

REPORT TO:	NHS SOMERSET INTEGRATED CARE BOARD ICB Board Part A	ENCLOSURE: C
DATE OF MEETING:	26 September 2024	
REPORT TITLE:	Chief Executive's Report	
REPORT AUTHOR:	Jonathan Higman, Chief Executive	
EXECUTIVE SPONSOR:	Jonathan Higman, Chief Executive	
PRESENTED BY:	Jonathan Higman, Chief Executive	

PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION	SELECT
Approve	To formally receive a report and approve its recommendations, (authorising body/committee for the final decision)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Endorse	To support the recommendation (not the authorising body/committee for the final decision)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discuss	To discuss, in depth, a report noting its implications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Note	To note, without the need for discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assurance	To assure the Board/Committee that systems and processes are in place, or to advise of a gap along with mitigations	<input type="checkbox"/>

LINKS TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
(Please select any which are impacted on / relevant to this paper)

- Objective 1: Improve the health and wellbeing of the population
- Objective 2: Reduce inequalities
- Objective 3: Provide the best care and support to children and adults
- Objective 4: Strengthen care and support in local communities
- Objective 5: Respond well to complex needs
- Objective 6: Enable broader social and economic development
- Objective 7: Enhance productivity and value for money

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION / ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable

REPORT TO COMMITTEE / BOARD

This paper sets out key items for the Board to note and discuss, arising since the last meeting of the Integrated Care Board (NHS Somerset) on 25 July 2024. It focuses on relevant changes in the National and Regional context and highlights key issues to note pertaining to the Somerset Integrated Care System.

The Board is asked to **Note and Discuss** the Chief Executive's report.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report provides a summary of key items of strategic and operational note for the NHS Somerset Board for the period since its last meeting on 25 July 2024.

2 NATIONAL CONTEXT

National Leadership Event and the Darzi Report

- 2.1 Following the July election there have been a number of opportunities to engage with national leaders to consider the new government's ambitions for the future. One of these was a national leadership event in London which was attended by the new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP. At this we had the opportunity to hear from the Secretary of State about his vision for the future.
- 2.2 It genuinely felt like a fresh approach and the commitment to taking a longer-term approach was evident. On speaking to colleagues afterwards the general reflection was a feeling of optimism, and that the new government genuinely wants to work with the NHS to develop and deliver on its health agenda.
- 2.3 That said, while some fundamental changes in approach are evident, this does not change the challenges we are facing in the short term, with no expectation of additional money to support this in the short term.
- 2.4 As widely reported in the media, Lord Darzi also recently published his assessment of the current state of the NHS. The full report can be found at [Independent investigation of the NHS in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91111/independent-investigation-of-the-nhs-in-england.pdf)
- 2.5 The report makes for uncomfortable reading but represents a thorough assessment of the underlying reasons for the challenges currently facing the NHS. It paints a picture of increasing demand driven by more people living longer with complex long- term conditions, an under investment in buildings, equipment and technology and a service that has struggled to recover from the impact of the pandemic.
- 2.6 In setting out his conclusions, Lord Darzi is unequivocal that the current NHS model is the right one. He is clear 'a top-down reorganisation' is 'neither necessary nor desirable', and our structures are the right ones to deliver the changes and improvements we all want to see. The report also highlights the quality and values of NHS staff and shares the view that many of the solutions to the problems that we are facing are already out there.
- 2.7 It was encouraging to hear the Secretary of State talk about the need to focus on enabling people to live healthier lives and the 'three shifts' which will be central to the 10-year NHS plan which will be developed over the coming months and published in the spring: from treatment to prevention, hospital to home and analogue to digital.
- 2.8 There is such alignment between this and the health and care strategy we have already developed in Somerset and a need now to redouble our efforts to deliver these shifts for the people we serve and to be relentless in our focus in delivering the improvements and innovations currently within our gift – driving productivity and reducing variation and continuing to roll out and spread the innovation and new models of care that we have tested and proven to work.

Planning for the coming Winter

- 2.8 Demand on all our emergency care services continues to be above expected levels and within this context maintaining patient safety will be the overriding priority for the coming Winter period. Nationally the delivery priorities for this winter have been reconfirmed and as a local system we are continuing to plan to deliver these over the coming months.

2.9 The key national priorities are:

- **Supporting people to stay well:** as a vital part of preventing illness and improving system resilience, it will be important to maximise the winter vaccination campaign both for eligible population groups but also patient facing staff. Details of our local vaccination programme are provided later in this report.
- **Providing safe care over the winter:** this will focus on performance against the 4-hour emergency department and Category 2 ambulance response time ambitions.
- **Maintaining patient safety and experience:** this winter is likely to see some services come under significant strain, and many patients will face longer waits at certain points in the pathway than acceptable. It is vital to ensure that patients are cared for in the safest possible place for them, as quickly as possible. This requires a whole-system approach to managing winter demand and a shared understanding of risk across different health and care settings. NHS Somerset will play a key role in continuing to convene the system to facilitate this approach over the Winter months.

2.10 An incredible amount of work is underway to confirm and refine our local plans which reflect these areas of national focus.

Mpox virus

- 2.11 Mpox is a viral infection that spreads through close person-to-person contact. The World Health Organization declared a public health emergency due to the rapid spread of Mpox clade 1, which emerged in the Democratic Republic of the Congo last year. This strain has the potential to spread further across African countries and beyond.
- 2.12 Somerset Council is collaborating with the NHS, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and other authorities to prepare for any cases in the UK and prevent transmission, including implementing infection control advice for suspected cases. Necessary communications have been sent to hospitals, primary care, and sexual health services.
- 2.13 Mpox has two major clades: clade 1 and clade 2. Clade 2 has been present in the UK since 2022, while clade 1 has been reported in several Central African countries and is now spreading in East and Central Africa. The virus spreads through close contact with an infected person, contaminated materials, or infected animals. Symptoms include a skin rash, fever, headaches, muscle aches, joint pains, swollen glands, shivering, and exhaustion. The rash typically appears 1 to 5 days after initial symptoms and can spread to various parts of the body.
- 2.14 Currently, there are no confirmed cases of clade 1 Mpox in the UK. The overall risk to the public is low. There have been 2 imported cases of Clade 1a, in Sweden and Thailand. The UKHSA is taking precautions, including monitoring international cases, ensuring rapid testing, and providing guidance to healthcare professionals. The vaccine used during the clade 2 outbreak is expected to be effective against clade 1 as well. The situation in Somerset and the UK is being monitored and updates will be required as necessary.

3 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Appointment of Regional Director of Public Health for the South West

- 3.1 Dr Justin Varney has been appointed to the role of Regional Director of Public Health for the South West. Justin is currently the Director of Public Health at Birmingham City Council and having trained as a GP, he brings more than 20 years' experience working for

a range of local authority, NHS, commercial and third sector organisations as well as the former Public Health England.

- 3.2 Starting in October, Justin will be a member of the South West NHS Executive Team. He replaces Professor Sara Blackmore, who has been acting up in the role since Professor Debbie Stark retired earlier this year.

4 SOMERSET SYSTEM

Autumn Vaccination Programme

- 4.1 Vaccination saves lives and protects people's health. It ranks second only to clean water as the most effective public health intervention to prevent disease. Through vaccination, diseases that were previously common are now rare, and millions of people each year are protected from severe illness and death.
- 4.2 In Somerset, we work together across our Integrated Care System (ICS) to make sure that those eligible find it quick and easy to book and attend their vaccinations. The seasonal vaccination plan in Somerset has a number of elements.
- 4.3 From September 2024, the NHS is introducing the RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccination. RSV is a common virus that can cause serious respiratory infections, particularly in young children and older adults.
- 4.4 The RSV vaccine will be available to those aged 75-79 years old, and to pregnant women (from 28 weeks) so that they can pass the protection on to their baby. GPs will be inviting those aged 75-79 and pregnant women will be contacted by the midwifery team in early September to book their appointment.
- 4.5 This year has seen a rise in measles cases nationally and internationally. Earlier this year GPs across Somerset reviewed their records, which showed that some young people in Somerset aged 17 to 30 had missed their MMR vaccine (which protects against measles, mumps, and rubella), as children. This age group has an increased exposure risk, due to travel and university. Anyone found missing MMR on their records was then contacted and encouraged to come forward to get their vaccine
- 4.6 The UK has also seen a rise in whooping cough cases this year, a disease which can be very dangerous, especially to infants and young children. Pregnant women can get vaccinated from 16 weeks, and it is recommended to have the vaccine before 32 weeks. Getting vaccinated while pregnant is highly effective in protecting the baby from developing whooping cough in the first few weeks of their life and is offered through the midwife or GP.
- 4.7 This year, the Somerset Foundation Trust vaccination and maternity teams have also provided drop-in clinics in Yeovil, Bridgwater and Taunton, which have been well-attended.
- 4.8 This spring our vaccinations teams passed an amazing milestone with the 2 millionth COVID-19 vaccine since the programme began. This is a massive achievement and is an important part of our plans to be able to help those eligible to stay protected and well.
- 4.9 As we head into Autumn we will once again be offering COVID-19 and flu vaccines to those who are eligible. Both viruses can be serious, especially for those who are older, have underlying health conditions, or are pregnant. The NHS is offering free flu and

COVID-19 vaccinations this winter to those most at risk, including care home residents and pregnant women. Our message is, is that even if you've had these vaccinations before, it's important to get your annual flu jab and the latest COVID-19 vaccine to ensure you're protected against the strains circulating this year.

- 4.10 A full summary of the vaccinations being offered this autumn by the NHS in Somerset can be found on our website (<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/my-health/vaccinations/>)

Opening of new Inpatient Mental Health Ward

- 4.11 The transfer of the inpatient mental health ward from St Andrews ward in Wells to the Summerlands site in Yeovil was completed at the end of July.
- 4.12 The new ward provides fifteen in-patient beds, supported by an experienced mental health team that will care for people with acute mental health needs and will enable us to provide safer care to people who need this level of mental health support. It is adjacent to a second inpatient mental health ward, that has also been extensively refurbished.
- 4.13 The new ward is one of four adult inpatient wards in Somerset. Once the new ward has opened, there will be two located in Yeovil, and two in Taunton.
- 4.14 The decision to relocate the stand-alone inpatient mental health ward from Wells to Yeovil was made by the [NHS in Somerset](#) after a public consultation in early 2020. The NHS took the decision to move the stand-alone ward to address the challenges it faced caused by the long distance to an Emergency Department when patients need emergency physical healthcare support, the availability of additional staff to provide support in an emergency, and out of hours medical cover.
- 4.15 A short video has been developed to provide a behind the scenes look at the new facility. This can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTrx_bzzULE

Clinical and Care Professional Leadership across our Integrated Care System

- 4.16 The Chief Medical Officer has been working with the Chief Nursing Officer to further develop the approach that is being taken in Somerset regarding Clinical and Care Professional Leadership (CCPL). There is now a Senior CCPL Cabinet which is meeting quarterly and brings together senior professionals with executive level responsibilities from across the system including the voluntary sector, social care, primary care, secondary care and public health as well as ICB colleagues. This group will determine areas of focus to take to a refreshed CCPL Reference Group. This Reference Group has a broad membership and will be having its first meeting in renewed form in November where the focus will be on new models of care and reimagining services.
- 4.17 Following the restructure of NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board there is now a Deputy Chief Medical Officer role shared between Dr Rob Weaver who is a GP and Dr Tom MacConnell who is a Consultant Cardiologist. They together with a new business manager will be supporting the Chief Medical Officer with delivering on CCPL and specifically how we access appropriate multidisciplinary clinical and care professional leadership from where it already exists within the system rather than has traditionally been the case, from the ICB. An exciting development that directly supports how General Practice can be involved in transformation and service development is the role of the newly formed General Practice Provider Support Unit.

Somerset GP Provider Support Unit

- 4.18 Dr Andy Brooks has recently been appointed as interim Chief Executive of the newly developed GP provider support unit (GPPSU) for Somerset. This represents a significant step forward in the development of the GPPSU, which has seen Somerset Primary Healthcare Ltd come together with the GP Provider Board to create a single unified provider voice for General Practice and will enable the delivery of a set of support offers to all General Practices in the county.
- 4.19 Andy is a practising GP and works as a senior visiting fellow at The King's Fund advising on general practice policy. Before joining The King's Fund, Andy worked as a senior policy adviser in the system transformation team at NHS England and has spent more than 20 years working in health care in the Frimley area, most recently as the accountable officer for Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group.

Glastonbury Pharmacy

- 4.20 Following confirmation from NHS Resolution a new Pharmacy in Glastonbury is due to open from Monday 23 September 2024. The new provider is Magna Healthcare Ltd and reflects the need for additional pharmaceutical provision in Glastonbury identified through the pharmaceutical needs assessment.

5 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Our communications and engagement spotlight is attached as Appendix 1.

Our Somerset Big Conversation

- 5.2 The NHS in Somerset has been out and about this summer talking to people about their priorities for their local NHS.
- 5.3 To support this 'Big Conversation' an online survey has been created to help capture as many views as possible from right across the county. The survey is quick and easy to complete. All of the information including event dates, survey and information on the Big Conversation can be accessed here: [Somerset's Big Conversation - NHS Somerset ICB](#)

Know Your Numbers Week - 24-Hour Blood Pressure Test-A-Thon

- 5.4 Our Somerset joined a nationwide effort to raise awareness of high blood pressure by celebrating this year's 'Know Your Numbers Week' with a 24-hour blood pressure Test-A-Thon which took place across Somerset on 5-6 September.
- 5.5 During the Test-A-Thon, blood pressure checks were taken at workplaces including Hinkley Point and Jay's Logistics, supermarkets and shopping centres including The Quedam Centre in Yeovil, and Angel Place in Taunton. The aim was to make it easy for adults in Somerset to take a simple step that could prevent heart attacks, strokes and other major illness.
- 5.6 The Test-A-Thon was held as part of Somerset's Take the Pressure off campaign which has already seen over 2,000 people in Somerset receive free blood pressure checks in community settings and workplaces since it launched in March.

Somerset Armed Forces Hubs shortlisted as finalists in the HSJ Awards

- 5.7 NHS Somerset is delighted to announce that the Somerset Armed Forces Hubs, which are run in partnership with Ark at Egwood and Arc at Taunton, have been shortlisted at the HSJ (Health Service Journal) Awards for recognising an outstanding contribution to healthcare and securing a place at the prestigious awards ceremony later this year.
- 5.8 The Hubs, based at Taunton and South Somerset, are open to all members of the Armed Forces community including those serving, their families and veterans.

Jonathan Higman
Chief Executive
19 September 2024

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS – KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED (please enter 'N/A' where not applicable)

Reducing Inequalities/Equality & Diversity	The report details the key elements of this autumn's vaccination campaign
Quality	The report details the opening of the new mental health ward in Yeovil which, following public consultation, aims to improve inpatient mental health care in the county
Safeguarding	N/A
Financial/Resource/Value for Money	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Governance/Legal/Privacy	N/A
Confidentiality	None – this is a Public Report
Risk Description	The report sets out the national priorities and approach to managing clinical and operational risk over the coming Winter

Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August
2024

Welcome to our communication and engagement spotlight report for July and August 2024, highlighting our activity over the past two months. It features 'In The News' section, showcasing highlights from our recent media coverage, updates on our ongoing campaigns and engagement activity as well as information on our social reach.

This period has been full of positive engagement with communities across Somerset through our Big Conversation events and Hypertension campaign, but it has also seen some external challenges take priority, including the global IT outage which had an impact on some NHS systems. We worked with regional and local teams to provide sign posting and reassurance. In August, as a result of the unrest and disorder seen across the country, we worked with system partners to support a [collective statement](#) condemning the actions and showing a stance of solidarity.

Hypertension update

Take the Pressure off update

We continue to share stories about the importance of knowing your numbers, including sharing the powerful story of Paul from Wellington, who went from riding classic motorbikes at 180 mph to using a 4mph wheelchair after his stroke.

Paul's story and his message urging people to get their blood pressure checked had an unprecedented reaction on our social media channels. Our 'Know Your Numbers' messages have now reached 74,451 people with over 1,200 reactions to our content and nearly 1,000 link clicks.

[Read more on our website](#)

[Read more on Our Somerset Facebook page](#)

[BBC News](#) [Healthcare Leader](#)



Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August
2024

In the news



Somerset Armed Forces Hubs shortlisted

In August we were delighted to hear we had been shortlisted for the HSJ Awards for the Somerset Armed Forces Hubs which are run in partnership with [Ark at Egwood](#) and [Arc at Taunton](#); recognising an outstanding contribution to healthcare.

The Hubs based at Taunton and South Somerset are open to all members of the Armed Forces community including those serving, their families and veterans.

[Read more](#) [Visit our webpage](#)

[Somerset County Gazette](#)

Soups and shakes diet helping to put type 2 diabetes into remission

In August we were interviewed on BBC Radio Somerset about our type 2 diabetes path to remission programme, in particular our successful 'soups and shakes' diet.

The 800-900-calorie-a-day 12-month diet is offered to patients to help them to lose weight and put their diabetes into remission. A recent study in the Lancet showed one third of people who followed the programme lost a significant amount of weight and therefore reduced their blood sugar levels.

[Read more on BBC News](#)

[Listen to the interview at 3:19:31](#)



Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August
2024

In the news



Somerset residents share views to help shape same day urgent care services

In August Evolving Communities published a series of reports about Somerset residents' views and experiences of same day urgent care, including recommendations for how NHS Somerset could make it easier for people to understand and access vital services such as general practice, urgent treatment centres, minor injuries units, dentists, opticians, pharmacies, NHS111 and A&E.

Supported by Healthwatch Somerset, they gathered feedback from 736 people and produced 10 reports about how residents view and use same day urgent care services.

[Read more](#) [Visit webpage](#)

Patients urged to order repeat prescriptions ahead of bank holiday

Ahead of the August bank holiday, we reminded patients across Somerset to plan ahead by ordering any repeat prescriptions they might need early.

We reminded patients that the quickest and easiest way to order repeat prescriptions is using the NHS App or the repeat prescription service at their local pharmacy.

[Read more](#)



Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August
2024

In the news



NHS Somerset statement on global Microsoft IT outage

In July, we issued a statement following the global IT outage and issues with EMIS Web, an appointment, prescription and patient record system used by our GP practices across Somerset.

The statement reassured patients and offered advice regarding booked appointments, pharmacies and emergency services.

[Read more](#) [Somerset Live](#)

Somerset ICB selects IEG4's All Age Continuing Care platform to transform their services

In August we reported on a new digital platform for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) in Somerset which will make it easier for individuals and their family members or representatives to be involved with the CHC assessment process and for patients and staff to readily access the information they need directly.

The new platform will bring huge benefits to the patient experience of the CHC journey.

[Read more](#) [Med Tech Innovation](#)

We would like to thank our colleagues across health and care who have taken the time to share their stories. If you have a story you'd like us to highlight, please get in touch with our communications team at: somicb.communications@nhs.net

Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August
2024

Newsletter update



May and June editions of Our Somerset newsletter

The focus for the July edition of Our Somerset was around Somerset's Big Conversation roadshow and was introduced by Charlotte Callen, Director of Communications, Engagement and Marketing. We also shared information about the challenges of rural healthcare at Exmoor Medical Centre, how Somerset charities are tackling the volunteering decline and the amazing work being done by teams across our local foundation trust and within the council.

The August edition focussed on the importance of vaccinations and our vaccination priorities for this year in Somerset. We also shared information on Somerset residents' views on same day urgent care services, Somerset's Big Conversation online survey and, as part of our hypertension campaign, our 'Know Your Numbers Week' 24-hour blood pressure test-a-thon.

You can find all editions of the newsletter on our websites.

[Our Somerset](#)
[NHS Somerset](#)



Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

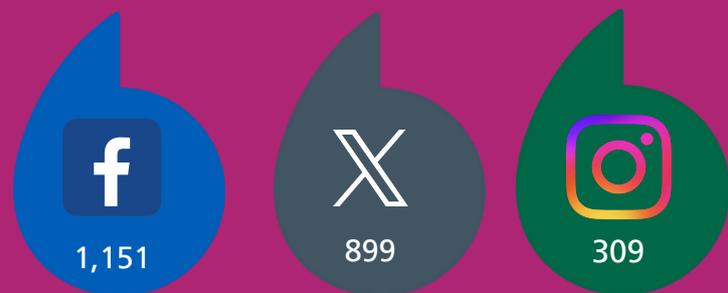
1 July - 31 August 2024

Social media highlights

NHS Somerset Followers: total followers 102,056

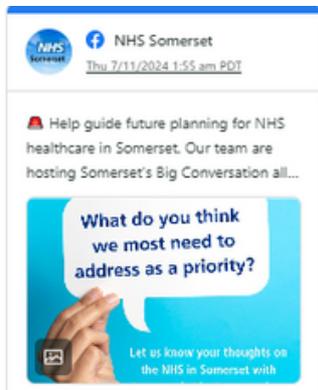


Our Somerset Followers



NHS Somerset social media posts which received the most engagement:

Facebook



- 14,997 people reached
- 1,411 engagements
- 50 reactions
- 111 comments

X



- 242 views
- 4 likes
- 3 shares

LinkedIn



- 1,882 people reached
- 54 reactions
- 9 comment
- 4 reposts

Next Door



- 27,897 people reached
- 9 reactions

Website

- 19,000 active users
- Top pages:
 - Homepage
 - Prescribing/meds management

Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August 2024

Engagement highlights

4 surveys	503 responses to surveys
17 engagement events	1 PPG Chairs meeting

Musculoskeletal Digital App 'getUBetter'

The NHS Somerset Engagement team have supported engagement around an app, designed as a self-management digital support platform to enable people with common musculoskeletal injuries and conditions to self-manage.

Most muscle and joint problems can improve with proper self-care from start to end, often without any specific or specialist treatment. However we are working in partnership with 'getUBetter' to provide safe digital self-management for all common muscle, bone and joint injuries and conditions.

Our colleagues are interested in the patient experience of 'getUBetter' and an online survey was designed to find out more.

The survey closed on 23 August with 311 responses. All feedback is currently being analysed and a findings report will be shared with all contributors and relevant ICB & ICS colleagues, to inform the use and development of this digital support option.



Communications, Marketing and Engagement Spotlight

1 July - 31 August 2024

Engagement highlights

Somerset's Big Conversation

Somerset's Big Conversation continues as an important initiative aimed at engaging residents in discussions about their priorities and raising awareness of key health and social care campaigns.

The county-wide roadshow, which began at the end of May and continues until October, aims to connect with the public, listen to their views, experiences and concerns, and inform them about current health topics and services.

In July and August we attended 12 events, ranging from local markets to festivals and community groups, had 1,137 conversations and tested the blood pressure of over 609 people.



Engaging the community

Somerset's Big Conversation is a collaborative endeavour that involves partners across NHS Somerset and the broader Somerset system.

The roadshow provides a platform for residents actively participate, ask questions, and provide feedback on the services and topics which matter most to them, to have key discussions with NHS staff from across the system, and to learn about and engage with important health areas, such as hypertension awareness, personalised care, women's health and supervised tooth brushing.

