

The purpose and scope of strong provider boards in making ICSs succeed

GGI webinar

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Briefing paper to prompt discussion – by Beatrice Fraenkel, Chair, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

At the end of November 2020, NHS E/I outlined next steps to developing effective integrated care systems (ICSs) across England¹, with the expectation of:

- a. stronger partnerships in local places; a more central role for primary care in providing joined-up care
- b. formal collaborative arrangements that allow providers to operate at scale
- c. the development of strategic commissioning through systems with a focus on population health outcomes
- d. digital technology and data driving system working, connecting providers, improving outcomes and giving citizens control of their care.

The development of integrated care systems and provider collaboratives presents a significant opportunity for us to work as partners with greater collective impact to improve population health outcomes for the people we serve.

A critical foundation for effective integrated care systems and provider collaboratives is good, shared data and intelligence used to generate meaningful insight and, from this, a shift in financial flows to support the transformation of care to improve outcomes.

Furthermore, NHS providers can maximise their relationship with patient and service users through co-production and are well placed to draw on this service user 'voice' in support of an effective ICS.

With this comes a number of opportunities for strong provider boards and the emerging ICS partners, including:

- taking care to develop the quality partnerships that already exist
- bringing together expertise as a well-governed provider board with collaborative partnership expectations
- achieving alignment of finances with population health and evidenced-need, including the use of data and metrics to improve outcomes
- progressing provider collaborative approaches during Covid
- developing system responsibility to support collective development to maturity
- building excellent resources to support new partnerships and collaboration
- and, most importantly, keeping in touch with the experience and needs of patients and service users

As ICSs take shape, there are questions provider boards could consider the following:

- Is our board well positioned and influential in decision making about the design and delivery of ICSs?
- How can board members ensure they understand local population needs and champion this as a part of the development of ICSs?
- How can provider boards ensure that excellent governance is developed from the organisation to the system

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1. Integrating care: Next steps to building strong and effective integrated care systems across England, NHS E/I, November 2020