

Greater Manchester Joint Health Scrutiny Committee – Workforce Update from NHS GM

Introduction and Context

NHS Reform

- **March announcement:** Government confirmed major NHS reforms, including the abolition of NHS England and a requirement to reduce the size and cost of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).
- **Funding impact:** Reductions will be calculated on average cost per head. For NHS GM, this equates to a **39% reduction in running and Programme costs**.
- **May submission:** NHS GM submitted a high-level plan in line with the national ICB blueprint.
- **Operating model:** A new model has been developed to maintain strategic commissioning functions while supporting delivery and integration at place.

Workforce implications:

- Strategic workforce planning, education and training to transfer to regional teams.
- Workforce development functions to move to NHS England.

NHS 10 Year Health Plan

In July, NHS England launched the NHS 10 Year Health Plan. The **key focus for workforce** in Chapter 6 of the plan includes:

- Multidisciplinary Teams, Flexible Career Pathways, Retention and Wellbeing, Technology-Enabled Workforce, Workforce Planning Reform, Diversity and Inclusion, Local Autonomy and Leadership.

Delivery of key priorities over the last six months

Workforce Efficiency Programme

Our GM NHS Trusts have collectively delivered against the majority of workforce performance and national temporary staffing targets, focussing on a reduced reliance of temporary staffing and associated high-cost agency spend. This has been achieved through implementation of the GM Temporary Staffing Strategy, resulting in a demonstrable shift from agency to bank.

- Substantive Workforce - 2,246.1 wte over plan - reflecting a 2.7% increase (2,234.2 increase)
- Bank - 1,593.9 wte over plan - reflecting a 11.6% decrease overall (892.1 WTE)
- Agency - target of 727 wte achieved with a 30.3% decrease overall (280.4 WTE decrease)
- Sickness absence - 0.9% above plan (overall 6.0% against a target of 5.1% - lower is better)
- Turnover - target of 10.1% achieved (overall 10.1% against a target of 10.9% - lower is better)

Targets for 2025/26

Workforce Movements		GM	ICB	GM Total
All Workforce WTE, % growth / reduction	Mar-25	91,030.2	1,604.0	92,634.3
	Mar-26	88,800.0	1,569.7	90,369.7
	Difference	-2,230.2	-34.3	-2,264.5
	% Diff	-2.4%	-2.1%	-2.4%
Substantive WTE, % growth / reduction	Mar-25	84,095.7	1,589.5	85,685.2
	Mar-26	83,536.3	1,557.7	85,094.0
	Difference	-559.3	-31.8	-591.1
	% Diff	-0.7%	-2.0%	-0.7%
Bank WTE, % growth / reduction	Mar-25	6,278.7	2.0	6,280.7
	Mar-26	4,841.2	0.0	4,841.2
	Difference	-1,437.4	-2.0	-1,439.4
	% Diff	-22.9%	-100.0%	-22.9%
Agency WTE, % growth / reduction	Mar-25	655.9	12.5	668.4
	Mar-26	422.5	12.0	434.5
	Difference	-233.5	-0.5	-234.0
	% Diff	-35.6%	-4.0%	-35.0%
Sickness Rate	Mar-25	6.0%	3.2%	5.4%
	Mar-26	5.4%	3.0%	4.9%
	% Diff	0.6%	0.2%	0.4%
Turnover Rate	Mar-25	11.1%	12.0%	10.4%
	Mar-26	10.9%	12.0%	10.5%
	% Diff	-0.3%	0.0%	0.1%
Establishment	Mar-25	90,411.4	1,557.7	91,969.1
	Mar-26	89,336.3	0.0	89,336.3
	% Diff	-1.2%	-100.0%	-2.9%
Vacancy rate	Mar-25	7.0%	-2.0%	6.8%
	Mar-26	6.5%	#DIV/0!	4.7%
	% Diff	-0.5%	#DIV/0!	-2.1%

Month 3 Update

- Substantive workforce remains nearly 200 WTE above plan.
- Reduction of nearly 600 WTE bank usage across the system, further 500 WTE reduction to achieve the plan.
- Utilisation of agency staff has remained stable and on plan.
- Further changes to substantive workforce numbers expected with reduction in corporate workforce, but we also anticipate an increase in clinical staff to further reduce reliance on temporary staffing.
- Sickness absence and turnover rates are in line with targets.

Leadership and Governance

The focus of this pillar is a broader approach to leadership, which looks at how our leaders work together across the integrated care system (ICS) and includes how NHS Greater Manchester develops a high functioning Board to best support the wider system.

Progress:

- NHS England has supported our proposal to continue work under this pillar as part of NHS Reform.
- 42 of 52 actions assured by NHS England.
- **Focus areas:**
 - **Board Development** – Completion of Affina Team Performance Inventory (ATPI), 360 feedback, and a Board Development Plan to strengthen effectiveness.
 - **Inter-organisational Partnerships** – Monthly System Leadership Group to build collaboration and drive transformation.
 - **Governance Review** – Working with the Good Governance Institute to ensure robust processes.

Staff Survey Results



Greater Manchester

In spring the latest NHS National Staff Survey Results were published. The response rate for the Staff Survey 2024 for the GM Integrated Care System (ICS) was 45.8%. This was an improvement of 4.6k people or 2.3% from 2023. It was slightly below the Northwest average of 47.9%.

Survey Themes	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change between 23 - 24	Change Between 21 - 24
We are compassionate and Inclusive	7.21	7.18	7.28	7.29	0.01	0.08
We are recognised and rewarded	5.89	5.78	6.01	6.02	0.01	0.13
We each have a voice that counts	6.71	6.65	6.71	6.74	0.03	0.03
We are safe and healthy	5.94	5.94	6.15	6.17	0.02	0.23
We are always learning	5.14	5.24	5.56	5.60	0.04	0.46
We work flexibly	6.01	6.02	6.26	6.36	0.1	0.35
We are a team	6.60	6.64	6.80	6.84	0.04	0.24
Staff engagement	6.78	6.70	6.84	6.83	-0.01	0.05
Morale	5.72	5.68	5.92	5.95	0.03	0.23

*A staff survey is conducted by Skills for Care for the adult social care workforce. The first results were published earlier this year, and the next survey is currently open. Results are only shared nationally.

Workforce Race Equality

Latest results indicate not enough progress within the NHS – and while results in social care are limited to participating local authorities, the results there are even more concerning. Our GM Equality Professionals Network is newly established and identifying areas for collective action. The Ten Year Health Plan will see organisations measured on well their workforce reflects the community they serve.

Transforming People Services

How our people services are configured will need to change, be more efficient and cost effective. This will be done through collaboration and partnership, enabled by digital.

This is one of eight Transformation Programmes that sit within the wider Corporate Services review led by the Trust Provider Collaborative (TPC)

The TPS Programme of work continues to drive progress across the **four priority project areas:**

- ESR
- Occupational Health
- Recruitment
- People Portal Chatbot

Wider System Delivery - two key areas

Good Employment

- Partnership with the **Good Employment Charter** expanding rapidly:
 - Sector now has **28 members** (up from 2 in 2022), covering **36,902 staff**.
 - Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Trust confirmed as members, committing to pay the **Real Living Wage until 2030**.
- Delivered the **6th annual GM Health and Care Champion Awards**, 700 nominations from 140 organisations, fully funded by sponsorship.

Skills

- Growing **T Level placements**, now over **300 across GM**, supporting pathways from nursing and maternity to estates and finance.
- First ever **midwifery T Level placements** at Oldham College/Northern Care Alliance.
- Secured **£184k funding** to expand industry placements, with a new coordinator role to grow capacity, tackle inequalities, and ensure consistency.