



Better Together

for people in our care

Our journey to integration

Introduction

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust (WCHC) and Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH) are **coming together as one organisation** to improve healthcare services for people in our communities.

This document provides an update on our strategic intentions for integration and the benefits it will deliver.

Wirral and its surrounding localities need strong and resilient clinical services, and our healthcare system must be sustainable for the future. This is an exciting opportunity to really make things better for our patients, service users and our staff, focussing on improving population health, reducing health inequalities, whilst also making our services stronger and more resilient.

Collectively our whole workforce contributes to the delivery of compassionate and specialist care from birth to end of life in a variety of settings. There are already many examples where positive partnership working, and effective collaboration is in place and is directly contributing to improved patient experience and care.

It is the positive impact on patient experience and care which matters most. Together, we want to provide seamless and targeted care, reduce patient handoffs and waiting times, minimise duplication, and ensure patients are treated in the right

setting at the right time by the right clinician.

We will design our joint strategy with the involvement of staff, our partners across the system including primary care, local authorities, voluntary sector, and people with lived experience.

Healthcare needs have changed, and so we must continue to evolve to provide the best care possible to meet those needs.

Subject to all necessary approvals, we plan to become a single organisation. This will help us to create the environment, leadership, and governance for high-quality clinical and corporate services to thrive.



The benefits for patients

Organisational integration brings a **shared commitment** to delivering outstanding, patient-centred care.

Together, we will:

- Provide seamless, coordinated care between community and hospital services
- Reduce handoffs between teams and services, improving continuity of care
- Shorten waiting times across the entire patient journey
- Ensure patients are treated in the most appropriate setting and location
- Improve access to care by bringing services closer to home
- Eliminate duplication in service delivery
- Deliver targeted services to address deprivation and health inequalities across Wirral
- Strengthen and sustain specialised services through consolidation
- Incorporate digital innovations to improve care delivery and patient outcomes
- Lead collaborative system working with partners

People will experience a smoother journey, with fewer transfers between providers and greater access to care in their community. Where complex or specialist care is needed, services will be more resilient, ensuring sustainability for future generations.

We are reimagining care delivery - shifting services from hospital to community wherever possible, relieving pressure on our busy hospital site, and making the best use of our people and resources to keep patients safe and well at home.



The benefits for staff

Our people are at the heart of **compassionate, high-quality care**.

Through integration, we will:

- Create new career development and progression opportunities
- Offer shared training, education, and resources to support professional growth
- Develop new roles for those seeking fresh challenges or transitions within our organisation
- Attract and retain talented staff across clinical and corporate services
- Foster greater staff satisfaction and fulfilment by improving patient and service user outcomes
- Ensure our teams have access to the right work environment along with the support and tools they need to deliver exceptional care

Together, we will build a stronger, more adaptable workforce, equipped to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve.

By combining our expertise and resources, we will deliver more accessible, efficient, and sustainable healthcare - transforming the way we work, and improving the experience and outcomes of the people we care for.



Financial benefits

We will make financial efficiency savings, first **by working together as one** under a shared leadership model which we have already started to implement, **before becoming a single organisation**, subject to all necessary approvals.

Patient care is our priority underpinned by sound financial discipline. We will work within our allocated budget, lower our cost base, and improve productivity. This includes reducing waste, optimising use of our clinics, theatres and estate and enhancing patient flow. We will identify and act on efficiency opportunities at every step.

We will leverage economies of scale, benefitting from the efficiencies of being a larger organisation and the increased buying power when procuring goods and services together.

By bringing together our corporate functions, we will be able to improve the quality of our services at a lower cost.

We will identify and act on efficiency opportunities at every step.



Overview of our organisations

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

1800



No. of staff

£116m



Annual turnover

50+



No. of sites

(St Catherine's Health Centre – Head office, Victoria Central Health Centre, and various community sites across our localities)



Locations

Wirral, Cheshire, Knowsley, St Helens.



St Catherine's Health Centre, Wirral

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

6700



No. of staff

£514m



Annual turnover

5



No. of sites

(Arrowe Park Hospital, Clatterbridge Hospital, Wirral Women and Children's Hospital and community clinics)



Locations

Wirral.



Arrowe Park Hospital

Vision and values

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

Our vision...

To be a population-health focused organisation specialising in supporting people to live independent and healthy lives.

Our common purpose...

Together we will support you and your community to live well.

Our values...

Compassion

Supportive and caring, listening to others.

Open

Communicating, openly honestly and sharing ideas.

Trust

Trusted to deliver, feeling valued and safe.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Our vision...

Together we will deliver the best quality and safest care to the communities we serve.

Our values...

Caring for everyone.
embracing **Teamwork**.

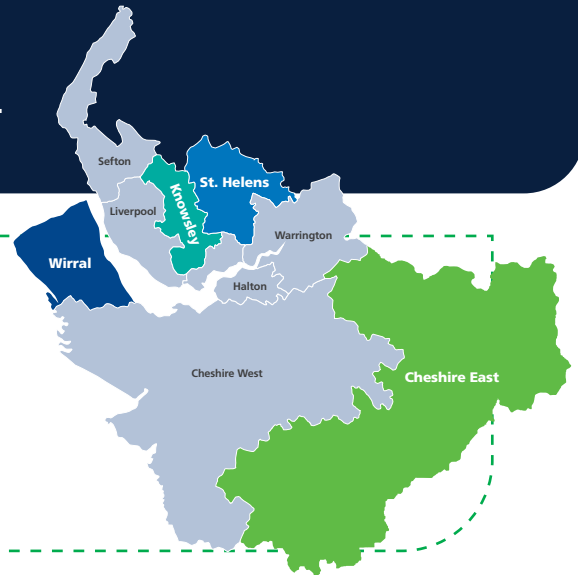
Respect for all.
committed to **Improvement**.

The national and regional context

Our plans for integration support the aims of the **NHS Long Term Plan** which recognises that the NHS must continue to evolve so that we have services that are **fit for the future**.

These aims include:

- Moving from treatment to prevention
- Moving from hospital to community
- Moving from analogue to digital



It also prioritises reducing health inequalities and supporting the NHS workforce through better training and career development.

Overall, the plan seeks to create a sustainable, high-quality NHS that meets the needs of a growing and ageing population.

The recently published NHS Planning Guidance also outlines priorities for health systems, focusing on:

- Improving patient outcomes
- Reducing waiting times
- Supporting workforce development
- Enhancing mental health services
- Tackling health inequalities
- Increasing the use of digital solutions
- Ensuring sustainable, efficient services while strengthening collaboration across NHS and local partners

The Cheshire and Merseyside region faces increasing demand due to an ageing population and a rise in long-term health conditions, leading to pressures on urgent and elective care services.

Our integration plan seeks to directly address how we can improve health and care services in Wirral and our localities and achieve the highest standards of care through the best use of our shared resources.

The plan seeks to create a sustainable, high-quality NHS that meets the needs of a growing and aging population.

Leading together

We already have **strong, shared leadership in place** with a joint chair, chief executive, chief people officer and non-executive director roles in place.

Our executive teams and Trust Boards are working together with joint governance arrangements to support us through this journey.

A formal partnership agreement is enabling our integration to progress allowing both Trusts to work together and make decisions together more seamlessly. We have established a 'special purpose' joint

committee known as the Integration Management Board (IMB) which includes representation from both Trusts and will be responsible for decisions relating to joint working and integration.

We have also developed a workforce sharing agreement which is allowing people from both organisations to work together more collaboratively and openly.



Next steps

As we move towards a single organisation, our main priorities are:

- Development of a joint vision and strategy
- Delivery of a transaction that permits the formation of a single organisation
- Strengthening our joint governance arrangements
- The integration of clinical and corporate services

In addition, we have agreed a number of delivery workstreams within our integration plan. These are:

- Clinical Services
- Corporate functions
- Finance
- Workforce and culture
- Digital
- Estates
- Communication and engagement



Our joint strategy

We will shortly be **commencing engagement** on our joint strategy which will be developed with staff, our partners and those who use our services.

We want to work with you and hear how we, as a single organisation can work with our partners to effectively support our shared communities and improve the health experience of local people.

We will share our high-level strategic intentions focusing on our priorities and ambitions and invite contributions by

bringing people together through multiple engagement channels.

We want to forge a future that includes insight and contributions from our partners. Join us on this journey and together we will build strong and sustainable community health and care services for all our shared communities.

