patient requiring an overnight stay in hospital.

InPhase

A suite of Oversight Apps to achieve swift, triangulated, compliance, assurance and monitor continuous improvement in the NHS.

Integrated Care Board (ICB)

This is a statutory NHS organisation which is responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, managing the NHS budget and arranging for the provision of health services in a geographical area.

LocSSIP (Local Safety Standards for Invasive Procedures)

These are local processes/procedures in place to reduce the number of patient safety incidents related to invasive procedures, in which surgical 'Never Events' can occur.

Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST)

'MUST' is a five-step screening tool to identify adults who are malnourished, at risk of malnutrition (under nutrition), or obese. It also includes management guidelines which can be used to develop a care plan. It is used in hospitals, community and other care settings and can be used by all care workers.

Medical Examiners

Review the death at time of death certification or referral to Coroners. Their work includes contact with the team that cared for the patient at time of death, review of case records and contact with the family to see if they have any questions or concerns.

MIYA Noting Electronic Patient Record

MIYA is a software platform for recording and managing patient information. This aims to be a central record system rather than paper notes or other electronic systems and should improve patient care and safety.

Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

A multidisciplinary team is a group of health care workers who are members of different disciplines (professions e.g., doctors, nurses, physiotherapists etc.), each providing specific services to the patient.

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)

The NIHR (National Institute for Health Research) funds health and care research and translate discoveries into practical products, treatments, devices and procedures, involving patients and the public in all our work. NIHR ensure the NHS can support the research of other funders to encourage broader investment in, and economic growth from, health research. NIHR work with charities and the life sciences industry to help patients gain earlier access to breakthrough treatments, and train and develop researchers to keep the nation at the forefront of international research.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is an independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health. Visit: www.nice.org.uk

NCEPOD

National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death. The website for more information is <http://www.ncepod.org.uk/>

National Patient Survey Programme

The National Patient Survey Programme, coordinated by the Care Quality Commission, gathers feedback from patients on different aspects of their experience of recently received care, across a variety of services/settings.

NHS England (NHSE)

NHS England leads the National Health Service (NHS) in England

NHS England Standard Contract objectives

The NHS Standard Contract includes mandatory quality requirements for NHS trusts to minimize Healthcare-Associated Infections (HCAIs), specifically targeting *Clostridioides difficile* (C. difficile), MRSA and Gram-negative bloodstream infections (GNBSIs) to thresholds set by NHS England.

NEQOS (North-East Quality Observatory Service)

Provides quality measurement for NHS organisations in the North-East (and beyond), using high quality expert intelligence to secure continually improving outcomes for patients.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Since January 2003, every local authority with responsibilities for social services (150 in all) has had the power to scrutinise local health services. Overview and scrutiny committees take on the role of scrutiny of the NHS – not just major changes but the on-going operation and planning of services. They bring democratic accountability into healthcare decisions and make the NHS more publicly accountable and responsive to local communities.

Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs)

PROMs measure a patient's health status or health-related quality of life at a single point in time, and are collected through short, self-completed questionnaires. This health status information is collected from patients through PROMs questionnaires before and after a procedure and provides an indication of the outcomes or quality of care delivered to NHS patients.

Payment by Results

A system of paying NHS healthcare providers a standard national price or tariff for each patient seen or treated.

PLACE (Patient-led Assessments of the Care Environment)

PLACE assessments are an annual appraisal of the non-clinical aspects of the NHS and independent / private healthcare settings, undertaken by teams made up of staff and members of the public (known as patient assessors). The team must include a minimum of 50% patient assessors. They provide a framework for assessing quality against common guidelines and standards.

Pressure Ulcer

A pressure ulcer is localised damage to the skin and/or underlying tissue, usually over a bony prominence (or related to a medical or other device), resulting from sustained pressure (including pressure associated with shear). The damage can be present as intact skin or an open ulcer and may be painful.

Providers

Providers are the organisations that provide relevant health services, for example NHS Trusts and their private or voluntary sector equivalents.

PSIRF (Patient Safety Incident Response Framework)

Sets out the NHS's approach to developing and maintaining effective systems and processes for responding to patient safety incidents for the purpose of learning and improving patient safety.

Regulations

Regulations are a type of secondary legislation made by an executive authority under powers given to them by primary legislation in order to implement and administer the requirements of that primary legislation.

Research

Clinical research and clinical trials are an everyday part of the NHS. The people who do research are mostly the same doctors and other health professionals who treat people. A clinical trial is a particular type of research that tests one treatment against another. It may involve either patients or people in good health, or both.

Risk

The possibility of suffering some form of loss or damage or the possibility that objectives will not be achieved.

Risk Assessment

The identification and analysis of relevant risks to the achievement of objectives.

Service user

An individual who uses a health care service, including those who are not in need of treatment, such as blood donors, carers or those using screening services.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Includes The Friarage Hospital (FHN) and James Cook University Hospital (JCUH) and community services in Hambleton, Richmondshire, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland.

Spell

A continuous period of time spent as a patient within a trust, and may include more than one episode.

STAQC (South Tees Accreditation for Quality of Care)

STAQC is a ward / department accreditation programme which brings together key measures of nursing and clinical care into one overarching framework.

Structured Judgement Review (SJR)

A tool used to evaluate the quality of care provided to patients, particularly in the context of mortality reviews.

STRIVE (South Tees Research, innovation and education)

Is the academic centre at South Tees for research, innovation and education. The centre also includes library services.

Summary Hospital-level Mortality Index (SHMI)

The Summary Hospital-level Indicator (SHMI) reports mortality at Trust level across the NHS in England using standard and transparent methodology. It looks at deaths following hospital treatment which take place in or out of hospital for 30 days following discharge and is based on all conditions.

TEWV

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust, supporting Mental Health and Learning Disabilities for County Durham and Darlington, Teesside, North Yorkshire, York and Selby.

University Hospitals Tees

A hospital group formed with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust with one unitary Board.

DRAFT

Progress Update on Previously Agreed Recommendations – Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care

Summary

Members are asked to consider the evidence and assessments of progress contained within the attached Progress Update on the implementation of previously agreed recommendations in relation to the review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care (see <https://moderngov.stockton.gov.uk/documents/s7863/Committee%20Report%20-%20Access%20to%20GPs%20and%20Primary%20Medical%20Care.pdf>).

Detail

- Following the Cabinet consideration of scrutiny reports, accepted recommendations are then subject to a monitoring process to track their implementation.
- Two main types of report are used. Initially this is by means of Action Plans detailing how services will be taking forward agreed recommendations. This is then followed by a Progress Update report approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan (unless requested earlier). Evidence is submitted by the relevant department together with an assessment of progress against all recommendations. Should members of the Select Committee agree, those recommendations which have reached an assessment of '1' are then signed off as having been completed.
- If any recommendations remain incomplete, or if the Select Committee does not agree with the view on progress, the Select Committee may ask for a further update.
- The assessment of progress for each recommendation should be categorised as follows:

1	Achieved (Fully)	The evidence provided shows that the recommendation has been fully implemented within the timescale specified.
2	On-Track (but not yet due for completion)	The evidence provided shows that implementation of the recommendation is on-track but the timescale specified has not expired.

3	Slipped	<p>The evidence shows that progress on implementation has slipped.</p> <p>An anticipated date by which the recommendation is expected to become achieved should be advised and the reasons for the delay.</p>
4	Not Achieved	<p>The evidence provided shows that the recommendation has not been fully achieved.</p> <p>An explanation for non-achievement of the recommendation would be provided.</p>

5. To further strengthen the monitoring process, from August 2020, the Progress Update report will also include references on the evidence of impact for each recommendation.
6. For Progress Update reports following the completion of a review, the relevant Link Officer(s) will be in attendance.
7. **Appendix 1** (Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care) sets out the outstanding recommendations for this Committee. Members are asked to review the update and indicate whether they agree with the assessments of progress.

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APPENDIX 1

PROGRESS UPDATE: Review of Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care

SCRUTINY MONITORING – PROGRESS UPDATE	
Review:	Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care
Link Officer/s:	Sarah Bowman-Abouna (SBC) & Emma Joyeux (NENC ICB)
Action Plan Agreed:	July 2024

Updates on the progress of actions in relation to agreed recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews are required approximately 12 months after the relevant Select Committee has agreed the Action Plan. Progress updates must be detailed, evidencing what has taken place regarding each recommendation – a grade assessing progress should then be given (see end of document for grading explanation). Any evidence on the impact of the actions undertaken should also be recorded for each recommendation.

General	
Recommendation 1:	All relevant health bodies (North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB), Cleveland Local Medical Committee (CLMC), Hartlepool & Stockton Health GP Federation (H&SH), NHS Trusts, and general practices) engage regularly and constructively around the issues raised as part of this review to ensure that patients are approaching / receiving care from the most appropriate services based on need.
Responsibility:	Emma Joyeux / Sarah Bowman-Abouna
Date:	December 2024
Agreed Action:	Update report to ICB place sub-committee (Stockton) and Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB).
Agreed Success Measure:	Sub-committee / HWB assured through report and discussion.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>All relevant health bodies (North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB), Cleveland Local Medical Committee (CLMC), Hartlepool & Stockton Health GP Federation (H&SH), NHS Trusts, and general practices do regularly engage constructively around issues relating to general practice to ensure that patients are approaching / receiving care from the most appropriate services based on need.</p> <p>The Stockton Place Sub-Committee has the following key partners in attendance (alongside ICB members):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stockton Local Authority Director of Public Health Director of Adult, Health & Wellbeing services Director of Children's Services • Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) Care Group Director • North Tees & Hartlepool Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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	<p>Locality Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Care – Primary Care Network [PCN] Clinical Directors [CD] Clinical Director - Stockton PCN Clinical Director - North Stockton PCN Clinical Director - Billingham and Norton PCN Clinical Director - Bytes PCN • Healthwatch Project Lead Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees • VCSE Chief Executive Catalyst
<p>Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2 (On-Track)</p> <p>A copy of this report will now be shared with HWB and Stockton Place Committee.</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (September 2025):</p>	<p>Examples of general practice issues discussed at Stockton Place Sub-Committee include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List closure applications • Merger applications • Temporary closures due to the civil unrest
<p>Evidence of Progress (May 2026):</p>	<p>The update report was shared with the Stockton Placed Based Committee on 23rd October 2025.</p> <p>The Stockton Place Based Committee in 2025/26 continued to be attended by System Partners and received updates in relation to general practice issues.</p> <p>Due to the ICB strategic commissioning transformation programme, and the requirement to reduce running costs by a further 30%, on 5th May 2026 a new ICB structure will go live. The Place Based Committee has therefore been stood down and new governance arrangements relative to the role and function of the organisation will be developed.</p> <p>A central General Practice, Pharmacy and Optometry Team has been formed, hosted by the ICBs Newcastle/ Gateshead Neighbourhood Health Team. This will support the implementation of consistent and timely processes in respect of general practice issues and responses to contractual changes which are required to be reviewed, approved and enacted.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (May 2026):</p>	<p>Since the last update the following practice issues have been progressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary list closure [Melrose Surgery]- until 15th September 2025 • Temporary list closure [Dr Rasool]- until 15th September 2025 • In hours closure on 22nd January 2026 [Densham Surgery] to allow staff to attend a funeral of a colleague

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Responsibility:	Local Clinical Interface Group (LCIG) via ICB
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Local Clinical Interface Group (LCIG) to continue discussing primary and secondary care interface issues that are impacting on primary care capacity.
Agreed Success Measure:	Collaborative working between primary and secondary care to agree actions as outlined by Primary Care Access Recovery Plan (PCARP).
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	Local Clinical Interface Group (LCIG) meetings have been established in Tees Valley, chaired by the Tees Valley Medical Director, and are continuing to take place monthly with good attendance and engagement from both Primary, Secondary care and CLMC colleagues. The LCIG is supporting discussions that are having a positive impact across both primary and secondary care and working through these collectively to resolve issues constructively and with mutual benefit.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>As part of the group valuable conversations and progress have been made around many areas. Some of the key outcomes as of September 2025 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Emergency Department outcomes letters have been developed and are going through final sign off • Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) active surveillance shared care agreement has been discussed and approved by the group • Regular reflections of positive work and sharing of 'quick wins' taking place in meetings to drive up confidence of stakeholders • Pain referral criteria being updated and agreed by the group <p>The group will soon be agreeing 'interface principles' which will smooth the interface between systems, ultimately leading to improved patient care, and saving time and energy to focus on the more important and valuable contributions system partners make. These have been developed in consideration of the national 'red tape challenge' with the aim of reducing bureaucracy between interfaces of care. The red tape challenge has distilled suggestions from extensive engagement into 'top ten' recommendations under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture and relationships across healthcare communities • Underpinning infrastructure • Making healthcare delivery more consistent • Improving customer service and experience
Responsibility:	Practices
Date:	August 2024
Agreed Action:	Continue to support practices to move to a Modern General Practice Access (MGPA) model to improve access and patient experience (13 practices accessed funding in 23/24).

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Agreed Success Measure:	Improvements in GP Patient survey / local practice survey.	Number of practices accessing MGPA funding.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>The General Practice Patient Survey (GPPS) results were released in January 2025.</p> <p>The data pack provided (Appendix 2) shows the positive changes in reporting between 2024 and 2025.</p> <p>In addition to the GPPS practices use the national Friends and Family Test (FFT) to gather more regular feedback about their services and use this to inform improvements and have active Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). The latest FFT data for June 2025 is also included in the data pack.</p>	<p>19 practices <i>[except for 1 in 24/25 who felt they did not require the funding]</i> accessed the MGPA transition funding in 24/25. The total funding released to practices across Stockton on Tees in 24/25 was £147,000.</p> <p>The funding in 24/25 was paid to practices to two waves, 75% upfront and 25% on completion of a value-based return to evidence the ongoing journey towards implementation of MGPA.</p>
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>It should be noted that at the time of the GPPS several practices continued to be on an improvement journey towards a MGPA model and therefore the survey will not capture these improvements. Of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Densham and Dovecot Surgery: The practices have now moved to a new cloud-based telephony system • Marsh House Medical Practice: The practice has moved to a new clinical system and is in the process of further improving their telephony system to include call back • Alma Medical Centre: The practice has now moved to a new cloud-based telephony system • Yarm Medical Practice: The practice has now moved to a new appointment and triage system • Kingsway Medical Centre: The practice is tied into a telephony contract until April 2026, after which they will be converting to a new cloud-based system which will include call back functionality • Norton Medical Centre: The practice has a new management team and are undergoing significant changes to their ways of working further to the CQC assessment <p>The MGPA value-based return also identified which practices would like further support from the ICBs Digital Support Hub to continue to improve ways of working in respect of operational processes linked to MGPA in their practices.</p> <p>10 practices in Stockton on Tees have received support from the Digital Support Hub.</p>	

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	<p>The support offer was also shared during the August 2025 practice engagement session to enable additional practices to seek support and the LDT will continue to receive updates from the Digital Support Hub on a bi-monthly basis.</p> <p>Note: NHS England have confirmed there will be no further MGPA funding in 2025/26.</p>
Responsibility:	PCNs
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Continue to support Primary Care Networks (PCNs) to implement Capacity and Access Improvement Plans (CAIP).
Agreed Success Measure:	Number of PCNs achieving maximum CAIP funding.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>NHSE set out in the 2024/25 PCN Directed Enhanced Service (DES) contract and associated guidance that the following components of Modern General Practice needed to be in place in every PCN practice, and to be confirmed as such by the network Clinical Director and the constituent practices, for the full CAIP funding to be paid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better digital telephony • Simpler online requests • Faster care navigation, assessment and response <p>Funding in 24/25 was apportioned equally across the three domains, such as that 100% of funding could only be received if the PCN has implemented MGPA requirements across all three areas.</p> <p>To support PCNs to make a declaration against achievement of any of the domains a declaration form was devised by Tees Valley Local Delivery Team (LDT) for use across the ICB.</p> <p>Within the PCN DES the following clause is set out in respect of cloud-based telephony (CBT):</p> <p><i>Where a practice is currently unable to adopt better digital telephony that is capable of enabling any of the components linked to this MGPA priority domain, for example because exit costs from a current contract are prohibitively high, and this has been agreed in writing by the ICB, the "better digital telephony" MGPA priority domain (or "improvement" as referred to in the Network Contract DES Specification) will be deemed to have been achieved if the PCN has agreed with the ICB a clear and deliverable plan to implement an appropriate digital telephony solution.</i></p> <p>To support the ICB in considering exceptional circumstances the Head of Service for Tees Valley and for North Cumbria developed principles to be applied to consider any requests from PCNs who feel any member practices should be considered under the above clause.</p> <p>The DES states: <i>PCNs and member practices should take an improvement approach to the implementation of modern general practice. Commissioners</i></p>

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	<i>should support PCNs, and practices as needed to take forward improvement priorities.</i>
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>At the end of March 2025 all 4 Primary Care Networks (PCNs) achieved the maximum CAIP funding.</p> <p>Two PCNs in Stockton on Tees submitted exceptional circumstances in relation to cloud based telephony, which were reviewed and accepted by the ICBs Local Delivery Teams [LDT] in line with the process developed and agreed improvement plan.</p> <p><u>2025/26 CAIP</u> The Capacity and Access Improvement (CAIP) payment will continue in 25/26 [worth £307,414 for Stockton on Tees] but will change from three domains down to two.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One domain will continue to focus on supporting modern general practice access [worth £204,942 in Stockton on Tees] while the other [worth £102,471 in Stockton on Tees] will incentivise PCNs to use the intelligence gained from population health risk stratification tools to stratify their patients – including to identify those that would benefit most from continuity of care <p>The ICB has developed a process for claims and exceptionality in relation to CBT and PCNs have until June 2026 to claim the CAIP funding.</p> <p>The PCNs continue to support practices to implement MGPA models.</p> <p>CAIP and the MGPA funding are intrinsically linked and CAIP can only be achieved when practices make the improvements required at an individual practice level.</p> <p>In addition to CAIP PCNs receive capacity and access funding unconditionally. PCNs have reported using this funding to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy common digital tools across the PCN • Optimise staff and capacity, such as backfill for clinical supervision of Additional Role Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) staff • Allocate funding to practices on a monthly basis for continuity plans around staffing and overtime (non-ARRS roles) to ensure safe levels across the network particular in high pressured seasons such as winter • Retain some funding for risk management, which was used towards additional one-off/practice expenses throughout the year • Support the delivery and coordination of care continuity and improving the delivery of care to people living in care homes • Fund patient self-check in screens, call boards with campaign advertising and website renewal • Exploring Artificial intelligence (AI) technology to support the patient journey

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Responsibility:	ICB & Cleveland LMC / H&SH
Date:	July 2024
Agreed Action:	NENC ICB to meet regularly with key stakeholders e.g. CLMC and H&SH.
Agreed Success Measure:	Regular meetings established.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	Regular meetings continue to be held on a monthly basis between key stakeholders to ensure early dialogue regarding areas of concern and interest and agreeing mutual support and collaborative working opportunities.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	The regular dialogue through effective partnership working has ensured a joined-up approach to the delivery of primary medical services. The relationships have enabled the ICB and stakeholders to work together to submit a bid for Stockton on Tees in relation to neighbourhood health, the outcome of which is expected in early September 2025.
Responsibility:	Practice Manager Lead
Date:	September 2024
Agreed Action:	NENC ICB to be invited to regularly attend Stockton Practice Managers meeting to further develop collaborative working relationships.
Agreed Success Measure:	Regular meetings established and attended by ICB.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	The ICB has established practice engagement sessions on a locality basis across Tees Valley. A survey was issued to practices to consider their preference in the type and frequency of the meetings, and this was used to inform the ICBs approach.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	The first engagement meetings were held in August 2025. All practices were invited to attend. Practices confirmed their preference was to have these meetings via MS Teams to ensure that they could be recorded for anyone unable to attend. A forward plan of topics has been agreed, in line with feedback from practices about the topics they'd benefit from, along with the opportunity for a 'hot topics' discussion in each session and a Q&A section for any issues, queries or concerns practices wish to raise.

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	<p>In addition to the meetings a GP TeamNet page has been established which is a reference site for practices to access guest speaker presentations and a FAQ document which will be produced after every engagement session.</p> <p>The engagement sessions will be held on a quarterly basis [in line with feedback from practices] and will be held in the following months</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Locality</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Meeting date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hartlepool and Stockton</td> <td>07/08/2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hartlepool and Stockton</td> <td>06/11/2025</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hartlepool and Stockton</td> <td>05/02/2026</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The meetings have been well received, with good attendance to date and the ICB is offering the practices the opportunity to shape the content of these sessions going forwards, so they remain timely and meaningful.</p>	Locality	Meeting date	Hartlepool and Stockton	07/08/2025	Hartlepool and Stockton	06/11/2025	Hartlepool and Stockton	05/02/2026
Locality	Meeting date								
Hartlepool and Stockton	07/08/2025								
Hartlepool and Stockton	06/11/2025								
Hartlepool and Stockton	05/02/2026								
Responsibility:	SBC, Public Health and NENC ICB								
Date:	March 2025								
Agreed Action:	Improved links between local Planning Services functions, Public Health and NENC ICB in terms of new housing developments and the potential impact of these in relation to health service demand / pressures.								
Agreed Success Measure:	Regular discussions established.								
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>The Tees Valley Strategic Estates Group is held on a bi-monthly basis chaired by the ICBs Strategic Head of Estates with Antony Phillips (SBC Place Development Manager) as the main attendee from Stockton Borough Council. The meeting continues to be attended from a range of public sector partners including Health, LA's, Police, University, Tees Valley Combined Authority and Homes England.</p> <p>The ICB continues to encourage SBC and Public Health to contribute to the understanding of what the local needs are and the impact this will have on local health services, particularly in relation to general practice and new patient registrations.</p>								
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track)								
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	Improved relationships through horizon scanning and sharing information so that all key partners are involved in discussions when planning services and their locations for the future.								
Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	The Tees Valley Strategic Estates Group continues to be held on a bi-monthly basis chaired by the ICBs Strategic Head of Estates with Antony Phillips (SBC Place Development Manager) as the main attendee from Stockton Borough								

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	<p>Council. The meeting continues to be attended from a range of public sector partners including Health, LA's, Police, University, Tees Valley Combined Authority and Homes England.</p> <p>The ICB continues to collaborate with SBC and Public Health to understand what the local needs are and the impact this will have on local health services, particularly in relation to general practice and new patient registrations.</p> <p>The ICB is linking into SBC Planning department to ensure the ICB is consulted on planning applications for new housing developments and is able to share the impact new houses would have on healthcare services and the requirements for investment into GP Premises to manage any increases to GP Practice list sizes. This has recently been expanded to include both Hartlepool and Durham Local Authority due to housing developments that cover multiple LA boundaries.</p> <p>The ICB is also part of the Tees Valley Care and Innovation Zone [TVCHIZ] Estates & Facilities Workstream bring partners together to maximise the use of current assets for the delivery of Neighbourhood Care services and identify any gaps where investment maybe required for new builds.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (May 2026):</p>	<p>Improved relationships and collaborative working now in place to undertake horizon scanning and share information so that all key partners are involved in discussions when planning services and their locations for the future.</p>

Communications	
Recommendation 2:	All relevant health bodies continue efforts to increase public / patient understanding about accessing the most appropriate services (including in the context of the Pharmacy First initiative), using all available communication mechanisms (both print and digital) and links through local community networks (e.g. community partnerships), to ensure key messages are reinforced.
Responsibility:	ICB / Practices / PCNs
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Continued promotion of public messaging through websites and social media channels.
Agreed Success Measure:	Visibility on websites and social media platforms.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>The ICB continues to have a strong social media presence and supports practices with key messaging on websites and social media channels.</p> <p>All Stockton on Tees PCNs have recruited a Digital and Transformation Manager through the Additional Role Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) supporting practices and patients to access information about accessing the most appropriate services.</p>

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	<p>The ICB has established a patient experience task and finish group, working with the Digital Team and HealthWatch to consistently promote pharmacy first, pharmacy first and enhanced GP access. Banners and leaflets to be developed and jointly branded between Healthwatch and the ICB to promote access routes across the region.</p> <p>PCNs and practices are routinely reminded of public health campaigns and cancer campaigns so that they can update their messaging on both website and in surgeries to ensure health promotion is a core part of their business.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (September 2025):</p>	<p>An example of this approach can be seen on the BYTES and Billingham and Norton PCNs resource hubs and on the ICB website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Hub - BYTES PCN • Billingham and Norton PCN • News North East and North Cumbria NHS • ICB Update - 15 August 2025
<p>Responsibility:</p>	<p>Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees</p>
<p>Date:</p>	<p>July 2024</p>
<p>Agreed Action:</p>	<p>Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees to adopt and promote the resource developed by Healthwatch South Tees.</p>
<p>Agreed Success Measure:</p>	<p>Communications disseminated through key services and VCSE.</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (September 2025):</p>	<p>It was noted during the Committee meeting when the action plan was agreed, that the proposed action for Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees to adopt and promote the resource developed by Healthwatch South Tees had already been addressed following the recent circulation of a Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees version of the 'Top Tips for Accessing your GP Practice'.</p> <p>Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees stated:</p> <p><i>'Following research undertaken by Healthwatch South Tees, who have worked in collaboration with a range of professionals, we are able to provide information in response to questions and issues raised by local people about getting the most out of your GP practice.</i></p> <p><i>The most common questions and answers are presented in this document, which is also live on our website</i> https://www.healthwatchstocktonontees.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-05-13/i-need-see-doctor-top-tips-accessing-your-gp-practice <i>and will be included in our next Summer newsletter.'</i></p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>

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Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	As above.
Responsibility:	ICB / SBC Public Health
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Key information and messages disseminated through Catalyst, community wellbeing champions and community spaces.
Agreed Success Measure:	Communications disseminated through key services and VCSE.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	The ICB continues to have a strong social media presence and supports practices and wider partners with key messaging on websites and social media channels that can be further shared.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News North East and North Cumbria NHS • ICB Update - 15 August 2025
Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	The ICB continues to have a strong social media presence and continues to support practices and wider partners by sharing key messages and branding that can be further shared.
Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (May 2026):	<p>An example of the above include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close liaison and dialogue with Public Health regarding vaccination programmes e.g. COVID-19, with media campaigns and local providers shared to support signposting of patients • NHS England — North East and Yorkshire » New neighbourhood approach makes waves in Stockton and Tyneside • New health service to rollout for Stockton-on-Tees residents - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council • Primary Care Networks receive a monthly bulletin with information that can be used by their teams to promote services and support patients to access wider support groups • Elm Tree Medical Centre Thornaby Facebook • Woodbridge Practice Thornaby Facebook • https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/gp-practices/
Responsibility:	Practices
Date:	October 2024
Agreed Action:	Increase the number of patients with online accounts enabled with full prospective access (target is 95%).

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Agreed Success Measure:	Remaining 5 practices to achieve 95% target.																														
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	NHS England data in relation to prospective records access has been intermittent and NHS England have advised caution on the data as it is not always reliable. However, the ICBs Digital Support Hub continues to work with practices to identify opportunities to increase the number of practices with full prospective record access in place and this will continue to be a key priority in 25/26.																														
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track) Delayed progress due to GP Collective Action.																														
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>The below shows the achievement as of September 2025. Riverside Medical Practice merged with Arrival Medical Practice in June 2025 which has resulted in a significant number of records with 104 applied [redacted] transferring to the practice. To ensure this is resolved for Riverside Medical Practice dedicated support is being provided in addition to the hands-on support being provided to the practices below the target.</p> <p>All practices now have the settings enabled to allow prospective records access with the default setting being switched on in the NHS app.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white;"> <th>Practice Name</th> <th>Organisational Settings to allow prospective access (Y/N)</th> <th>% of Registered patients excluded (104 code applied)</th> <th>Prospective default for new NHS App users (Y/N)</th> <th>% Online accounts with full prospective access</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>YARM MEDICAL PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">32.10%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">70.82%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NORTON MEDICAL CENTRE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.33%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">78.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WOODLANDS FAMILY MEDICAL CENTRE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19.68%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">95.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>THE ROSEBERRY PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12.81%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">88.82%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RIVERSIDE MEDICAL PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">65.03%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26.80%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Additional targeted support will continue to be offered to further improve this reported position.</p>	Practice Name	Organisational Settings to allow prospective access (Y/N)	% of Registered patients excluded (104 code applied)	Prospective default for new NHS App users (Y/N)	% Online accounts with full prospective access	YARM MEDICAL PRACTICE	Y	32.10%	Y	70.82%	NORTON MEDICAL CENTRE	Y	4.33%	Y	78.03%	WOODLANDS FAMILY MEDICAL CENTRE	Y	19.68%	Y	95.0%	THE ROSEBERRY PRACTICE	Y	12.81%	Y	88.82%	RIVERSIDE MEDICAL PRACTICE	Y	65.03%	Y	26.80%
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Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	<p>Targeted support continues to be offered to practices via the ICBs 'Digital Support Hub'.</p> <p>The ICB are offering 1-1 guidance and dedicated training sessions to help practices resolve outstanding technical issues. These sessions are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and practices are also signposted to the digital support hub during regular engagement sessions.</p> <p>Note- The figures included do not add up to 100%. This is because NHS England is providing the data using two different calculations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 104 code percentages are based on the entire patient population, not just those over 16 / with online accounts etc 																														

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online account with full prospective access is calculated by looking at only the patients with online accounts (not the entire patient population) who have been given full prospective records access 																																		
Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)	2- (On track) Business as usual for ongoing monitoring via the ICBs GP contracting Team.																																		
Evidence of Impact (May 2026):	A target is not written in to the GP contract as the contract implies all patients should have online access unless exclusions apply, so a 90% figure acts as a margin for flexibility, ensuring that practices are not deemed non-compliant if e.g. a handful of patients don't have full prospective records access.																																		
	How progress is being monitored	Position statement																																	
	Practices are correctly configured to ensure global organisation settings to allow for prospective access	All Stockton on Tees practices have their organisation settings correctly configured to allow for prospective access																																	
	Prospective access is the default for new NHS App users	All Stockton on Tees practices have prospective access as default for new NHS app users																																	
	Less than 10% of registered patients have withheld records access due to the need for an enhanced review	3 practices in Stockton have more than 10% with the 104 code* applied- Dedicated technical support is being provided to these practices																																	
	90% or more patients with online accounts enabled with prospective access	Online accounts will full prospective access has increased for all practices since the September 2025 update 1 practice is 1% away from having 90% of online accounts with full prospective access 3 practices are receiving dedicated technical support to increase their % of accounts																																	
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white;">Organisation Name</th> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Organisational Settings to allow prospective access (Y/N)</th> <th style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white;">Patients withheld access due to need for enhanced review (104 code*) (% of registered patients)</th> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">Prospective default for new NHS App users (Y/N)</th> <th style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white;">Online accounts with full prospective access</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">%</td> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: #f8d7da;">YARM MEDICAL PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">31.41%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">71.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NORTON MEDICAL CENTRE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.39%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">80.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #f8d7da;">THE ROSEBERRY PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">13.00%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">89.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #f8d7da;">RIVERSIDE MEDICAL PRACTICE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">61.52%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center; color: red;">30.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Organisation Name	Organisational Settings to allow prospective access (Y/N)	Patients withheld access due to need for enhanced review (104 code*) (% of registered patients)	Prospective default for new NHS App users (Y/N)	Online accounts with full prospective access			%		%	YARM MEDICAL PRACTICE	Y	31.41%	Y	71.5%	NORTON MEDICAL CENTRE	Y	4.39%	Y	80.1%	THE ROSEBERRY PRACTICE	Y	13.00%	Y	89.0%	RIVERSIDE MEDICAL PRACTICE	Y	61.52%	Y	30.6%				
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	*The 104 code excludes patients from viewing records thus disabling these patients from having access to their record switched on. ** The previous target was 95%																																		

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	<p>Note- The figures included do not add up to 100%. This is because NHS England is providing the data using two different calculations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 104 code percentages are based on the entire patient population, not just those over 16 / with online accounts etc • Online account with full prospective access is calculated by looking at only the patients with online accounts (not the entire patient population) who have been given full prospective records access 																					
Responsibility:	Practices and H&SH																					
Date:	March 2025																					
Agreed Action:	Promotion of enhanced access appointments on evenings and weekends.																					
Agreed Success Measure:	Increased utilisation of appointments.																					
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>Enhanced access continues to be offered by Hartlepool and Stockton Health GP federation [H&SH] on behalf of the four PCNs, offering a range of appointments to patients which are considered an extension of core general practice.</p> <p>Each year the hours required to be provided change on the basis of the PCNs adjusted list size being amended in January of each year to account for new patients joining or leaving PCN member practices. The total hours per week required from 1st April 2025 were:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">PCN Code</th> <th style="text-align: left;">PCN Name</th> <th style="text-align: right;">Updated hours to provide in 2025</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>U63844</td> <td>BYTES PCN</td> <td style="text-align: right;">48:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U94460</td> <td>BILLINGHAM & NORTON PCN</td> <td style="text-align: right;">53:30:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U07032</td> <td>NORTH STOCKTON PCN</td> <td style="text-align: right;">51:30:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U27349</td> <td>ONE LIFE HARTLEPOOL PCN</td> <td style="text-align: right;">40:15:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U89141</td> <td>STOCKTON PCN</td> <td style="text-align: right;">70:00:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"></td> <td style="text-align: right;">263:45:00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PCN Code	PCN Name	Updated hours to provide in 2025	U63844	BYTES PCN	48:30	U94460	BILLINGHAM & NORTON PCN	53:30:00	U07032	NORTH STOCKTON PCN	51:30:00	U27349	ONE LIFE HARTLEPOOL PCN	40:15:00	U89141	STOCKTON PCN	70:00:00			263:45:00
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Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>																					
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>The ICB monitors utilisation of the enhanced access service in each PCN [booked and utilised appointments] by way of a monthly update report which is completed on behalf of the PCNs by H&SH. The ICB also requires PCNs to confirm if and when any enhanced access hours are to be re-provided due to any days which fall on bank holidays. The 24/25 booked and utilisation rates by PCN is as below:</p>																					

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	24/25 Enhanced Access	Booked	Utilised
	Stockton	79.49%	71.90%
	North Stockton	71.81%	64.23%
	BNPCN	87.38%	80.03%
	BYTES	77.67%	67.70%
	Average	79.09%	70.97%
	Average 23/24	76.48%	68.72%
	<p>Data shows an improvement from previous year in both appointments booked and utilised [which includes DNA rates].</p> <p>The enhanced access service continues to be widely promoted via phone lines, on websites and by QR codes/ banners. The service offers the opportunity for patients to attend appointments on evenings and weekends at convenient locations.</p>		
Responsibility:	Practices and H&SH		
Date:	March 2025		
Agreed Action:	Promotion of at-scale services provided by H&SH that will reduce demand on practice appointments e.g. covid vaccinations, menopause clinics.		
Agreed Success Measure:	Increased utilisation of at-scale services.		
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>H&SH, as the sub-contractor of the PCNs enhanced access services also offer additional innovative appointment types such as group consultations and menopause clinics.</p> <p>In addition to this H&SH have continued to partner with the ICB to offer COVID-19 vaccinations during the spring programme for North Stockton PCN [who opted out of the programme] and the delivery of outreach clinics across the Tees Valley and will continue to do so in the Autumn/Winter 25/26 COVID-19 programme.</p>		
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	<p>1 (Fully Achieved)</p> <p>Ongoing (business as usual)</p>		
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>Menopause: Patients across the four PCNs in Stockton on Tees have benefited from a series of women's health events dedicated to supporting women from minority ethnic groups to understand menopause and access care with the aim to destigmatise the conversation around menopause, empower women to take control of their health and mitigate direct and indirect health issues affecting patients from minority ethnic groups experiencing menopause.</p> <p>COVID-19: During the 2025 Spring COVID-19 booster programme, H&SH delivered 332 vaccinations across all 5 localities in Tees using the RALPH bus and ensured housebound and care home patients received a COVID-19 vaccine.</p>		

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	<p>Ensuring coverage of the North Stockton PCN eligible population and offering outreach clinics enables those most vulnerable to receive a vaccine. Outreach clinics during the autumn/ winter programme will continue to be widely promoted using both ICB and national comms branding via Public Health, Intrahealth, community champions, practices etc. The Local Delivery Team will request that practices remind patients of the clinics in their locality to promote the opportunity to receive a convenient vaccine.</p> <p>Sexual Health: Since 1st Augst 2025, Teesside Together (provided by the Tees Alliance Partnership, which is led by University Hospitals Tees, Hartlepool and Stockton Health and ELM GP Federation) will be working with 70 GP practices and approximately 100 community pharmacies across the region, providing emergency hormonal contraception through community-based hubs to promote early intervention, support informed choice, and reduce barriers to essential services.</p> <p>Other H&SH services: Community Healthcare Services Hartlepool & Stockton Health - Hartlepool & Stockton Health</p>
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Communications	
Recommendation 3:	Councillors and local MPs be supported in helping with these communication messages as leaders in their communities (as well as their role in raising concerns expressed by the community) and encourage positive feedback as well as concerns (to help share and spread learning and best practice).
Responsibility:	Councillors / MPs
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Help support messaging around wasted appointments from Did Not Attends (DNA).
Agreed Success Measure:	Reduction in DNA rates.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	The ICB continues to have a strong social media presence and supports practices and wider partners with key messaging on websites and social media channels that can be further shared.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>Examples of how ICB shares messages that can be used by wider partners to further disseminate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News North East and North Cumbria NHS • ICB Update - 15 August 2025 •

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	 NENC ICB MP and local councillors upda The ICB will look to include some further messaging in future around DNAs.
Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	The ICB continues to have a strong social media presence and supports practices and wider partners with key messaging on websites and social media channels that can be further shared.
Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (May 2026):	DNA rates in Stockton practices have been on average around 3.7% for the last 5 months, slightly higher in October 2025 due to increased seasonal flu activity. This is similar to the Tees Valley position (3.83% in Feb 26 https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/appointments-in-general-practice) Practices continue to promote the importance of keeping or cancelling appointments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queens Park Medical Centre Stockton-on-Tees Facebook
Responsibility:	Councillors / MPs
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Healthwatch communication to be used by Councillors and local MPs, for dissemination in the community – including contact details to send feedback.
Agreed Success Measure:	Communications disseminated in the community and feedback gathered.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	Healthwatch communication has been shared and is accessible on the Healthwatch website for Councillors and local MPs to use. Information is also available on the ICB website and NHS website
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	2 (On-Track)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP practices North East and North Cumbria NHS • Appointments and bookings at your GP surgery - NHS
Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	Information is made available to share and NHS messaging is often re-shared by Stockton LA and the Community Wellbeing Champions social media sites.
Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)

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Evidence of Impact (May 2026):	<p>Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees: Modern General Practice Access: What People Across Our Region Told Us Healthwatch Stocktonontees</p> <p>Stockton on Tees Community Wellbeing Champions: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1285805166867071</p>
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Operational	
Recommendation 6:	All general practices move towards providing the full use of digital telephony capabilities (including call-back functionality), with appropriate staff in place to support these arrangements.
Responsibility:	Practices
Date:	In line with end date of individual practice contracts
Agreed Action:	Support practices to transition from analogue telephony to Cloud Based Telephony (CBT).
Agreed Success Measure:	All practices to be on CBT.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	All practices are now on cloud-based telephony systems.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	Data is not yet publicly available regarding any quantifiable impact or improvement of CBT. However 70% of practices in Stockton have seen an increased positive response to the GP patient survey question relating to ease of getting through to GP practice by telephone compared to last year.
Responsibility:	ICB / Practices
Date:	October 2024 [or in line with end date of individual practice contracts]
Agreed Action:	Support practices to increase functionality of Cloud-Based Telephony (CBT), with particular emphasis on call-back function.
Agreed Success Measure:	All practices to have call-back functionality as part of CBT.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>All practices are now on cloud-based telephony systems. As previously mentioned, two PCNs (affecting now 3 practices) in Stockton on Tees submitted exceptional circumstances in relation to cloud-based telephony, which were reviewed and accepted by the ICBs Local Delivery Teams (LDT) in line with the process developed and agreed improvement plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marsh House Medical Centre: Whilst the practice has a CBT contract, installation of the call back functionality has been delayed due to the recent migration of the practice clinical system from EMIS to Systm1. The practice

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	<p>has agreed to implementing call back functionality as soon as practical during 2025/26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingsway Medical Centre: The practice is tied into a CBT telephony contract until April 2026, after which they will be converting to a new cloud-based system which will include call back functionality • Dr Rasool: The practice has agreed a new CBT contract which has call back functionality enabled. The practice intended to move to this system in Q1 of 25/26 however this has been delayed due to the ICB upgrading the Health and Social Care Network being upgraded [which is a secure network to enable health and social care data to flow quickly and securely]. A new installation date is expected in Q3.
<p>Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2 (On-Track)</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (September 2025):</p>	<p>Data is not yet publicly available regarding any quantifiable impact or improvement of CBT. However, 70% of practices in Stockton have seen an increased positive response to the GP patient survey question relating to ease of getting through to GP practice by telephone compared to last year.</p>
<p>Evidence of Progress (May 2026):</p>	<p>As previously reported all practices have cloud-based telephony systems [CBT].</p> <p>Exceptional circumstances that were submitted in 25/25 for two practices [Marsh House Medical Centre and Kingsway Medical Centre] have now been resolved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marsh House Medical Centre- System configuration with the telephony provider has now taken place and call back will go live in Mid- May • Kingsway Medical Centre- The practice has now moved to a new CBT provider which meets all system requirements, including call back functionality <p>Unfortunately, Dr Rasool have continued to be hampered with digital delays outside of their control. The practice continues to work closely with North of England Commissioning Support [NECS] who have advised that a new circuit is being installed, alongside a new router. A pause of 5 weeks is technically required before the site can be migrated therefore there is an expected change over date of Mid-May.</p>
<p>Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)</p>	<p>2 (On-Track) (with expectation of 1 (Fully Achieved) by mid-May – as such a verbal update will be provided)</p>
<p>Evidence of Impact (May 2026):</p>	<p>CBT telephony data is now routinely available, although NHS England note that the data is official statistics in development and not all suppliers of Cloud Based Telephony are sending data</p> <p>Cloud Based Telephony in General Practice: Supporting Information - NHS England Digital</p> <p>Practices are using data they receive directly from their supplier to inform capacity and demand planning and better understand telephony data / trends.</p>

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Public / patient feedback	
Recommendation 11:	NENC ICB consider its complaint / compliment reporting mechanisms so future data can be provided at a local general practice level.
Responsibility:	ICB
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	ICB to review process to themes complaints/ compliments at a more granular level.
Agreed Success Measure:	Data made available to local delivery team in Tees Valley.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	<p>The Tees Local Delivery Team continue to receive information regarding complaints and compliments (where relevant), which are considered as part of the quality and variation approach (see next action for further detail on this process).</p> <p>This intelligence includes any MP queries and subsequent responses provided that are relevant to general practice. One MP query has been responded to in relation to Stockton on Tees practices during 24/25 in relation to Yarm Medical Practice.</p>
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	<p>2 (On-Track)</p> <p>New national requirements and processes have superseded previous exploratory arrangements for more granular level data at local level (as supposed to ICB level).</p>
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	<p>NHS England have launched the 'you and your general practice charter' which all practices are expected to have on their website by 1st October 2025 as part of a contract variation which has been issued by NHS England.</p> <p>This will also require the ICB to have a route for patients to provide feedback. This will be led by the patient and public involvement team, with the ICBs website to be updated to enable comments and feedback to be captured.</p> <p>This information will also be considered in the ICBs quality and variation group once available and the Local Delivery Team will be reviewing all websites in due course to ensure this charter is available for patients via this route.</p> <p>NHS England » You and your general practice</p>
Evidence of Progress (May 2026):	<p>The ICB has created a process to respond to 'you and your GP practice charter feedback' and has a website link for patients to submit their feedback. Feedback is provided to local teams to liaise with practices to receive updates further to any patient feedback received, this is then reported through the Tees Valley Quality and Variation Group and up through the ICBs primary care sub-committee.</p>

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	All practices have the 'you and your GP practice charter' link on their websites and inform patients how to submit their feedback.
Assessment of Progress (May 2026): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (May 2026):	2 pieces of feedback have been received to date for Stockton practices to the ICB via the 'you and your GP practice' route, 1 piece of feedback was positive, and 1 piece of feedback led to improved processes for parents seeking to access an appointment for their child. Feedback will continue to be reported and discussed via the Tees Valley Quality and Variation Group.
Responsibility:	ICB
Date:	March 2025
Agreed Action:	Themes from available data to be discussed as part of the Primary & Community Care Quality and Variation Group.
Agreed Success Measure:	Feedback from the Primary & Community Care Quality and Variation Group.
Evidence of Progress (September 2025):	The Tees Valley Local Delivery Team led on the development of an ICB wide Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for how Quality & Variation across general practice should be managed in line with delegated commissioning of general medical services. Part of the new process includes a standard set of 'key lines of enquiry' (KLOE) questions which form a 'deep dive' of each practice and identifies potential themes across practices. Practices are asked to respond on the KLOEs and then are considered by the ICBs subject matter experts across primary care, quality, safeguarding, medicines management, contracting, estates and digital within a monthly quality and variation group. The SOP was considered exemplar by NHS England and has been recommended for adoption beyond the NENC ICB.
Assessment of Progress (September 2025): (include explanation if required)	1 (Fully Achieved) Ongoing (business as usual)
Evidence of Impact (September 2025):	Standard SOP now in place across the ICB, with standardised templates, questions and resource guides developed. Since April 2025, 26 'deep dives' have been undertaken on practices across Tees Valley [12 have been for Stockton on Tees practices]. 14 on a rolling basis and 12 on a risk basis [of which 3 were on a risk basis in Stockton on Tees]. Practices are selected on a rolling basis [for deep dives to be undertaken once every 3 years] and on a risk basis [when data or intelligence may warrant a review sooner than the 3-year period. A deep dive rota has been developed

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	<p>which records when the deep dive was undertaken, key themes and any support requirements.</p> <p>Key themes of the deep dives have included: QoF exemptions, high opioid and gabapentinoid prescribing, cervical screening.</p> <p>The deep dives have enables support to be identified for practices to work through themes with the subject matter experts from the ICB.</p> <p>In addition, practices have been provided the opportunity to sign up to the national General Practice Improvement Programme [where relevant] - with Norton Medical Practice due to commence in September 2025.</p> <p>Feedback from 'You and your general practice' will be incorporated into the SOP when available and where relevant.</p>
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Assessment of Progress Gradings:	1 Fully Achieved	2 On-Track	3 Slipped	4 Not Achieved
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Health & Wellbeing Board

A meeting of Health & Wellbeing Board was held on Wednesday 28th January 2026.

Present: Cllr Lisa Evans (Chair), Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Fiona Adamson, Cllr Clare Besford, Tracey Carter, Cllr Lynn Hall, Majella McCarthy, Katie Mcleod (Sub for Karen Hawkins), Cllr Jack Miller, Lucy Owens, Peter Smith and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Sub for Cllr Pauline Beall).

Officers: Michael Henderson, Michael Houghton (North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust), Amit Law and Sidney Wong (Adults, Health and Wellbeing)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Pauline Beall, Karen Hawkins, Diane Monkhouse, Carolyn Nice, Matt Storey and Jamie Todd

HWB/31/25 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure and housekeeping arrangements for the Council Chamber were noted.

HWB/32/25 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

HWB/33/25 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 17 December 2025 be approved as a correct record.

HWB/34/25 Appointment of Vice Chair

The Board considered the appointment of a Vice – Chair.

RESOLVED that Karen Hawkins be appointed as Vice- Chair of the Board with immediate effect until the end of April 2027.

HWB/35/25 Neighbourhood Health Improvement Programme

The Board received a presentation outlining the Neighbourhood Health Improvement Programme.

Key points included:

- The programme supported the national ambition to shift care from hospital to community and from treatment to prevention.
- Stockton had been selected as one of 43 areas for Phase One.

- Focus would be on the most deprived areas, particularly Central Stockton and Portrack.
- Emphasis on collaborative working, early intervention, and prevention.
- Initial focus areas included:
 - Frailty (65+)
 - Individuals aged 50–65 with multiple long-term conditions
 - Community-based case finding

Progress to date:

- Programme mobilisation across partners
- Governance structures and decision-making routes established
- Initial cohort identified using shared data
- Engagement with VCSE sector and community groups
- Integrated delivery supported by clear assurance and evaluation processes

Engagement activity included:

- Workshops with over 50 partners
- Establishment of a Community Voice Group
- Reducing Inequalities workshop delivered

Next steps:

- Ongoing testing and scaling of delivery models
- Continued engagement with national programme
- Development of integrated neighbourhood teams
- VCSE and community co production

Discussion

- Members welcomed the focus on prevention, early intervention and reducing inequalities.
- Importance of partnership working and alignment with existing provision to avoid duplication was highlighted.
- Need for meaningful community engagement and visible outcomes for residents was emphasised.
- Members noted differing needs across pilot communities and stressed the importance of building trust over time, avoiding consultation fatigue.
- Members supported building on existing community assets and infrastructure.
- Concerns noted regarding pace of development and reliance on further national guidance.
- Members referenced links to wider initiatives, including Pride of Place, and suggested a future report or presentation to the Board.

- It was noted that an interim Neighbourhood Health Plan would be brought to the Board in March for discussion, ahead of submission.

RESOLVED that the update and discussion be noted/actioned as appropriate.

HWB/36/25 Development of Performance Monitoring Framework - Update

The Board received an update on the monitoring and accountability framework for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Key points:

- A high-level delivery plan had been developed for Year 1.
- Commitment leads would identify Year 2 milestones by February 2026.
- Deep dive sessions focus on:
 - Healthy weight / good food
 - Early years
 - Social isolation and loneliness
- A Power BI outcomes dashboard is in development:
 - Will align with national and local outcome frameworks
 - Enable benchmarking and trend analysis
- End-of-year reflections will be gathered via structured self-assessment across:
 - Successes
 - Inequalities
 - Community engagement
 - Partnership working
 - Challenges

Next steps:

- March Board: End-of-year report and reflection session
- April Board: Agreement of future deep dive topics

Key points

- Need for a pragmatic approach to performance monitoring, focusing on key priorities rather than all activity.
- Use of partner self-assessment aligned to strategy priorities noted.
- Flexibility in format and timing of sessions discussed and would be considered outside the meeting.

RESOLVED that the progress and plans be noted/agreed.

HWB/37/25 Health and Wellbeing Board Web page

The Board considered a report on updating the Health and Wellbeing Board webpage.

Key proposals:

- Publication of updated Terms of Reference with explanatory context.
- Clear articulation of the Board’s role as a statutory committee and strategic partnership.
- Updated membership information.
- Inclusion of:
 - Overview of the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
 - Summary of the monitoring and accountability framework.

Discussion highlighted:

- Importance of clarity, transparency, and accessibility.
- Opportunity to strengthen communication and public understanding.

RESOLVED:

1. that the proposed updates to the webpage be approved.
2. that further options for proactive communication be explored.

Chair:

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE
Work Programme 2026-2027**

Date (4.30pm unless stated)	Topic	Attendance
21 April 2026	Monitoring: Action Plan – Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service Stockton-on-Tees Wellbeing Hub Overview Report: SBC Adults, Health & Wellbeing (Adult Social Care / Strategy & Transformation) Regional Health Scrutiny Update	Graham Lyons Sarah Jones Cllr Pauline Beall / Carolyn Nice / Angela Connor / James O'Donnell / Jacqui Warrior
19 May	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT): Quality Account 2025-2026 Monitoring: Progress Update – Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care Health and Wellbeing Board: Previous Minutes (January 2026)	Matt Neligan / Judith Connor Sarah Bowman-Abouna / Emma Joyeux / Rebecca Warden
23 June	Norton Medical Centre: Response to latest CQC inspection PAMMS Annual Report (Care Homes): 2025- 2026 (TBC) CQC / PAMMS Quarterly Update: Q4 2025-2026 (TBC) Review of Protection of Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Draft) Scope and Project Plan Regional Health Scrutiny Update	TBC Darren Boyd Darren Boyd Carol Malham
21 July	SBC Adult Social Care Complaints 2025-2026 (TBC) Tees Valley Care and Health Innovation Zone (TBC) Review of Protection of Property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC 	Cllr Pauline Beall / Carolyn Nice Geraldine Brown / Chris Renahan
22 September	Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees: Annual Report 2025-2026 (TBC) Monitoring: Progress Update – Reablement Service Overview and Performance Report: Adults, Health & Wellbeing (Public Health)	Natasha Douglas Rob Papworth Cllr Pauline Beall / Carolyn Nice / Sarah Bowman-Abouna

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE Work Programme 2026-2027

Date (4.30pm unless stated)	Topic	Attendance
	CQC / PAMMS Quarterly Update: Q1 2026-2027 Review of Protection of Property • TBC	Darren Boyd
20 October	Care and Health Winter Planning 2026-2027 (TBC) Review of Protection of Property • TBC	Sarah Bowman-Abouna
17 November	SBC Director of Public Health: Annual Report 2025-2026 CQC / PAMMS Quarterly Update: Q2 2026-2027 Review of Protection of Property • TBC Regional Health Scrutiny Update	Sarah Bowman-Abouna
15 December	Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB): Annual Report 2025-2026 Stockton-on-Tees Independent Complaints Advocacy: Annual Report Review of Protection of Property • TBC	Adrian Green / Carolyn Nice Philip Kerr
19 January 2027	Regional Health Scrutiny Update	
16 February	CQC / PAMMS Quarterly Update: Q3 2026-2027	
23 March	Overview and Performance Report: SBC Adults, Health & Wellbeing (Adult Social Care / Strategy & Transformation)	Cllr Pauline Beall / Carolyn Nice / Angela Connor

2026-2027 Scrutiny Reviews

- Protection of Property

Monitoring Items

- Access to GPs and Primary Medical Care (Progress Update) – May 2026
- Reablement Service (Progress Update) – September 2026
- Stockton-on-Tees Adult Carers Support Service (Progress Update) – TBC

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

Work Programme 2026-2027

Performance and Quality of Care (standing Items)

- SBC Adults, Health and Wellbeing – Overview Report
- SBC Director of Public Health – Annual Report
- SBC PAMMS (Care Homes) – Annual Report
- SBC Adult Social Care Complaints (Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman) – Annual Report
- Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees – Annual Report
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) – State of Care Annual Report
- Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) – Annual Report
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT) – Quality Account

Regular Reports

- Regional / Tees Valley Health Scrutiny – Updates
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) / PAMMS – Quarterly Inspection Updates
- Health and Wellbeing Board – Minutes
- Care and Health Winter Planning – Update

Other Reports (as required)

- Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees – Enter and View Reports
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) – Inspection Reports (by email / by exception at Committee)

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