

# Evidence Brief: Place-based and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) including Anchor Institutions

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Produced by the Knowledge Management team Evidence Briefs offer an overview of the published reports, research, and evidence on a workforce-related topic.

**Date of publication:** March 2025

Please acknowledge this work in any resulting paper or presentation as:

## Evidence Brief: Place-based and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)

Evidence Brief: Place-based and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) including Anchor Institutions. Katie Nicholas. (March 2025). UK: Workforce, Training and Education Knowledge Management Team

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# Definitions

## What is place-based care?

**Place-based care:** A simple proposition lies at the heart of place-based care: that we blur institutional boundaries across a location to provide integrated care for individuals, families and communities. Energy, money and power shifts from institutions to citizens and communities. Devolution becomes an enabler for a reform programme that starts to deliver on the long-held promise of joining up health and social care for a population in a place, with the ultimate aim to improve the public's health and reduce health inequalities.<sup>1</sup>

And that there is value in:

- collaborating at different levels in the system
- building up from places and neighbourhoods
- providing leadership across the system
- focusing on functions that are best performed at scale.<sup>2</sup>

## What are Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs)?

**Integrated Care Systems (ICSs):** are partnerships that bring together NHS organisations, local authorities and others to take collective responsibility for planning services, improving health and reducing inequalities across geographical areas. There are 42 ICSs across England, covering populations of around 500,000 to 3 million people.<sup>3</sup>

Developing more joined-up health and care has been a bottom up, step-by-step journey for the NHS and its partners, building on the expertise of frontline staff and learning from what works well in different areas.<sup>4</sup>

On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 statutory Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) arrangements were established after the passing of the Health and Care Act 2022.<sup>5</sup>

Statutory ICSs comprise two key components:

- **integrated care boards (ICBs):** statutory bodies that are responsible for planning and funding most NHS services in the area
- **integrated care partnerships (ICPs):** statutory committees that bring together a broad set of system partners (including local government, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), NHS organisations and others) to develop a health and care strategy for the area.

Working through their ICB and ICP, ICSs have four key aims:

- improving outcomes in population health and health care
- tackling inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- enhancing productivity and value for money
- helping the NHS to support broader social and economic development.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The journey to place based health](#), UK Health Security Agency (2016)

<sup>2</sup> [Health and wellbeing boards and integrated care systems](#), The King's Fund (2019)

<sup>3</sup> [Integrated care systems explained making sense of systems, places and neighbourhoods](#), The King's Fund (2022)

<sup>4</sup> [The journey to integrated care systems in every area](#), NHS England (2022)

<sup>5</sup> [Health and Care Act 2022](#), legislation.gov.uk (2022)

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The ICB Establishment Order, list of statutory ICBs and a map of the areas covered by the 42 ICBs (and ICSs) are available on the NHS England website.<sup>6</sup>

### The Hewitt Review

In April 2023 the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt published her review of integrated care systems. The review set out to consider ICS oversight and governance and identified six key principles to create the context in which ICSs can thrive and deliver. These are: collaboration within and between systems and national bodies; a limited number of shared priorities; allowing local leaders the space and time to lead; the right support, balancing freedom with accountability and enabling access to timely, transparent and high-quality data.<sup>7</sup>

### The Darzi Review

In September 2024 Lord Darzi published his investigation on the state of the NHS in England. Chapter 10 focuses on NHS structures and systems, including ICBs.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [Integrated care boards in England](#), NHS England (May 2022)

<sup>7</sup> [The Hewitt Review: an independent review of integrated care systems](#) Department of Health and Social Care (April 2023)

<sup>8</sup> [Independent Investigation of the NHS in England](#) Department of Health and Social Care (September 2024)

<sup>9</sup> [Change NHS - Help build a health service fit for the future](#) Department of Health and Social Care (October 2024)

### The 10 Year Plan

The Government launched a Change NHS consultation on 21 October 2024 to gather public and health care staff opinion about what the 10 Year Health Plan should include. It will focus on three "shifts":

1. Moving care from hospitals to communities
2. Making better use of technology
3. Focusing on preventing sickness, not just treating it<sup>9</sup>

### Upcoming system change

In March 2025 the Health and Social Care Secretary announced major changes to the organisations at the "centre" of the NHS and it is reported that ICBs will face similar changes.<sup>10 11</sup>

### An overview of neighbourhoods, places, and systems

- **Neighbourhoods** (covering populations of around 30,000 to 50,000 people\*): where groups of GP practices work with NHS community services, social care and other providers to deliver more co-ordinated and proactive care, including through the formation of [primary care networks](#) (PCNs) and multi-agency neighbourhood teams.
- **Places** (covering populations of around 250,000 to 500,000 people\*): where partnerships of health and care organisations in a town or district – including local

<sup>10</sup> [NHS England: Health and Social Care Secretary's statement](#) The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP (March 2025)

<sup>11</sup> [The Reshaping Of NHS National Bodies Has Only Just Started. How Will It Finish?](#) Siva Anandaciva (March 2025)

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government, NHS providers, VCSE organisations, social care providers and others – come together to join up the planning and delivery of services, redesign care pathways, engage with local communities and address health inequalities and the social and economic determinants of health. In many (but not all) cases, place footprints are based on local authority boundaries.

- **Systems** (covering populations of around 500,000 to 3 million people\*): where health and care partners come together at scale to set overall system strategy, manage resources and performance, plan specialist services, and drive strategic improvements in areas such as workforce planning, digital infrastructure and estates.
- \* Population sizes are variable – numbers vary from area to area and may be larger or smaller than those presented here. Systems are adapting this model to suit their local contexts, for example some larger systems have an additional intermediate tier between place and system.<sup>3</sup>

### Other useful definitions

**Place-based partnerships:** Place-based partnerships are collaborative arrangements between organisations responsible for arranging and delivering health and care services and others with a role in improving health and wellbeing. They are a key building block of the [integrated care systems](#) (ICSs) recently established across England and play an important role in co-ordinating local services and driving improvements in population health. There are currently around 175 place-based partnerships in England.<sup>12</sup>

**Anchor institutions:** Anchor institutions are large, public sector organisations that are called such because they are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in a geographical area – they are effectively ‘anchored’ in their surrounding community. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support local community wealth building and development, through procurement and spending power, workforce and training, and buildings and land. Anchors have a mission to advance the welfare of the populations they serve.<sup>13</sup>

**Primary Care Networks:** Primary care networks (PCNs) form a key building block of the [NHS long-term plan](#). Bringing general practices together to work at scale has been a policy priority for some years for a range of reasons, including improving the ability of practices to recruit and retain staff; to manage financial and estates pressures; to provide a wider range of services to patients and to more easily integrate with the wider health and care system.<sup>14</sup>

ICS (integrated care systems) are a way of planning and organising the delivery of health and care services in England at a larger scale than PCNs. Every ICS will have a critical role in ensuring that PCNs work with other community staff and use multi-disciplinary teams across primary and community care.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> [Place-based partnerships explained](#), The King’s Fund (November 2022)

<sup>13</sup> [Building healthier communities: the role of the NHS as an anchor institution](#), Health Foundation (August 2019)

<sup>14</sup> [Primary care networks explained](#), The King’s Fund (November 2020)

<sup>15</sup> [Primary care networks \(PCNs\)](#), British Medical Association (June 2021)

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**Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs):** The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced HWBs, which became operational on 1 April 2013 in all 152 local authorities with social care and public health responsibilities.

HWBs:

- provide a strong focus on establishing a sense of place
- instil a mechanism for joint working and improving the wellbeing of their local population
- set strategic direction to improve health and wellbeing

The Health and Care Act 2022 did not change the statutory duties of HWBs as set out by the 2012 Act but established new NHS bodies known as ICBs and required the creation of ICPs in each local system area. This will empower local health and care leaders to join up planning and provision of services, both within the NHS and with local authorities, and help deliver more person-centred and preventative care.<sup>16</sup>

**Devolution:** Devolution has two mutually reinforcing objectives – to drive local economic growth, and to maximise the contribution of and value derived from public services, including health and social care.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> [Health and wellbeing boards – guidance](#), Department of Health and Social Care (November 2022)

<sup>17</sup> [Devolution – What does it mean from an NHS England perspective?](#) NHS England

# Integrated Care

## Reports, guides and explainers

### [Are integrated care systems improving population health outcomes?](#)

NHS Confederation, January 2025

A deep dive into how systems are making a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.

### [Good practices in delivering integrated care: examples from the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Ontario, Canada](#)

OECD, December 2024

In recent years, many countries have undertaken significant efforts to reform their healthcare systems, driven by the need to adapt to ageing populations, shortages of healthcare personnel, pressure on health budgets and a growing burden of chronic disease. As a growing number of people in all EU and OECD countries are living with chronic health conditions, and often multiple chronic health conditions, healthcare demands have become more complex, and the need for a cohesive and patient-centred approach that bridges primary, secondary, and tertiary care has become more

### [Change NHS - Help build a health service fit for the future](#)

Department of Health and Social Care, October 2024

The government is seeking your views on how we can make a health service fit for the future.

### [Unlocking prevention in integrated care systems](#)

NHS Confederation, October 2024

The NHS Confederation, in partnership with Newton and the Universities of Stirling and Southampton, undertook a project to explore what role ICSs can play in 'unlocking' the prevention

agenda by overcoming persistent barriers to prevention and to uncover best practice that exists across the country.

### [Independent Investigation of the NHS in England](#)

Department of Health and Social Care, September 2024

Lord Darzi's report on the state of the National Health Service in England.

See Chapter 10 for "NHS structures and systems"

### [What can integrated care systems in England learn from the devolved nations?](#)

NHS Confederation, August 2024

Examines approaches to integrated care in the three devolved UK nations, to identify and share good practice for adoption in England.

### [Realising the potential of integrated care systems: developing system-wide solutions to workforce challenges](#)

The King's Fund, July 2024

This research examines the development of ICSs by assessing their efforts to develop system-wide approaches to the recruitment, training and retention of staff. Workforce issues such as these are currently some of the biggest challenges facing the health and care sector, and require a co-ordinated response from multiple organisations of the kind that ICSs were designed to enable.

### [Enabling Integrated Care Systems to work better](#)

Institute for Government, July 2024

Most of the money that flows to the NHS now goes through ICSs.



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### [Logic model for integrated care](#)

Social Care Institute for Excellence, March 2024

The logic model for integrated care describes what good looks like, providing a visual depiction of how a fully integrated health and care system might be structured and function, and the outcomes and benefits it should deliver for those who use services and their carers.

### [Place-based care: an evidence summary](#)

Social Care Wales, February 2024

Place-based care is an approach to delivering social care that meets people's unique needs by using the resources of the community where they live or that they feel connected to.

### [Guidance on the preparation of integrated care strategies](#)

Department of Health and Social Care, Updated February 2024

This guidance on the preparation of integrated care strategies was first published in July 2022. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) committed to reviewing and, if necessary, refreshing the guidance. This guidance replaces that previously published.

### [Integrated Care Systems Survey Report](#)

Association of Directors of Public Health, 2024

Presents the findings of a survey that sought to investigate and understand the experiences of Directors of Public Health (DsPH) when engaging with integrated care systems (ICSs).

### [Levelling up or levelling down: the impact of Integrated Care Systems on the delivery of care](#)

Medical, Technology Group, 2024

Explores the impact of the introduction of integrated care systems on the delivery of healthcare across England. Outlines the background to the study, highlighting the importance of integrated care boards (ICBs) sharing best practice and utilising

medical technologies to improve standards and provide better outcomes for patients.

### [Place-based growth, innovation and The Quadruple Helix](#)

N8, Research Partnership and AtkinsRealis, 2024

Abstract: Looks at the challenges associated with delivering place-led growth in the North of England, drawing on research conducted by the N8 Research Partnership (N8). Notes that N8 is a collaboration of eight universities in the North of England: Durham, Lancaster, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield and York.

### [The Hewitt Review: an independent review of integrated care systems](#)

Department of Health and Social Care, April 2023

The Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt was commissioned to lead an independent review of integrated care systems in November 2022.

### [Replenishing our roots: how the government can promote healthier, more productive places](#)

Centre for Progressive Policy, 2023

Abstract: Sets out a national framework for a localised population health approach based on prevention. Considers how to empower local and regional government and health bodies to deliver a population health agenda.

### [Healthy places: building inclusive local economies through integrated care systems](#)

CLES (The national organisation for local economies), 2023

This paper serves as a blueprint for ICSs who wish to work with their partners to build a more inclusive economy – an economy where the activity is environmentally sustainable, which supports good jobs and wages and actively removes barriers to participation.



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### Journal articles

#### Value-Based Integrated Care: A Systematic Literature Review

International Journal of Health Policy and Management, 2024  
Background: Healthcare services worldwide are transforming themselves into value-based organizations. Integrated care is an important aspect of value-based healthcare (VBHC), but practical evidence-based recommendations for the successful implementation of integrated care within a VBHC context are lacking. This systematic review aims to identify how value-based integrated care (VBIC) is defined in literature, and to summarize the literature regarding the effects of VBIC, and the facilitators and barriers for its implementation.

#### Introduction of novel complex integrated care models supported by digital health interventions in European primary settings: a scoping review

Health Policy and Technology 13(4), September 2024  
Introduction: There remains the need to develop comprehensive organisational care models supported by digital health interventions (DHIs) to manage chronic conditions in primary healthcare.

#### Contexts and complexities: a realist evaluation of integrated care system leadership Abstract only\*

Leadership in Health Services 38(1), 2025  
Abstract: Purpose: This paper presents a realist evaluation of leadership within an integrated care system (ICS) in England. This paper aims to examine which aspects of leadership are effective, for whom, how and under what circumstances.

#### Collaborative networks in community-based health and social care services: insights from Blackpool and the Fylde Coast (United Kingdom)

Health Research Policy and Systems 23(1), 2025  
Abstract: BACKGROUND: Globally, health and social care systems have been responding to the demand for better integrated service delivery to tackle complex public health and socioeconomic challenges. Similarly, services in the United Kingdom strive for comprehensive, person-centred care to support health equity and improved quality of life. This study took place in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast, United Kingdom, where socioeconomic deprivation and health inequalities persist and effective collaboration among health and social care providers offers an opportunity to tackle such complex challenges.

#### Implementation of the children and young people's health partnership model of paediatric integrated care: a mixed-methods process evaluation

Archives of Disease in Childhood, 2025  
Abstract: OBJECTIVE: A process evaluation of the Children and Young People's Health Partnership (CYPHP) model of integrated care for the interpretation of trial findings and building evidence on the implementation of integrated care for children., DESIGN: A mixed-methods process evaluation.

#### A public health perspective on 10 years of developing an anchor institution approach in a National Health Service Hospital Trust in England Abstract only\*

Perspectives in Public Health 145(1), 2025  
This article summarises the process and learning from developing such an approach for Barts Health NHS Trust, one of the largest NHS trusts in England, covering five hospital sites and a population of over 2.6 million in North East London.

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[Cross-sector collaboration to reduce health inequalities: a qualitative study of local collaboration between health care, social services, and other sectors under health system reforms in England](#)

BMC Public Health 24(1), 2024

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Policymakers across countries promote cross-sector collaboration as a route to improving health and health equity. In England, major health system reforms in 2022 established 42 integrated care systems (ICSs)-area-based partnerships between health care, social care, public health, and other sectors-to plan and coordinate local services. ICSs cover the whole of England and have been given explicit policy objectives to reduce health inequalities, alongside other national priorities.

[Improving the maternity experience for Black, African, Caribbean and mixed-Black families in an integrated care system: a multigroup community and interprofessional co-production prioritisation exercise using nominal group technique](#)

BMJ Quality & Safety, 2024

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Ethnic inequities in maternity care persist in England for Black, African, Caribbean and mixed-Black heritage families, resulting in poorer care experiences and health outcomes than other minoritised ethnic groups. Co-production using an integrated care approach is crucial for reducing these disparities and improving care quality and safety. Therefore, this study aimed to understand the alignment of health and local authority professional perspectives with community needs on how to improve maternity experiences for this ethnic group within a London integrated care system (ICS).

[Inclusive integrated care for LGBTQ+ families: An exploratory qualitative study in the United Kingdom](#)

International Social Work 67(4), 2024

Abstract: A surge in scholarship on minoritised gender and

sexual identities has supported the advancement of LGBTQ+ family rights in many developed countries internationally. However, further work is needed to ensure LGBTQ+ families are fully included within integrated care systems.

[Interventions to minimise hospital winter pressures related to discharge planning and integrated care: a rapid mapping review of UK evidence](#)

Health and Social Care Delivery Research 12(31), 2024

Abstract: Background: Winter pressures are a familiar phenomenon within the National Health Service and represent the most extreme of many regular demands placed on health and social care service provision. This review focuses on a part of the pathway that is particularly problematic: the discharge process from hospital to social care and the community. Although studies of discharge are plentiful, we identified a need to focus on identifying interventions and initiatives that are a specific response to 'winter pressures'.

[Implementing integrated care infrastructure: A longitudinal study on the interplay of policies, interorganizational arrangements and interoperability in NHS England](#) Abstract only\*

Health Policy (Amsterdam, Netherlands), 2024

Abstract: BACKGROUND: New models of care that integrate health and social care provision around the patient require a supportive infrastructure, including interorganizational arrangements and information systems. While public policies have been designed to facilitate visions of integrated care, these often neglect the implementation of effective and efficient delivery mechanisms.

[Governing Integrated Health and Social Care: An Analysis of Experiences in Three European Countries](#)

International Journal of Integrated Care 24, 2024

Abstract: Purpose: Achieving greater health and social care

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integration is a policy priority in many countries, but challenges remain. We focused on governance and accountability for integrated care and explored arrangements that shape more integrated delivery models or systems in Italy, the Netherlands and Scotland.

### "We have to change our mindsets": a qualitative study of barriers and facilitators in research collaboration across integrated care system organisations

BMC Health Services Research 24(1), 2024

Abstract: The introduction of Integrated Care Systems (ICS) in England aimed to increase joint planning and delivery of health and social care, and other services, to better meet the needs of local communities.

### How can healthcare organisations improve the social determinants of health for their local communities? Findings from realist-informed case studies among secondary healthcare organisations in England

BMJ Open 14(7), 2024

Abstract: OBJECTIVES: Increasingly, healthcare and public health strategists invite us to look at healthcare organisations as not just care providers but as anchor institutions (ie, large community-rooted organisations with significant impact in the local economy, social fabric and overall community well-being). In response, this study explores the mechanisms through which healthcare organisations can impact social determinants of health and communities in their local areas.

### Integrated care system leadership: a rapid realist review

Leadership in Health Services (Bradford, England), 2024

Abstract: PURPOSE: Given the complex nature of integrated care systems (ICSs), the geographical spread and the large number of organisations involved in partnership delivery, the importance of leadership cannot be overstated. This paper aims

to present novel findings from a rapid realist review of ICS leadership in England.

### Assessing progress in managing and improving quality in nascent integrated care systems in England

Journal of Health Services Research & Policy 29(2), 2024

Abstract: OBJECTIVES: In 2022, England embarked on an ambitious reorganisation to produce an integrated health and care system, intended also to maximise population health. The newly created integrated care systems (ICSs) aim to improve quality of care, by achieving the best outcomes for individuals and populations through the provision of evidence-based services.

### Floundering or Flourishing? Early Insights from the Inception of Integrated Care Systems in England

International Journal of Integrated Care 24(3), 2024

Abstract: Background: In 2022, England embarked on an ambitious and innovative re-organisation to produce an integrated health and care system with a greater focus on improving population health. This study aimed to understand how nascent ICSs are developing and to identify the key challenges and enablers to integration.

### Investigating barriers & facilitators for the successful implementation of the BP@home initiative in London: Primary care perspectives

PLoS One 19(2), 2024

Abstract: BACKGROUND: The COVID-19 pandemic led to the implementation of a national policy of shielding to safeguard clinically vulnerable patients. To ensure consistent care for high-risk patients with hypertension, NHS England introduced the BP@home initiative to enable patients to self-monitor their blood pressure by providing them with blood pressure monitors.

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### [General practice in an integrated NHS: reasons to be hopeful](#)

Future Healthcare Journal 10(3), 2023

Abstract: Moving from leadership of general practice to leadership involving all medical disciplines throughout the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic provided a fascinating overview of the health and care landscape. There are many erroneous assumptions in secondary care about general practice, and vice versa, with professional tribalism a cause for concern.

### [Inclusion of palliative and end of life care in health strategies aimed at integrated care: a documentary analysis \[version 2; peer review: 2 approved\]](#)

AMRC Open Research 4, 2023.

Abstract: Background: In England, Integrated Care Systems have been established to improve integration of care, as part of the NHS Long Term Plan. For people near the end of life, palliative care can improve integration of care. We aimed to understand whether and how palliative and end of life care was included in Integrated Care System strategies, and to consider priorities for strengthening this.

### ['This needs to be a journey that we're actually on together'-the introduction of integrated care systems for children and young people in England: a qualitative study of the views of local system stakeholders during winter 2021/22](#)

BMC Health Services Research 23(1), 2023

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Integrated care has become a central feature of health system reform worldwide. In England, Integrated Care Systems (ICS) are intended to improve integration across public health, the National Health Service (NHS), education and social care. By April 2021, England had been divided into 42 geographical areas, each tasked with developing local ICS provision. However, it was not clear how

ICSs would address the specific needs of children and young people (CYP).

### [Co-creating system-wide improvement for people with traumatic brain injury across one integrated care system in the United Kingdom to initiate a transformation journey through co-production](#)

Health Expectations : An International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy 26(2), 2023

Abstract: BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE: There is a need for better integration of services across communities and sectors for people living with traumatic brain injury (TBI) to meet their complex needs. Building on insights gained from earlier pilot work, here we report the outcomes of a participatory workshop that sought to better understand the challenges, barriers and opportunities that currently exist within the care pathway for survivors of TBI.

### [Primary care services in the English NHS: are they a thorn in the side of integrated care systems? A qualitative analysis](#)

BMC Primary Care 24(1), 2023

Abstract: BACKGROUND: As integrated care systems are embedded across England there are regions where the integration process has been evaluated and continues to evolve. Evaluation of these integrated systems contributes to our understanding of the challenges and facilitators to this ongoing process. This can support integrated care systems nationwide as they continue to develop. We describe how two integrated care partnerships in different localities, at differing stages of integration with contrasting approaches experienced challenges specifically when integrating with primary care services.



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### [Developing architecture of system management in the English NHS: evidence from a qualitative study of three Integrated Care Systems](#)

BMJ Open 13(2), 2023

Abstract: OBJECTIVE: Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) mark a change in the English National Health Service to more collaborative interorganisational working. We explored how effective the ICS form of collaboration is in achieving its goals by investigating how ICSs were developing, how system partners were balancing organisational and system responsibilities, how partners could be held to account and how local priorities were being reconciled with ICS priorities.

### [Barriers and enablers of integrated care in the UK: a rapid evidence review of review articles and grey literature 2018-2022](#)

Frontiers in Public Health 11, 2023

Abstract: Integrated care refers to person-centered and coordinated, health and social care, and community services. Integrated care systems are partnerships of organizations that deliver health and care services which were placed on a statutory footing in England, April 2022. Due to the need for fast, accessible, and relevant evidence, a rapid review was conducted according to World Health Organization methods to determine barriers and enablers of integrated care across the United Kingdom, 2018-2022.

### [Integrated care in a Beveridge system: experiences from England and Denmark](#)

Health Economics, Policy, and Law 18(4), 2023

Abstract: Health systems internationally face demands to deliver care that is better coordinated and integrated. The health system financing and delivery model may go some, but not all the way in explaining health system fragmentation. In this paper, we consider the road to care integration in two countries with Beveridge style health systems, England and Denmark, that are

both ranked as highly Integrated systems in Toth's health integration index.

### [Experiences of implementing the 'Making Every Contact Count' initiative into a UK integrated care system: an interview study](#)

Journal of Public Health (United Kingdom) 45(4), 2023

Abstract: Background The 'Making Every Contact Count' (MECC) approach is in line with the current National Health Service (NHS) strategy to improve and prevent health conditions in England. Despite its importance and value for preventative healthcare, implementation of MECC varies. The aim of this study was to explore the barriers and facilitators of implementing MECC and MECC training into an integrated care system (ICS).

### [Integrated care systems face challenges fulfilling hopes of better services, says watchdog](#)

BMJ 379, October 2022

New integrated care systems (ICSs) in England will struggle to deliver long term improvements in people's health amid "extreme" funding and staffing pressures in the NHS and social care, the public spending watchdog has warned.

### [The move towards integrated care: Lessons learnt from managing patients with multiple morbidities in the UK](#)

Health Policy 126(8), August 2022

Introduction: The multi-disciplinary care offered to patients with multi-morbidities offers a powerful example of the practical challenges faced by the National Health Service's planned move to more closely integrated models of care.

### [United Kingdom: Health System Review](#)

Health Systems in Transition 24(1), May 2022

Abstract: This analysis provides a review of developments in financing, governance, organisation and delivery, health reforms and performance of the health systems in the United Kingdom.

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[A picture of health: determining the core population served by an urban NHS hospital trust and understanding the key health needs.](#)

BMC Public Health 22(1), 2022

Abstract: BACKGROUND: NHS hospitals do not have clearly defined geographic populations to whom they provide care, with patients able to attend any hospital. Identifying a core population for a hospital trust, particularly those in urban areas where there are multiple providers and high population churn, is essential to understanding local key health needs especially given the move to integrated care systems.

[Comparing registered and resident populations in Primary Care Networks in England: an observational study.](#)

Bjgp Open 6(4), 2022

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Primary Care Networks (PCNs) were established in England in 2019 and will play a key role in providing care at a neighbourhood level within integrated care systems (ICSs).

[Identifying and understanding the factors that influence the functioning of integrated healthcare systems in the NHS: a systematic literature review](#)

BMJ Open 12(4), 2022

Abstract: OBJECTIVES: The National Health Service has been moving towards integrated care for the best part of two decades to address the growing financial and service pressures created by an ageing population. Integrated healthcare systems (IHSs) join up health and social care services and have been established to manage the care of individuals with complex chronic conditions but with varied success.

[Exploring lessons from Covid-19 for the role of the voluntary sector in integrated care systems.](#)

Item Type: Journal Article

Health & Social Care in the Community 30(6), 2022

Abstract: Integrated care systems (ICS) in England are partnerships between different health and social care organisations, to co-ordinate care and therefore provide more effective health and social care provision.

[The forgotten dimension of integrated care: barriers to implementing integrated clinical care in English NHS hospitals.](#)

Health Economics, Policy, & Law, 2022

Abstract: Multimorbid patients who enter English NHS hospitals are frequently subject to care pathways designed to assess, diagnose and treat single medical conditions.

[Commissioning \[Integrated\] Care in England: An Analysis of the Current Decision Context.](#)

Item Type: Journal Article

International Journal of Integrated Care [Electronic Resource] 22(4), 2022

Abstract: Background: The emergence of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) across England poses an additional challenge and responsibility for local commissioners to accelerate the implementation of integrated care programmes and improve the overall efficiency across the system. To do this, ICS healthcare commissioners could learn from the experience of the former local commissioning structures and identify areas of improvement in the commissioning process.

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### [Developing programme theories of leadership for integrated health and social care teams and systems: a realist synthesis](#)

NIHR Journals Library, 2022

Abstract: BACKGROUND: As the organisation of health and social care in England moves rapidly towards greater integration, the resulting systems and teams will require distinctive leadership. However, little is known about how the effective leadership of these teams and systems can be supported and improved. In particular, there is relatively little understanding of how effective leadership across integrated care teams and systems may be enacted, the contexts in which this might take place and the subsequent implications this has on integrated care.

### [An integrated care model for mental health in diabetes: Recommendations for local implementation by the Diabetes and Mental Health Expert Working Group in England.](#)

Diabetic Medicine, 2022

Abstract: CONTEXT: In 2019, NHS England and Diabetes UK convened an Expert Working Group (EWG) in order to develop a Model and recommendations to guide commissioning and provision of mental health care in diabetes pathways and diabetes care in mental health pathways.

### [An integrated care systems model approach for speech and language therapy head and neck cancer services in England: service development and re-design in Cheshire and Merseyside](#)

Abstract only\*

Current Opinion in Otolaryngology & Head & Neck Surgery 30(3), 2022

Abstract: PURPOSE OF REVIEW: The incidence of head and neck cancer (HNC) is increasing globally and changes in treatment mean that patients are living longer with the condition. It is recognised that while there have been improvements at the

diagnostic phase of the pathway, follow-up and on-going care can be fragmented and inequitable.

### [Impact of COVID-19 on social prescribing across an Integrated Care System: A Researcher in Residence study](#)

Health & Social Care in the Community 30(6), 2022

Abstract: Emerging evidence suggests that connecting people to non-medical activities in the community (social prescribing) may relieve pressure on services by promoting autonomy and resilience, thereby improving well-being and self-management of health. This way of working has a long history in the voluntary and community sector but has only recently been widely funded by the National Health Service (NHS) in England and implemented in Primary Care Networks (PCNs).

### [Exploring the work and organisation of local Healthwatch in England: a mixed-methods ethnographic study](#)

National Institute for Health and Care Research, 2022

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Local Healthwatch organisations are an important part of the landscape of health and care commissioning and provision in England. In addition, local Healthwatch organisations are a key means by which users of services are given voice to influence decisions about health and care commissioning and provision.

### [Community empowerment and mental wellbeing: longitudinal findings from a survey of people actively involved in the big local place-based initiative in England.](#)

Item Type: Journal Article

Authors: Akhter, N.;McGowan, V. J.;Halliday, E.;Popay, J.;Kasim, A. and Bamba, C.

Publication Date: 2022

Journal: Journal of Public Health

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Community empowerment initiatives are receiving increased interest as ways of improving health and



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reducing health inequalities. PURPOSE: Longitudinally examine associations between collective control, social-cohesion and mental wellbeing amongst participants in the Big Local community empowerment initiative across 150 disadvantaged areas of England.

### Making a difference: workforce skills and capacity for integrated care

Journal of Integrated Care, 2021

Abstract: Purpose: The aim of this action research was to explore, from a workforce and a patient/carer perspective, the skills and the capacity required to deliver integrated care and to inform future workforce development and planning in a new integrated care system in England.

### Implementing asset-based integrated care: a tale of two localities

International Journal of Integrated Care 21(4), 2021

Abstract: BACKGROUND: To date, few studies have examined the implementation of asset-based integrated care in the UK. This paper aims to address this gap in knowledge through examining the implementation of one model of asset-based integrated care, Local Area Coordination (LAC), within two localities in England.

### What does Success Look Like for Leaders of Integrated Health and Social Care Systems? a Realist Review.

International Journal of Integrated Care 21(4), 2021

Abstract: INTRODUCTION: Health and social care services in England are moving towards greater integration, yet little is known about how leadership of integrated care teams and systems can be supported and improved. This realist review explores what works about the leadership of integrated care teams and systems, for whom, in what circumstances and why.

### Sharing leadership: current attitudes, barriers and needs of clinical and non-clinical managers in UK's integrated care system.

BMJ Leader 4(3), 2020

Abstract: BACKGROUND: As systems become more complex, shared leadership (SL) has been suggested to have a dominant role in improving cross-functional working tailored to organisational needs. Little, however, is known about the benefits of SL in healthcare management, especially for UK's recently formed integrated care system (ICS). The aim of this study was to understand current attitudes, barriers and needs of clinical and non-clinical managers sharing leadership responsibilities in the ICS.

### The working of a primary care network in Wirral: experiences thus far. Abstract only\*

British Journal of Community Nursing 25(7), 2020

Abstract: In order to meet the unique needs of local populations, health and care providers need to come together as a collective. A model of integration in line with the NHS Long Term Plan will support transformation, sustainability and meeting the increasing demands on the NHS.

### Scaling up: The politics of health and place.

Social Science & Medicine 232, 2019

Abstract: Research into the role of place in shaping inequalities in health has focused largely on examining individual and/or localised drivers, often using a context-composition framing.

### Integrated care systems and nurse leadership. Abstract only\*

British Journal of Community Nursing 24(11), 2019

Abstract: There will be significant changes to the way in which primary and community health services are provided in the wake of the NHS Long Term Plan published in January 2019. Community nurses are already preparing themselves for these

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changes by exploring models of care that are patient-centred and link to neighbourhood, place and system levels.

[Integrated care systems: what can current reforms learn from past research on regional co-ordination of health and care in England?: a literature review.](#)

Policy Research Unit in Commissioning and the Healthcare System, 2019

Abstract: The integration of health and social care at a 'system' level is currently a central NHS policy priority in England. The NHS Long Term Plan sets out how organisations are to continue to work together collaboratively as Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) with the aim of improving co-ordination of local health and care services to encourage the better use of resources and through managing population health. In addition, seven new regional teams bring together NHS England and NHS Improvement at a regional level, intended to harmonise their operations for system-wide working.

[Integrated care systems in the English NHS: a critical view](#)

Archives of Disease in Childhood 104(11), 2019

The intriguing evolution of health policy in recent years has implications for all parts of the health system. With the UK falling behind most high-income countries on many measures of child health<sup>1</sup> and growing evidence of a worrying health gap between UK children in deprived and affluent areas,<sup>2</sup> paediatricians and others working in child health will want to remain abreast of the broader policy backdrop even where child health has not been privileged in policymaking.

[Understanding new models of integrated care in developed countries: a systematic review](#)

NIHR Journals Library, 2018

Abstract: BACKGROUND: The NHS has been challenged to adopt new integrated models of service delivery that are tailored to local populations. Evidence from the international literature is needed to support the development and implementation of these new models of care.

[A qualitative exploration of stakeholder perceptions of the implementation of place-based working and its potential to reduce health inequality](#)

Journal of Public Health 40(4), December 2018

Background: Local authorities (LAs) have statutory responsibility to reduce health inequalities and improve public health. Place-based approaches may positively influence service provision yet little is known about their implementation and potential for reducing inequality through health and wellbeing improvements.

[The international knowledge base for new care models relevant to primary care-led integrated models: a realist synthesis](#)

NIHR Journals Library, 2018

Abstract: BACKGROUND: The Multispecialty Community Provider (MCP) model was introduced to the NHS as a primary care-led, community-based integrated care model to provide better quality, experience and value for local populations.

# Anchor Institutions

## Reports, guides and explainers

### [Community Wealth Building and Anchor institutions](#)

Public Health Scotland, updated March 2025

Due to their size, Anchor institutions already make a huge, positive impact in their local area. However, by deliberately adopting strategies that support their local community, they have the potential to further support the wellbeing economy and reduce inequalities caused by socioeconomic disadvantage.

### [Unlocking health and wealth: the role of anchor institutions in boosting local economies](#)

The Health Foundation, 28 February 2025

The government's commitment to growth and to addressing inequalities, as outlined in the Devolution White Paper and the Get Britain Working White Paper, provides a key opportunity to bridge the gap between health and the economy.

### [Unlocking the NHS's social and economic potential: a maturity framework](#)

NHS Confederation, December 2022

The new Health and Care Act (2022) this year for integrated care system (ICS) working will not only give a basis to improve health outcomes, tackle inequalities and enhance value for money, but will also for the first time give the NHS the permitted opportunity to support broader social and economic development for distinct communities.

### [The impact of community anchor organisations on the wider determinants of health](#)

Locality, March 2022

As part of the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance, Locality (in consortium with Power to Change) have been working with the government's Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) to research the impact of community anchor organisations on the wider determinants of health. This includes understanding how they impact those experiencing health inequalities in their communities.

### [Anchor institutions: innovating through partnership in challenging times](#)

NHS Confederation, February 2022

Anchor institutions are large organisations such as NHS trusts, which are unlikely, by their nature, to relocate, have a significant stake in their local area as a result and have sizeable assets which can be used to support local community health and wellbeing, including tackling health inequalities.

### [Anchor institutions and how they can affect people's health](#)

The King's Fund, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

It is well known that [socio-economic factors play a huge role in determining people's long-term health](#), and contribute significantly to [the health inequalities that exist across England](#). [Anchor institutions](#) are large organisations that are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in their local area.

### [The NHS as an anchor institution](#)

Health Foundation

[First developed in the US](#), the term anchor institutions refers to large, typically non-profit, public sector organisations whose long-term sustainability is tied to the wellbeing of the populations they serve. Anchors get their name because they are unlikely to relocate, given their connection to the local population, and have

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a significant influence on the health and wellbeing of communities. The Health Foundation worked in partnership with the [Centre for Local Economic Strategies \(CLES\)](#) and [The Democracy Collaborative](#) to understand how NHS organisations act as anchor institutions in their local communities and can positively influence the social, economic and environmental conditions in an area to support healthy and prosperous people and communities.

### [Anchors and social value](#)

NHS England

By strategically and intentionally managing their resources and operations, anchor institutions can help address local social, economic and environmental priorities in order to reduce health inequalities.

Examples of anchor institutions include:

- NHS Trusts
- local authorities
- universities

See also [Health Anchors Learning Network](#)

### [ICSs, ICPs, and anchor organisations](#)

Good Governance Institute, December 2020

The term ‘anchor’ refers to the permanence of these organisations and their significant stake in a geographical area, linked to the wellbeing of a local population.

Perhaps it was an early sign of the complexity of this topic when one CEO at a GGI event dismissed anchor as an unhelpful metaphor as it was associated with not moving anywhere rather than moving with agility, and with creating a negative drag along the bottom, rather than positive forward momentum.

### [Health as the new wealth: The NHS’s role in economic and social recovery](#)

NHS Reset and NHS Confederation, September 2020

This report looks beyond the immediate health response to COVID-19 to understand where and how the NHS is actively supporting the nation’s critical economic and social recovery.

### [Anchor institutions: best practice to address social needs and social determinants of health](#)

American Journal of Public Health 110(3), March 2020

“Anchor Institutions”—universities, hospitals, and other large, place-based organizations—invest in their communities as a way of doing business. Anchor “meds” (anchor institutions dedicated to health) that address social needs and social determinants of health have generated considerable community-based activity over the past several decades.

### [Prosperous communities, productive places: how a deeper relationship with anchor businesses can drive place prosperity and business productivity](#)

Localis, April 2019

Productive businesses need prosperous communities to thrive and grow – prosperous communities need productive and profitable businesses. This report argues the relationship is symbiotic. However, the local economic landscape has changed and the relationship between major business and “place” must now be renewed if local industrial strategies are to deliver local economic success. Recommending that new, local productivity deals should be forged, the report argues that West Sussex and Gatwick Airport now have a unique opportunity to pioneer this approach.

## Evidence Brief: Place-based and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)

### Health institutions as anchors: establishing proof of concept in the NHS

CLES (The national organisation for local economies), August 2019

This report from the Centre for Local Economic Strategies and The Democracy Collaborative considers health institutions as anchors within the context of a broader community wealth building approach.

### Building healthier communities: the role of the NHS as an anchor institution

Health Foundation, August 2019

Widening health inequalities and growing pressures on health care services have prompted a fundamental conversation about the role of the NHS in prevention and its broader influence in local communities. [...Anchor Institutions] have sizeable assets that can be used to support local community wealth building and development, through procurement and spending power, workforce and training, and buildings and land.

### Community business and anchor institutions

CLES (The national organisation for local economies), February 2019

This research funded by Power to Change looks at how community businesses and anchor institutions can better work together to evolve and realise their full potential, and build local wealth. Primary research in three localities – Liverpool, Bristol and Ipswich – identified a number of key barriers and challenges to better working, and recommendations are made targeted at a number of groups: Anchor institutions, community businesses, national policymakers, local policymakers and the community.

### (£) The NHS as an anchor – taking forward the long term plan

Health Service Journal (HSJ), 16 January 2019

There are huge opportunities to build on the aims set in the long-term plan to help maximise the role of the NHS as an anchor in its local communities by leveraging on it as an employer, procurer, purchaser and also a mode of social change. Contact your library for help with access <https://www.hlisd.org/>

### Transforming communities? Exploring the roles of community anchor organisations in public service reform, local democracy, community resilience and social change

What Works Scotland, May 2018

This report explores the developing roles of key community sector organisations known as community anchors. It draws from six exemplar anchor organisations in Scotland to explore their roles in engaging with, leading and challenging public service reform; how public services and the state can better support community anchors and community sector development; and the potential roles of anchors in building local democracy, community resilience for sustainable development, and wider social change.

### The NHS as an anchor

The Health Foundation, March 2018

How can health care organisations maximise their resources to improve population health?

### Community building through anchor institutions

CLES (The national organisation for local economies), February 2017

This 2017 report documents 6 years of local wealth building work with anchor institutions in Preston. The report provides inspiration and practical ideas for organisations and places seeking to use procurement to recirculate wealth locally.



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### [Maximizing the local impact of anchor institutions: a case study of Leeds City Region](#)

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 16 January 2017

This report looks at anchor institutions in Leeds City Region, examining how the impact of these big spenders can be maximised for the region as a whole.

See also a [Progressive Framework](#)

## Journal articles

### [Navigating Barriers: Healthcare Anchor Institutions and Population Health Advancement](#)

International Journal of Medical Students, 2024

Background: Many United States hospitals explicitly pursue “anchor missions” by committing to intentionally apply place-based economic power and human capital in partnership with the community. Little is known about how hospital-community partnerships are implemented or whether they impact social determinants of health (SDOH) and population health. We qualitatively analyzed healthcare institutions from a national network to understand barriers and facilitators while implementing hospital-community partnerships that aim to improve population health.

### [How can healthcare organisations improve the social determinants of health for their local communities? Findings from realist-informed case studies among secondary healthcare organisations in England](#)

BMJ Open, 2024

Objectives: Increasingly, healthcare and public health strategists invite us to look at healthcare organisations as not just care providers but as anchor institutions (ie, large community-rooted organisations with significant impact in the local economy, social fabric and overall community well-being). In response, this study

explores the mechanisms through which healthcare organisations can impact social determinants of health and communities in their local areas.

### [Taking one step further: five equity principles for hospitals to increase their value as anchor institutions](#)

Journal: Future Healthcare Journal 9(3), 2022

Abstract: Hospitals have the potential to create value beyond the direct clinical care that they provide through tackling the social determinants of health as an 'anchor institution': shifting the way in which they employ staff; procure goods and services; use their physical and environmental resources and assets; and partner with others

### [Communities with an anchor institution have higher coronavirus vaccination rates.](#)

Journal of Rural Health 39(1), July 2022

Abstract: PURPOSE: Anchor institutions ("anchors") are large employers, rooted in a community by reason of mission, capital, or relationships. Many anchors have encouraged coronavirus vaccination for employees and their families. Our objective was to determine whether the presence of an anchor was associated with a higher county-level vaccination rate.

### [Conference abstract: Improving health inequalities and wellbeing through the development of NHS Anchor Institutions – the Advancing Quality Alliance \(aqua\) using a ‘living laboratory’ approach to understand and facilitate learning into how NHS organisations engage, learn and build collaborative capacity with place-based partners and local communities to create social value](#)

International Journal of Integrated Care, April 2022

The NHS Long Term Plan (2019) recognises the potential of NHS organisations, who are often the largest employer and

procurer of services within a place, to think beyond the provision of care services.

### [The role of anchor institutions in creating value for SMEs: insights from North East of England owner-managers](#)

Studies in Higher Education 47(6), 2022

This empirical study is based on the results of a leadership and business development intervention for 50 UK SMEs. The intervention was facilitated and delivered by a North East University we recognise to be an 'anchor institution'.

### [Public value governance meets social commons: community anchor organisations as catalysts for public service reform and social change?](#)

Local Government Studies 47(6), 2021

Scottish public service reform is one example of an emerging international vision for state-convened public value governance. Scottish Government focus on community empowerment has legitimised discussions of community-led approaches and offers cautious policy support for community anchor organisations.

### [Hospitals as anchor institutions: how the NHS can act beyond healthcare to support communities](#)

BMJ 361, May 2018

The NHS is exploring how it can use its local economic clout to benefit population health, finds Richard Vize  
UK hospitals are exploring their potential as anchor institutions to use their financial, employment, and asset muscle to support local economies and tackle social determinants of health.

## Case Studies

### [Neighbourhood health – case studies of good practice](#)

NHS England, 5 March 2025

These case studies provide examples of existing good practice that forms the foundations of neighbourhood health. They should be read alongside the Neighbourhood health guidelines 2025/56.

### [Realising the potential of integrated care systems: developing system-wide solutions to workforce challenges](#)

The King's Fund, July 2024

Case studies included throughout.

### [Case study: How partnership working in Sefton is creating a person-centred approach to hospital discharge](#)

NHS England, February 2024

Urgent care services in Sefton are working with the local voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise sector to reduce hospital admissions, enable safe, effective discharge and support unpaid carers through a wrap-around, holistic service that puts the patient and their carer at the centre of their support.

### [Working together to improve health in Fleetwood](#)

NHS England, August 2023

An ambitious programme of integrated neighbourhood working is helping children and young people with their self-esteem, anxiety and stress at a local youth hub with specialist sessions that aim to improve their mental health and get them back into work and education.

### [Multidisciplinary teams: Integrating care in places and neighbourhoods](#)

Social Care Institute for Excellence, December 2022

Multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) are central to achieving the vision of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) as they are a structured



forum in which practitioners from across health and social care can come together around the needs of individuals and communities.

### Case studies of local collaboration

NHS Providers, July 2022

NHS Providers is undertaking a range of activities to support trusts to work effectively at place, including sharing examples, analysing and interpreting policy developments, and influencing national decision-makers.

### Collaborating for better care

NHS Providers, June 2021

In this report we set out examples of a wide range of collaborations taking place across the country to show the complexity of arrangements.

### Social determinants of health and the role of local government

Local Government Association, 2020

See p. 18 for case studies

This report explores what local government can do to improve health especially by tackling social determinants. Health improvement has always been a fundamental responsibility of local government and this was emphasised further with the transfer of public health responsibilities in 2013.

### A citizen-led approach to health and care: lessons from the Wigan Deal

The King's Fund, June 2019

This report provides an independent critique of the Wigan Deal, and its approach to delivering local services based on the idea of building a different relationship with local people. It looks at why it was developed, how it has been put into practice, and what others can learn from it.

## The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in [the Star](#)

## Statistics

You can find relevant statistics on the [Health and Care Statistics Landscape](#) under “**Health and Care**”

## National Data Programme

Workforce, Training and Education staff can look at the [National Data Warehouse \(NDL\)](#) SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.