

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee

16 December 2025

REGIONAL HEALTH SCRUTINY UPDATE

Summary

The Committee is requested to consider an update on the work of the regional health scrutiny committees. Some recent health-related developments impacting on the Tees Valley and / or wider North East and North Cumbria footprint are also highlighted.

Detail

Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

1. Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council is hosting this Committee during 2025-2026.
2. Two Committee meetings have taken place since the last update. The first was held on 17 July 2025 where agenda items included:
 - Minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2025 (see **Appendix 1**)
 - NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB): NHS Dentistry Update
 - Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV): CAMHS Update
 - NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB): Tees Respite Care / Adult Learning Disability Update
 - North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT): Community Diagnostic Centre Update
3. The latest Committee meeting was held on 2 October 2025 where agenda items included:
 - Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2025 (see **Appendix 2**)
 - Public Health: Suicide Prevention Update
 - Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV): Community Mental Health Transformation
 - Public Health: Vaping / Nitrous Oxide Update
 - NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB): Winter Plan Update
4. Committee Members visited the Tees Valley Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) in Stockton on 24 October 2025.

5. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 11 December 2025 – the agenda is still to be confirmed, though potential items may include a Clinical Services Strategy update (University Hospitals Tees), a Palliative and End-of-Life Care Strategy update (NENC ICB), opioid prescribing and dependency across the Tees Valley (NENC ICB / NECS), and a further update on Tees Respite Care / Short Breaks Service (NENC ICB / TEWV).

Sustainability and Transformation Plan / Integrated Care System Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

6. Following a lengthy hiatus, Durham County Council (who support this Joint Committee) contacted scrutiny teams across the region in November 2022 with the intention of arranging a meeting for late-November / early-December 2022. However, following liaison with senior NENC ICB representatives, it was deemed that in light of the ongoing ICS briefings to the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, a meeting of this Joint Committee (which involved similar Councillors) was likely to be a duplication and would not add value.
7. In wider regional health matters, the NENC ICB '**Here to help you**' webpage continues to provide information on choosing the right NHS service for your needs, looking after your mental health, keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet, or getting your vaccines. Plus, there is lots of health advice and local support information (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/>).
8. The NENC ICB continues to promote the **NHS 'Be wise, immunise' campaign**. Details on flu and COVID-19 vaccinations can be found at <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/flu-and-covid-19-vaccinations-be-wise-immunise/> – this includes a list of walk-in clinics available within the Tees Valley footprint (includes venues across Stockton-on-Tees).
9. **People struggling to stay in work because of health problems will get more support through an ambitious new scheme** (one of only three in the country to receive funding from the Government's Health and Growth Accelerator scheme) getting started in October 2025. The WorkWell programme will help people tackle their health problems so they can stay in work – or get back to work. That means people who are at risk of having to stop working will get extra help with things like depression and anxiety, back problems, alcohol, smoking or gynaecological issues (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/19m-health-boost-for-working-people-in-north-east-and-north-cumbria/>).
10. In October 2025, the NENC ICB announced the launch of a **new People's Hub** in the region. The region's NHS will now provide regular updates and details of events, involvement activities and proposed changes to anyone who signs up to the new hub (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/stay-informed-get-involved-nhs-launches-new-peoples-hub-in-north-east-and-north-cumbria/>).
11. **Women across the North East and North Cumbria can now get emergency contraception straight from their local community pharmacy**. The new free NHS service is available in 97% of community pharmacies across the region - offering a quick, easy and confidential way for women to get care when they need it most. This follows the launch of the oral contraception pharmacy service, in March 2025, which lets women speak privately with a trained pharmacist to start, or continue, taking the contraceptive pill. Both pharmacy contraception services are free of charge and help to reduce pressure on GP surgeries and sexual health clinics by freeing up appointments for people with more complex needs (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/women-can-now-get-emergency-contraception-directly-from-local-pharmacies/>).
12. Following the early-2025 announcement requiring **ICBs to reduce running and programme costs**, recently received guidance from NHS England has enabled ICBs to progress with their consultation processes, supported by guaranteed funding that will contribute towards the redundancy costs. The guidance stipulates that ICBs are required to develop transition plans for 2025-2026, implement restructuring within the financial year, and achieve both the

mandated operating model and cost savings targets, which for the NENC ICB is a reduction of £32.5 million (or 32%). A staff consultation has now been launched which runs until 16 January 2026.

13. More locally, a number of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust developments have been publicised in recent weeks (see <https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/>), including:
- Top performing hospital emergency unit transformed – helping patients be seen and treated more quickly (October 2025)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/top-performing-hospital-emergency-unit-transformed-helping-patients-be-seen-and-treated-more-quickly/>
 - New blood infections testing programme launched at University Hospital of North Tees (October 2025)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/new-blood-infections-testing-programme-launched-at-university-hospital-of-north-tees/>
 - Open day event supports members of the public with audiology concerns (November 2025)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/open-day-event-supports-members-of-the-public-with-audiology-concerns/>
 - Award success for volunteer team (November 2025)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/award-success-for-volunteer-team/>

North East Regional Health Scrutiny Committee

14. No meetings are currently scheduled.

Name of Contact Officer: Gary Woods

Post Title: Senior Scrutiny Officer

Telephone No: 01642 526187

Email Address: gary.woods@stockton.gov.uk