



# Better Care Together

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Integrating community and hospital services provided by  
Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and  
Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

# A case for change



## **We want to provide better care together.**

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BCH) and Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WHH) are joining forces and working as one to improve healthcare services for our communities.

This document, produced for commissioners and system partners, provides an update on our strategic intentions around integration.

Warrington and Halton need strong and resilient clinical services, and our healthcare system must be sustainable for the future. We know that we can achieve more together for both our patients and staff.

By coming together, we will deliver new models of care, with the continued involvement of a wide range of partners and voices, including primary care, local authorities and people with lived experience. We want to provide care as close to home as feasibly possible and focus significantly on improving population health and reducing health inequalities.

This is an exciting opportunity to really make things better for our patients and our staff, while also making our services stronger and more resilient.

With shared leadership, we will co-design our clinical strategy and integrate our services. We will make greater use of technology, enabling us to deliver care differently. Healthcare needs have changed, and so we must continue to change and evolve in providing the best care possible to meet people's needs.

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

Our organisations have much in common, and we are looking forward to a bright future for our healthcare services in Warrington and Halton, and those we provide further afield.

# The benefits



## Benefits for patients

By working together as one, we will improve patient outcomes and service delivery. We will see shorter waiting times, with a more streamlined patient journey through the joining up of services. Importantly, patients will have a better experience when accessing community and hospital healthcare services.

We will bring together the best of both organisations, resulting in the increased use of digital solutions wherever appropriate to enable the right care to be provided in the right place.

Services will be delivered as close to home as feasibly possible and only centralised when necessary. Where services are complex, specialised or small volume, they will be stronger and more resilient as a result of consolidation, making the services more sustainable for future patients who may need them.

In all that we do, we will work to reduce health inequalities and improve access to services, and we are committed to co-producing changes to clinical services wherever possible.

## Benefits for staff

We understand that our staff want to deliver the highest standard of compassionate care. Therefore, any enhancements in patient and service user care will also improve the work environment, making it more fulfilling and meaningful for our teams.

Through integration, we will open up better opportunities for career development. By providing shared training and educational resources, we aim to support, develop, and retain our workforce. This will create new roles for those looking to advance their careers, take on new challenges, or transition into different positions within our organisation.

These changes will help us fill gaps by sharing resources and becoming more appealing to new talent. This includes not only patient-facing roles but also support teams such as safeguarding, digital design, medical engineering, recruitment, and patient experience.

These enhancements will ensure our staff have access to the support and services they need to deliver the best possible care.

## Financial benefits

We will make financial savings, first by working together as one, before eventually becoming a single organisation, subject to all necessary approvals. We will leverage economies of scale, benefitting from the efficiencies of being a larger organisation. This includes, for example, the reduced cost of borrowing through internal cash support and increased buying power when procuring goods and services together.

We will continue our work to reduce spend on agency staffing, and we will think differently about our vacant posts. We may also see a reduction in premium rates through the use of integrated teams, particularly in support of our fragile services.

By bringing together our corporate functions, we will be able to improve the quality of our services at a reduced cost. This may also enable us to cease contracts for externally provided services where it can be delivered at a minimal cost by one of our respective organisations.



# Overview of our organisations

BCH

## Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust



1,550 staff



£97m annual turnover



66 community sites in Warrington, Halton, Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester



Community adult and children's nursing and therapy services in Halton, Warrington and St Helens. Community dental services across Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester

WHH

## Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



5,000 staff



£347m annual turnover



2 acute hospitals and more than 30 community sites in Warrington and Halton



Full range of acute general hospital services, across unplanned care, planned care and clinical support services, predominantly covering Warrington and Halton

## MISSION

We will be outstanding for our patients, our communities and each other

## VISION

We will be a great place to receive healthcare, work and learn

## VALUES



### Working Together

Listening and understanding to be able to work well with others



### Excellence

Being the best that we can be, with patients and families at the heart of all we do



### Inclusive

Supporting and valuing everyone to be their true and authentic selves



### Kind

Acting consistently with compassion, empathy, civility and respect



### Embracing Change

Reflecting, learning and improving, seeking feedback and new ideas

## AIMS



### QUALITY

We will always put our patients first, delivering safe and effective care and an excellent patient experience



### PEOPLE

We will be the best place to work, with a diverse and engaged workforce that is fit for now and the future



### SUSTAINABILITY

We will work in partnership with others to achieve social and economic wellbeing in our communities

# Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

## MISSION

We will improve health, health equity, wellbeing and prosperity across local communities by providing person centred care in collaboration with our partners

## VISION

We will create stronger, healthier, happier communities

## VALUES



**Person Centred**

We are passionate about individual needs and promote independence in the healthcare that we provide



**Empowered**

We empower our people and encourage new ideas to deliver and create improvements in community care



**Open & Honest**

We behave in a way that develops relationships based on trust, openness, honesty and respect



**Professional**

We support our people, so everyone has the right skills and training to deliver outstanding patient care



**Local**

We are always learning about our communities and show great pride in being a local provider of health and care



**Efficient**

We use our resources wisely to provide sustainable and value for money healthcare for our patients

## AIMS



**COMMUNITY**

Improve the health and wellbeing of local people and communities



**PEOPLE**

Improve the health and wellbeing of our staff



**QUALITY**

Improve the quality of services provided



**SUSTAINABILITY**

Improve the sustainable and efficient use of resources

# The wider context



## National context

- The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) recognises that as medicine advances, health needs change, and society develops, the NHS must continually move forward so that in 10 years' time we have services that are fit for the future.
- The current delivery model of health and care services is unsustainable in the medium-term, with overall healthcare demand and complexity of demand increasing, almost universally.
- The NHS White Paper 2021, [Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all](#), builds on the NHS Long Term Plan and is focused on the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by removing unnecessary bureaucracy, empowering local leaders and services and tackling health inequalities.
- NHS England's [Priorities and operational planning guidance 2024/25](#) focuses on the recovery of services through continuous improvement in access, quality, and productivity, whilst transforming the way we deliver care and creating stronger foundations for delivery in the future.



## Regional context

- The needs of the local population are changing, and services need to be more responsive to long-term conditions as well as the necessary acute interventions.
- The population is ageing and growing, inevitably adding pressure to local hospitals, emergency care, and community services.
- Recruiting and retaining staff is challenging in a competitive market. Being able to find and keep the best staff will be supported by better patient flows and more flexible ways of working.
- We must maintain high quality care and levels of performance. Integrated working will enable this as our environment becomes ever more challenging.

# The opportunities



**By working together as a single organisation, we believe there are opportunities to be gained, including:**

**improved clinical sustainability**

**clinical service reconfiguration - delivering optimal patient pathways and staff flow, including seamless transfer between local acute and community services**

**workforce optimisation and development - doing all we can to retain staff and thinking differently about the vacancies we have, with new joint approaches to recruitment, secondments, and ways of working across clinical and support services**

**economies of scale - larger shared services can leverage their scale during procurement and eradicate areas of duplication**

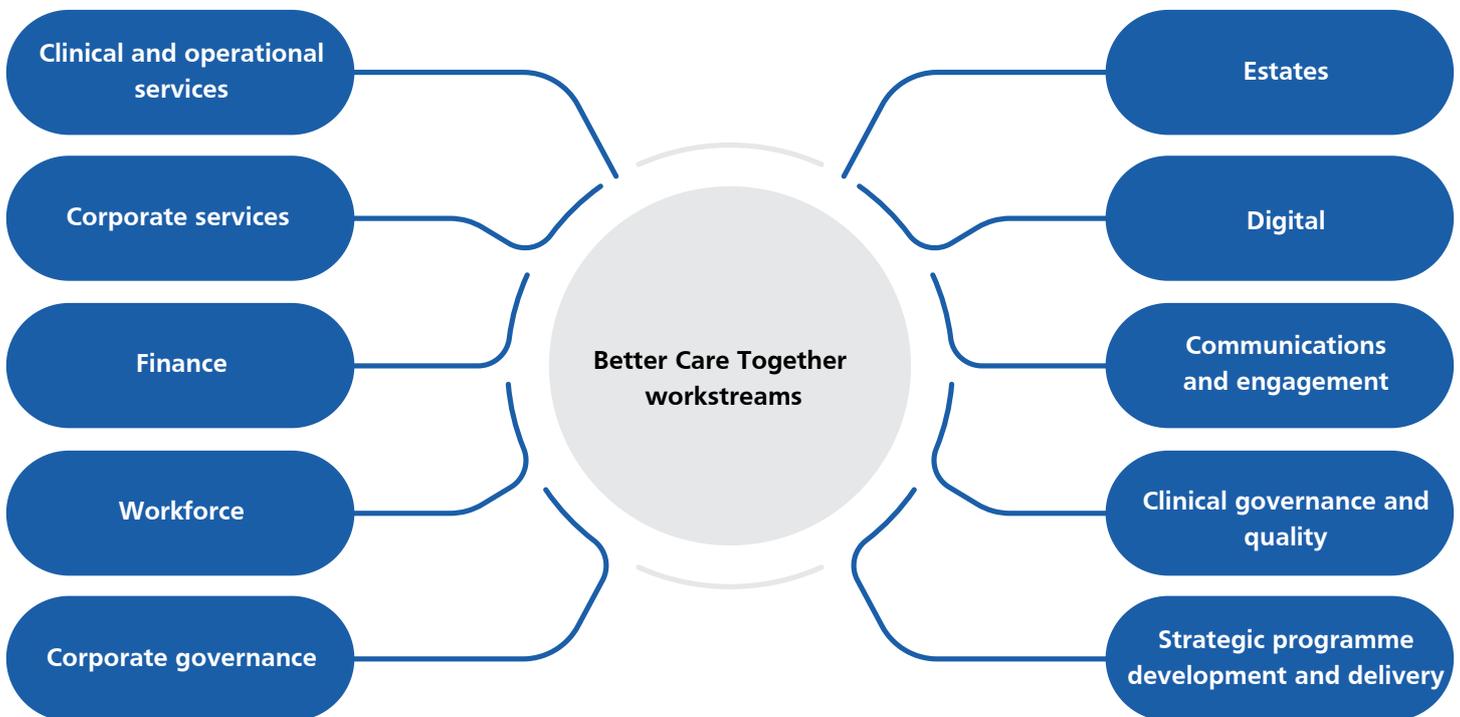
**estates optimisation - joint estates utilisation across acute and community services**

**improved digital services and integration - yielding best practice from both organisations and eradicating duplication**

# Progress made and next steps

Our executive teams and Trust Boards have been working together to carefully develop this proposal. A memorandum of understanding has been developed and signed by the chief executives of each organisation.

A programme has been set up, called Better Care Together, which has seen the creation of ten workstreams, listed below. Each workstream has a named responsible officer from each organisation and all have developed initial priorities for the coming 6, 12 and 24 months.



Governance arrangements have been established, including joint exec-to-exec meetings, joint Board meetings, and the creation of a steering group made up of senior representatives from both Trusts as well as system partner organisations.

Initial communications have taken place internally and externally, with further routine communications and engagement activity being planned to ensure all parties feel informed and involved.

Over the coming months, we will be working to finalise governance arrangements, introduce a shared executive team, and align our infrastructures. Together, we will develop new and improved ways of working, starting first with services identified as an urgent priority. Subject to all necessary approvals, we hope to become a single organisation as soon as possible.