

our local strategic direction | 2025 - 2028

setting our future direction over the next three years to deliver against our priorities



our future



Scan for digital version

hello

Since we last set our strategic direction, back in 2019, our staff have risen to the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, increasing numbers of urgent and emergency attendances, and the impact of industrial action on our services.

Despite these challenges, we've made huge steps forward, investing in our infrastructure including a new Emergency Department, Urgent Treatment Centre and surgical robot, which have enabled us to improve our environment and the care we deliver.

We are in the process of embedding continuous improvement in everything we do through our Improving Together methodology and way of working.

As we look to the future, we have taken the time to speak to our teams of staff and volunteers, patients, public and partners to better understand what our priority areas should be and how these address the needs of our local communities.

We've considered the kind of organisation we want to be, how we can work more closely with our partners, the conditions we need to thrive and how everyone can contribute.

This work has given us a better understanding of what's important to us and our local communities. It has helped us to create a refreshed vision and set priorities, which will enable us to contribute to delivering the Integrated Care System's strategy (covering Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire - BSW).

Our vision is to provide great services for local people at home, in the community and in hospital, enabling independent and healthier lives.

We have four strategic pillars, which are our priorities that we want to be known for.

- Outstanding care – continuous quality improvement and co-creation of services with local communities, with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Valued teams – our teams of staff and volunteers feeling valued and knowing their contribution to our future success, enabling them to deliver high quality care.
- Better together – collaborative and integrated working to improve quality of care and address health inequalities in our local communities.
- Sustainable future – maximise research and innovation opportunities to support quality improvement, spend wisely, and deliver on carbon net zero.

We believe our vision and pillars give us a clear direction and ambition for our organisation as we go forward.

We know that we can't do this on our own and our staff, volunteers, partners, and communities will be integral to everything we do.

As we work to develop our group model with colleagues at hospitals in Bath and Salisbury, we look forward to seeing the benefits of greater collaboration on the care we are able to provide to our patients.



Liam Coleman
Chair
Great Western Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Cara Charles-Barks
Chief Executive
Great Western Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust +
BSW Hospitals Group



Jon Westbrook
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about us

We are a **collaborative** NHS Foundation Trust

What this means and why it's important

As a provider of NHS healthcare we seek to deliver outstanding patient care to our local communities.

Being a collaborative organisation is important to us, it allows us to work together with teams across our organisation and to recognise the importance of working with local partners to deliver the best possible care. We hold a responsibility to consider and respond to the needs of our local communities, not just through the services under our direct control.

This means that we view our local communities' needs first and that we, internally and with our partners, arrange ourselves to meet this in the most caring and efficient way.

This will increasingly mean that across all providers we will need to deliver care in new ways, moving away from 'community' care and 'hospital' care based services towards models that are more integrated. Our teams will work together and we need to recognise that some care may be better delivered closer to home.

We will support this approach through a joined-up local infrastructure plan and carefully consider how digital technology will enable positive transformation.

It's important for us to describe ourselves as a collaborative NHS Foundation Trust as it demonstrates our commitment to all areas of care and shows that we value the vital benefits of prevention and early intervention.

It's also important that all of our teams are valued equally, we all play a part in our future success and the future improvements that we can make to the health outcomes of local people and communities.

To do this effectively we'll need to live our values every day, they make us who we are and will ensure that we go about delivering our future in the best possible way.

The role of local people and our communities is central to our strategy, supporting them with prevention, early intervention and timely treatment and care when they need it.

To inform our decision making and the development of our future services, engagement and co-creation will be part of our everyday transformation, helping us ensure that we meet the needs of those we serve.

We are collaborative, because we know that Together we are Great.

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3 steps
to success

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working together

We stand ready to build on our foundations and look to the future

It was back in 1871 that the blueprint for the National Health Service was founded by staff from the Great Western Railway (GWR), following on from early developments by the workers of the Mechanics' Institution. By 1892, having merged with GWR welfare services, workers were also getting access to the very first medical centre in the country.

It was this new healthcare service, in the heart of Swindon, that was to become the model for the new National Health Service, and by 1948 the NHS, as we know it, was up and running.

Today, Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is one of the biggest healthcare providers and employers in the South West, with over 2.5 million patient contacts a year.

Swindon is a diverse and vibrant town, rich in heritage, but one also focusing on growth and significant development, with a population estimated to grow by 5%



between 2020 and 2030 and a further 4% by 2040.

We know that doing more of the same, expanding services and building more units is not affordable or sustainable. Our future needs to be set on getting the foundations right and integrating care, so that it is focused on prevention and early intervention to allow people to live better for longer. This approach will help reduce future growth in demand and ensure that we are fit for the future.

But, we know that we cannot do this alone. We need the full support of our teams of staff and volunteers, and local communities - to make wise health choices, and the support of all of our local partners to help us achieve our priorities.

Collaborative partners

It is often assumed that the NHS is a single entity. In reality, the landscape is a complex network of organisations. Each working with common goals, but sometimes with competing priorities and all too often working in isolation, without sharing vital data or seeking to integrate across organisational boundaries.

We will work openly and collaboratively with all partners and seek out opportunities to integrate where there is clear benefit to our local communities.

We have worked hard in recent years to develop relationships with our partners and we want to also help them by being open

to sharing our knowledge, scale advantages and infrastructure.

Locally we will need to support the wider determinants of health by working closely with Swindon Borough Council, as well as Wiltshire Council, and their long-term strategic plans. We will ensure that we not only share data and knowledge but that we look at ways of joining up health and care to drive the pace of change and achieve improvements to the quality of life for people right across our communities. We will do this while recognising that there will be disadvantaged or vulnerable groups that may need additional help or support.

Our group + system

While the NHS provides universal access to healthcare, the reality is that getting the right care and living a healthy life is not easy for everyone.

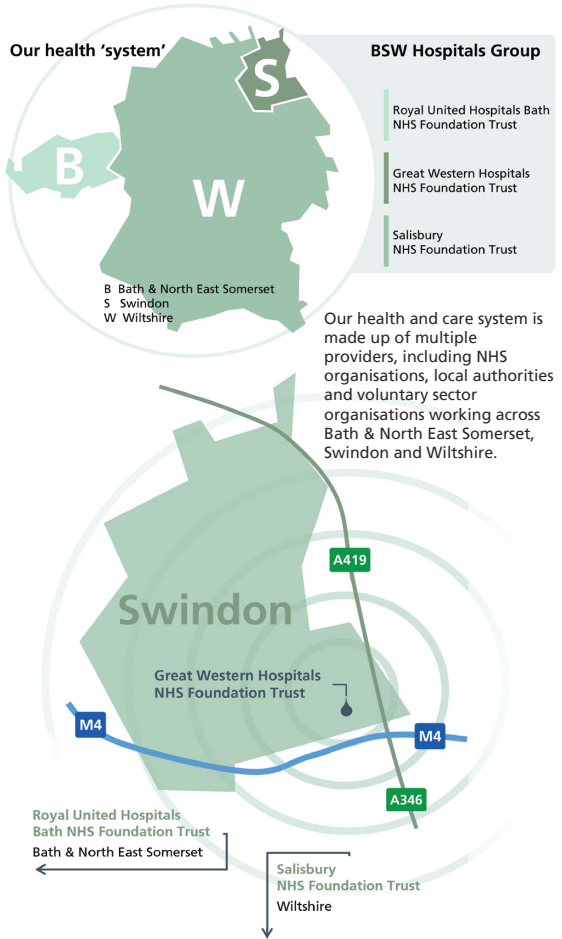
We have long recognised that we can achieve far more to support and empower local people by collaborating rather than operating independently, but we have now taken the opportunity to further develop our relationship with each other to enable us to lead the change that's needed to support a new NHS.

As a group, we will work to create the next generation health service, which will see us shift from analogue to digital, hospital to community and from treatment to prevention, ensuring people receive great care in the right place when they need it.

We know that together we are stronger, and we will be working together, learning together and improving together to make things better for our population and people, creating a brighter future where we will all thrive.

Our ambition is to set a standard of exceptional care across our system, eliminating unwarranted variation and consistently achieving outstanding results.

Collectively, the hospitals within our group have more than 15,000 staff who are committed to delivering excellent care for our communities. We are well-known for delivering services such as urgent and emergency care and maternity care, but we also have a number of specialist services across the Group, and are increasingly working to join up and integrate care to deliver this in the community where possible.



BSW Hospitals Group - three NHS foundation trusts working collaboratively together across our health 'system'.
Working Together. Learning Together. Improving Together.



We currently use different patient record systems, meaning it is not possible to align clinical pathways, provide shared services, or take advantage of digital advances to support clinical care.

One of our top priorities is the implementation of a single, shared Electronic Patient Record across our three hospitals by the end of 2026.

This will enable us to improve patient care, improve the experience of our staff, and become more efficient in how we do things.



As a group we developed a successful business case which allowed us to invest in robotic surgery at our three hospitals. Patients are now benefiting from less invasive procedures and faster recovery times.



Across our three hospitals we use a shared Improving Together methodology to bring about positive change. Our teams work collaboratively across our group, sharing experiences and best practice.



We have a single procurement function across our group focused on market intelligence.

Through effective stock management and the use of mutual aid, we are able to maintain supplies to all of our operating locations and protect against supply chain failures.

During 2024-25 we achieved over £9m of savings by realising the impact of our collective spending power, through standardisation and by reducing our supplier base.

one team

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing medical scrubs and a stethoscope, is shown in profile, looking towards the right. She has a thoughtful expression. The background is a blurred clinical setting. The entire image has a greenish tint.

We want to work collaboratively together as one team, delivering high quality care to our local communities, driven by living and breathing our values at every step.

engagement

From the outset, our intent was to listen and reflect on our existing strategic direction. We know that much has changed and that hearing, first hand, from those who are impacted by the way we work and the services we deliver would allow us to ensure that we consider all of these voices in our future.

We used our 'Big Conversation' to drive this and engaged with three key groups; our local communities, our teams of staff and volunteers and our partners.

The conversation doesn't stop here.

Central to our future is co-creation, developing future services with those who deliver them and those who receive them. This goes beyond engagement and discussion and allows for true development, design and continuous improvement.

The inputs into our thinking and direction

872

surveys completed by people in our local communities

364

local people have told us that they would like to get involved in our future

832

face-to-face conversations with staff and volunteers

179

staff surveys completed

20

members of staff representing internal groups + networks

12

surveys completed by the partner organisations we work with

Developing our local strategic view

The steps we've taken in developing our local strategic direction.

Trust Board workshops

- overall direction
- vision setting
- values
- priorities
- review

Our Big Conversation

Engaging with our three key groups:

- our local communities
- our staff teams and volunteers
- our partners

Feedback + review

- workshops
- surveys
- testing our thinking
- review and reflection workshops

Live + day-to-day feedback

- our social media channels
- our patient liaison service
- our community engagement leads
- wider surveys and feedback

Strategic direction

- national guidance
- regional and local reports and strategies
- demographic data and trends
- internal data and patient trends

Our network

- health and care networks
- learning from others
- NHS England
- existing informing strategies
- national policy and guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care

our vision + values

Our vision is our guiding beacon, which sets out who we are and what we are here to achieve.

Great services for local people at home, in the community and in hospital, enabling independent and healthier lives.

Our values make us who we are and support us in achieving our vision.

S
service

T
teamwork

A
ambition

R
respect

We are committed to being a values-led organisation, we believe that our core principles define who we are and shape the outstanding care we provide. Our values - service, teamwork, ambition, and respect - guide every interaction, every decision, and every effort we make to improve the lives of our patients and communities. We take pride in fostering a compassionate and inclusive environment where every individual feels heard, valued, and supported. By embedding these values into everything we do, we will deliver the highest standards of care, adapt to challenges with resilience, and inspire trust in those we serve.

Service is at the heart of our care. We communicate effectively, listen attentively, and act with professionalism and accountability. Every patient deserves to be treated with dignity and receive care that prioritises their safety and well-being. Through **teamwork**, we build strong partnerships, embrace diversity, and support each other to achieve common goals. Our **ambition** drives us to strive for excellence, innovate, and uplift those around us, ensuring continuous improvement. And at the core of it all, **respect** forms the foundation of our relationships, valuing every person's voice, demonstrating empathy, and fostering a culture of openness and integrity. Together, these values empower us to make a meaningful difference every day.

our priorities

Our priorities are set out through our four strategic pillars. These pillars are what we want to be known for.



**Outstanding
care**



**Valued
teams**



**Better
together**



**Sustainable
future**



Outstanding care

Continuous quality improvement and co-creation of services with local communities, with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

Why we're focused on this + our current position



Feedback shows that while we provide good levels of individual patient care, there are many opportunities for us to improve the way we present and communicate to our patients, carers, visitors and local communities generally. This will include face-to-face contacts, letters and appointment notifications, information provision and service signposting, as well as our more formalised communications and social media channels.

Equality

We value and respect every individual, including our patients, their families and carers, local community groups, and our dedicated teams of staff and volunteers.

We recognise that everyone is different and we will provide appropriate resources and opportunities to recognise and address inequality.

Diversity

We acknowledge the unique lived experiences of every individual, we are committed to listening, learning, and taking meaningful action to celebrate and embrace diversity.

Inclusion

We take targeted steps to ensure that we work for all the local communities that we serve. We also take action to deliver effective services that address the issues faced by inclusion health groups.

What we will do + how we'll measure success



We are here to deliver safe and effective care to our local communities, centred on their needs in a kind and caring way.

We face a significant challenge with public confidence in the NHS at a national level. Concerns with response times, waiting lists and increasing demand are shared by providers across the country. But, we still have much to celebrate and welcome many positive care experiences from our local communities.

Our everyday patient and visitor contacts can be significantly improved to further enhance the care we provide and give a better all-round experience. We want to embrace our integrated and collaborative approach to develop our services, hand-in-hand with local people.

Using our established improvement methodology we must shift our focus to prevention and early intervention, to lessen the impact of major and multiple health conditions on our communities and address inequalities.

These changes will take time to show benefits, but they are essential for achieving improvements in health over the long term.

- We will aim for Outstanding in all assessed areas of our next Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection, achieving a rating of at least Good overall.
- Our patients and local communities will receive care provided by one of the safest trusts in the country.
- We are determined to deliver, or go beyond, all nationally set performance standards. These standards are generally reviewed annually but we will also be working closely with NHS England on performance and reform requirements following reviews underway from mid-2024 and the new 10 year NHS plan.
- Excellent patient and visitor experience will be demonstrated through our quality of care, compassion and professional approach. We will have equality, diversity and inclusion at the centre of our service delivery and design.



Valued teams

Our teams of staff and volunteers feeling valued and knowing their contribution to our future success, enabling them to deliver high quality care.

Why we're focused on this + our current position



Our teams of staff and volunteers have been under intense pressure in recent years. We have countless examples of how they have gone above and beyond to provide the best possible care. It's their dedication and belief in the NHS and our own organisation that allows us to continue our improvement journey.

The challenges we face are significant and we need the input of all of our teams to help us build on our successes and ensure that we can sustain a future that continues to provide the best possible health outcomes for our local communities.

Being an organisation of almost 5,000 problem solvers, we really will be making a difference - big and small - each and every day, continually improving together. Beyond this, we want to ensure that we are working with all local partners together as a wider team with shared goals and an open and collaborative mindset.

What we will do + how we'll measure success



Improvements made here will be seen in the quality of care we provide, positively impacting on our performance and external / independent inspections.

- Our people will feel recognised and valued for their efforts and achievements.
- Our teams will understand their contribution to our future success and our services will be prepared for the future.
- We will have rolled out our Improving Together methodology to our entire workforce and this will also show high levels of engagement and daily practice of our toolkits.
- Our people will have the opportunity to be involved in the development and shaping of future services.



Better together

Collaborative and integrated working to improve quality of care and address health inequalities in our local communities.

Why we're focused on this + our current position



Scan for more information on Core20Plus5

Growing pressures across the NHS and the pandemic have stalled opportunities to embrace positive steps to better collaborate and integrate services for better health outcomes. This will be a priority area for us, we are better together.

Our local health landscape faces a number of challenges. There is a sharp contrast in health quality and life expectancy depending on where you live in the town. Studies suggest, for example, that men living in more affluent areas could be living up to nine years longer than those in the most deprived. Recognising the wider determinants of health is key to making good decisions on healthcare for the future.

We will develop our approach targeted on equity of access, experience and outcome for Core20Plus5¹ groups.

¹Core20Plus5 is an NHS England initiative aimed at tackling health inequalities by focusing on the most deprived 20% of the population (Core 20) alongside additional identified groups (Plus) across five specific clinical areas of focus (5) where inequalities are particularly prevalent. Essentially, Core20Plus5 is a strategy to target the most disadvantaged populations with specific healthcare interventions across key clinical areas to reduce health disparities.

Research shows that there are many wider determinants of health, such as poor housing, access to education and employment opportunities. Our input and support in tackling such issues will be helpful and respectful of the abilities of other partners who have these core issues at the heart of their own agenda. We will also recognise the capacity that we hold and the areas where we need to prioritise our effort and resources.

What we will do + how we'll measure success



- Our patients and local communities are our experts by lived experience and will have the opportunity to co-create future services and pathways. Their voice will need to represent all the communities we deliver care to.
- We will be taking an active lead role in working collaboratively. We will shine a light on local health inequalities to ensure they are prioritised within our own delivery plans and work closely with all our partners to help shift focus towards tackling root causes.
- The volunteer sector will feel supported and are partners in the future development of services. They will also have an active and heard voice in local decision making.
- We will be actively empowering our local communities to make good health and care choices, with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. We will do this collaboratively, recognising the strengths of all our health and care partners.

Sustainable future



Maximise research, innovation and digital opportunities to support quality improvement, spend wisely, and deliver on carbon net zero.

Why we're focused on this + our current position



Scan for more information on our digital roadmap



Scan for more information on our green plan and our journey to carbon net zero

We have a thriving research and innovation team, who have taken a lead on many projects in recent years, including making us the first trust in the world to trial a new method of pacemakers to improve the lives of patients with a heart condition. We have an opportunity to raise the profile of this team and work collaboratively with partner organisations.

We know that we need to move much more rapidly towards becoming an organisation that uses digital solutions for the benefit of our patients and consider how these solutions are accessible.

Our funding and resources are finite and we need to continue to provide good value for money and plan to invest wisely in our future. We will need to focus on doing more for less but also rethink the way we spend, focusing more on prevention and early intervention to avoid high cost hospital care after conditions have deteriorated or become more complex.

We have a number of initiatives underway to support our journey to carbon net zero by 2040. We have already been awarded the Silver Stars Certificate for our work on sustainable travel planning, achieved a Silver 'Green' Emergency Department accreditation for our efforts to reduce carbon in urgent and emergency care and have invested in many new carbon lowering energy solutions. But this is just the start of our programme.

What we will do + how we'll measure success



- All research and innovation projects are linked to at least one of our strategic priorities / pillars to ensure that we focus on best supporting patients' needs. We will be able to demonstrate that, as a Trust, we have raised the profile nationally of our capability and successes and that we are working collaboratively with partner organisations.
- We will be on track with our plans to implement our shared Electronic Patient Record.
- We will have a clear shift in funding towards prevention and early intervention, and / or out of hospital alternatives.
- Our patients, communities and valued teams will be served by a trust that is financially stable, spending well to ensure value for money and is focused on continued productivity and efficiency in all day-to-day operations.
- We will generate income from a variety of sources so that any profits can be reinvested into NHS care.
- We will be on track with our programme to become carbon net zero by 2040.

improving together

our vision

Great services for local people at home, in the community and in hospital, enabling independent and healthier lives.

our strategic priorities / pillars



Outstanding care



Valued teams

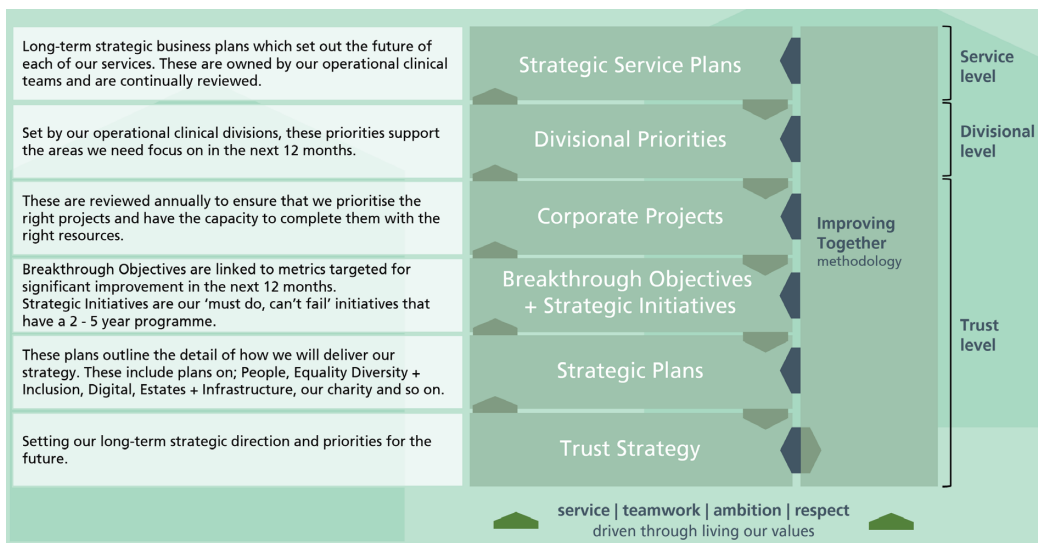


Better together



Sustainable future

our strategic framework in action



our strategic initiatives

These significant programmes of work are already established and will continue through to 2028.

- **Way Forward Programme**

- Focused on setting and delivering our estates and infrastructure strategic plan and planning for the completion of the Great Western Hospital PFI (Public Finance Initiative) in 2029.

- **Digital First**

- Delivering our shared Electronic Patient Record system across our three group NHS foundation trusts and developing our strategic approach to make the switch from analogue to digital, in a sustainable way, fit for the future.

- **Leadership + Management Capability**

- Building and developing our leadership and management capability across the organisation.

- **System + Place**

- Developing and delivering integration across our health system and 'place' (for us that means Swindon).

- **Improving Together**

- Delivering our improvement methodology across our organisation and embedding it into our everyday work.

your contribution

local communities

care access

What you can do to support us:

Register with a GP practice and know your local pharmacies and the services they offer. Think prevention and seek help early.

Access your care in the most appropriate way, make use of your GP and local pharmacy. Use 111 online and on the phone for advice and guidance or support when you're not sure of your next health care steps. Look into available services provided by the NHS, such as local community based options, the Urgent Care Centre, protecting the Emergency Department for life-threatening health issues or injuries. In an emergency call 999.

life choices

People in the UK are living longer but are facing more complex needs, often dealing with multiple major conditions. In Swindon and the surrounding area we face our own set of health needs and inequalities, some of which place us behind average trends in England.

45% of people in Swindon have a major condition

at least 1 in 10 have two or more major conditions

High blood pressure^{*}, depression[^], diabetes^{*}, asthma^{*}, and obesity^{*} are the most common conditions

^{*} Identified conditions are higher than the England average, [^] identifies a deteriorating position.

What you can do to support us:

Take care of yourself, access care and advice early - be empowered to live well and steer your own health needs. Consider your choices - such as exercise or healthy eating. What can you do to stay well?

Participate in health programmes, such as vaccinations, and cancer screening, and consider blood and organ donation.

If you are aged 40 to 74 and do not have any known pre-existing conditions, why not access a free NHS check-up of your overall health. It can identify if you're at a higher risk of getting certain health problems and if you could benefit from changes in your lifestyle or early care intervention to prevent future health complications.

Consider how we can inspire children and young people to make healthy choices as they grow and develop so that they lead their best possible lives.

get involved

What you can do to support us:

We want to develop our future services together so they best meet your needs - through co-creation.

Represent. We need to hear the voices of our entire community so that we can make good decisions about the future of our services that we provide across the community and in hospital.

Give feedback, both positive and negative - join the discussion and help us improve.

We are committed to developing a range of ways where you can get involved, from workshops, to surveys, to community-based group discussions or social media feedback. If you'd like to know more email us at gwh.strategy@nhs.net or speak to a member of staff.

your contribution

our teams + volunteers

We want to provide the best possible care for our local communities. We need to deliver against our day-to-day commitments and also deliver a significant and transformational improvement plan. We can only achieve this with the full support of our teams of staff and volunteers. Every contribution made is important but we all need to pull in the same direction towards the same priorities and goals to make the biggest and most positive impact.



champion

You are our champions

We ask you to take the time to understand our priorities, what's important to us as an organisation and how we want to be seen by our local communities and peers.

We are proud of the care we deliver and that we are a collaborative organisation - working as one team, providing high quality services in the community and in hospital. It provides us with the ability to work together to provide the best possible health outcomes.

Let's celebrate our success and share our good work.

Embrace our improvement journey

We need you to get involved and be a part of our improvement journey. Your day-to-day contributions all add up to our future success, be that delivering against our plans to deliver high quality care or by contributing to an improvement in the way we work.

We need to work together on our long-term goals, with every improvement bringing us closer to achieving them.

Use our Improving Together methodology and toolkits to support your improvements. Work with other teams both inside and outside of the organisation and consider prevention and early intervention as your default start position.

Live our values

Our values make us who we are, you can contribute by living them every day. Speak up about anything which gets in the way of doing your job.

Proudly display our values in how you approach your day-to-day work and any improvement contributions that you can make.

We also call on all our valued teams, at all levels, to fully live our leadership behaviours. Good leadership starts with you and how we behave sets the scene for how people feel. When people feel valued and respected it goes a long way in terms of them being the best that they can be at work.

embrace

live

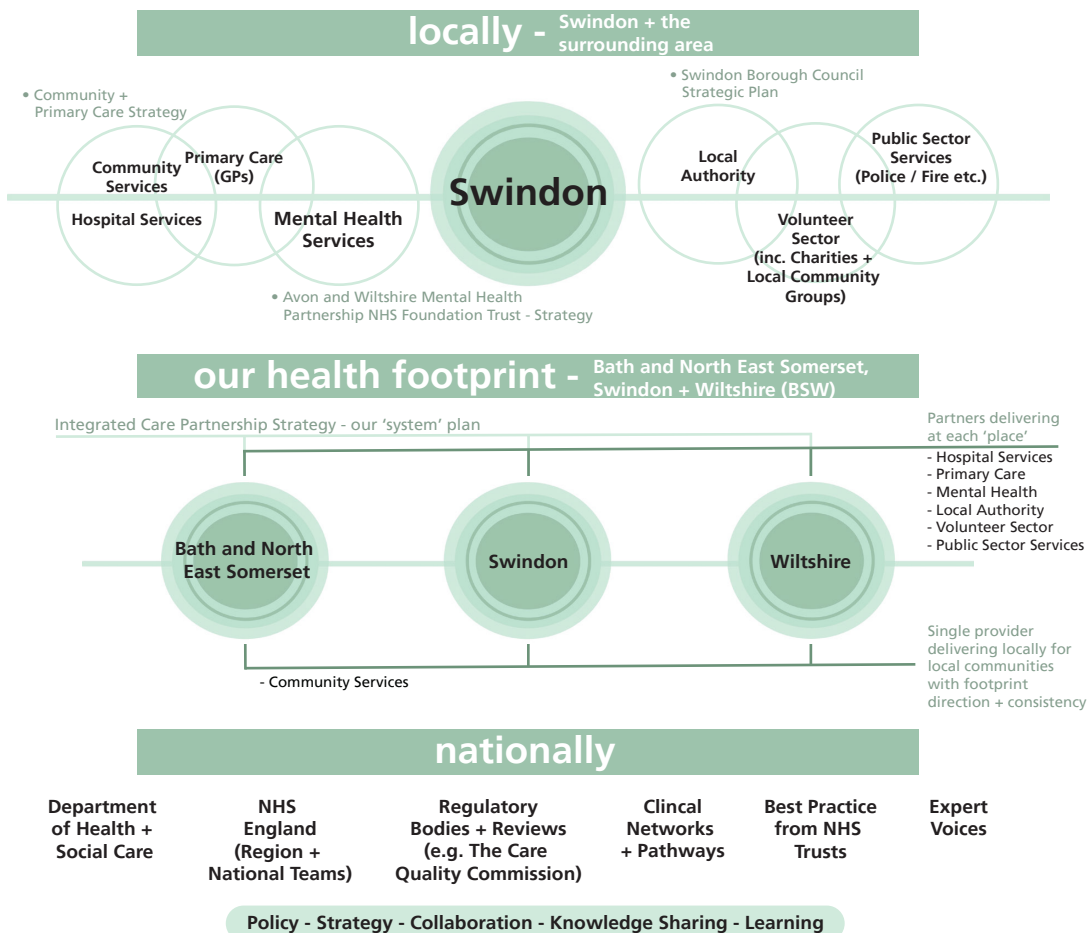
your contribution

our partners

We send a call to action to all of our partners, be they local, across our health footprint or nationally. We want to work with you in an open, transparent, helpful and collaborative way, with shared goals.

We want you to hold us to account when we say we are going to take action. We also ask that you join us with the same spirit, enthusiasm and pace to deliver the change that we need to improve health and care services, taking advantage of integration opportunities where we can to make our services efficient and a better experience for our local communities.

Partners at each level



harnessing our ability to work together

Our experiences + looking ahead

The last few years have seen the NHS tested like never before, with the Covid-19 pandemic bringing disruption to our everyday lives in a way which was unprecedented in modern times.

The challenge we now face is in many ways more complex than the early days of the pandemic. How do we recover our services in a challenged financial environment, with more people needing urgent and emergency care, more acutely ill patients, an older population, and many people living with more than one health condition?

The incredible way our valued teams of staff and volunteers have responded gives us faith that we can help to meet current and future challenges head on, and shape the NHS for the future.

We have now embedded a joined-up approach in our health and social care system locally, with hospital, community and primary care teams working together to do the best for our patients.

As we move forward, we do so together, looking for ways to shift the care people receive from hospital to the community, to move technology from analogue to digital, and away from treating sickness to preventing it from happening in the first place.

We must work together to harness our collective ability to drive innovation and positive change through the power of collaboration.

As we look to the future, we can do so with hope for how we can maximise the opportunities that being part of a group of trusts gives us.

By working together, learning together and improving together we can make things better for our local communities.

Implementing our shared Electronic Patient Record and proactively supporting the delivery of integrated care in the community, give us new opportunities to truly make a difference for our population.

We must now learn from each other and lift each other up, sharing in our successes.

Together, we can connect our ambition with the way we work through Improving Together and the way we behave with a common set of leadership behaviours.

We know that things won't always go as planned, but by living our values and truly embedding a just and learning culture where people feel able to speak up, we can learn from those times and continually improve.

Our work to date has enabled us to establish foundations which we must now build upon, paving the way for a different type of healthcare that embraces opportunities to bring providers closer together with a resolute focus on why we are all here – to provide the best care possible to our patients.

best lives

We want to support our local communities by delivering outstanding care and by reducing inequalities so that everyone can live a healthier life.

Together we are
Great

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