



## **Interim Chair's Report - October 2024**

I am pleased to provide a written report to the Board of Directors which covers some key updates for members' attention and assurance.

### **Cheshire and Merseyside ICB review of collaboration and integration opportunities across health and care in Wirral.**

#### **Wirral System Review**

The Board of Directors received the report from Phase Two of the Wirral System Review with all members welcoming the clarity of the report and accepting the recommendations as set out in respect of a Shared Leadership Model and the appointment of a joint Chair and joint CEO, and the proposed governance arrangements to enable effective collaboration and integration.

The Board accepts and welcomes the establishment of new governance and assurance processes and recognises that amendments to the NHS Act 2022 gave NHS FTs wide ranging powers to collaborate with each other.

Personally, I have had productive conversations with Sir David Henshaw, Chair at Wirral University Teaching Hospital and I look forward to a positive meeting in the coming weeks with our respective Lead Governors and Directors of Corporate Affairs to support implementation of the recommendations from the report.

On behalf of Non-Executive Director members of the Board, I would also like to recognise the efforts and commitment of the Executive Team, led by Mark Greatrex interim CEO, in supporting the findings from the report and taking positive steps to ensure effective implementation with Executive Director colleagues at WUTH.

The Board of Directors are individually and collectively committed to positively support the process over the coming months for the benefit of the Wirral population and our dedicated workforce.

#### **Chief People Officer**

I would like to extend thanks and best wishes to Claus Madsen as he leaves the Trust in October 2024, to take up a new role at Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. Claus has been a highly effective and trusted member of the Executive Team, and the Board of Directors and his leadership of the People Function has brought much success, clarity of vision and engagement.

Thank you, Claus, for your leadership and your contribution to the Trust over the last 2 years.

As Claus leaves the Trust I would like to extend a warm welcome to Debs Smith, who will be joining us as Joint Chief People Officer between WCHC and WUTH. This joint appointment is testament to the commitment of both organisations for greater collaboration and integration.

Debs brings a wealth of experience to the Trust, and we look forward to working with her and sharing the skills, talent and determination of our workforce.

## **Council of Governor elections**

We are pleased to have been able to commence our governor elections with a number of public seats available for election. The nomination window will close on 23 October 2024, and we look forward to declaring the results in November/ December 2024.

I would like to extend my thanks to all our governors who have recently supported a review of the Trust's Constitution and specifically the composition of the public governor seats. The insight and experience from our governors, and their focus on the populations we collectively serve is always appreciated.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would also like to extend thanks to those governors who are ending their current term of office. We hope that some may seek re-election recognising the opportunities ahead for the Trust, but we also acknowledge that some will have other important commitments. We value the support and hard work of our governors and thank them for their time, energy and commitment to the Trust, the Board and our staff.

We look forward to welcoming new and any re-elected governors to the Trust in the coming months.

## **Team WCHC Staff Awards**

We are looking forward to celebrating our wonderful staff at this year's Team WCHC Awards on Friday 25 October 2024. We received more nominations this year than in previous years and with two new categories of Team of The Year and Excellence in Learning we are looking forward to a fantastic evening of celebration.

My congratulations to all those who were nominated and shortlisted for the awards and we look forward to announcing the winners on the night.

## **Fit and Proper Persons - board member annual checks 2024**

To align with the completion of annual appraisals of all board members and in accordance with the Trust's Fit and Proper Persons Policy, I can confirm that all members of the Board, including Directors in interim positions, have completed an annual declaration in respect of Fit and Proper Persons and all subsequent checks have been satisfactorily completed in line with the policy and the national requirements.

I have completed an assurance process to verify all the evidence to support the checks and I am assured by the process completed and compliance in respect of Regulation 5: Fit and Proper Persons.

I invite the members of the Board of Directors to receive this report for information.

**Gerald Meehan**  
**Interim Chair**

October 2024



## **Lead Governor Report**

### **Wirral System Review**

On behalf of the Council of Governors, I would like to acknowledge the findings from Phase Two of the Wirral System Review and extend thanks to members of the Board for their clarity and timeliness in briefing the governors.

We all support the recommendations as set out in the report recognising the potential of greater integration and collaboration between WCHC and WUTH for the benefit of patients and service users.

As governors, we recognise our important role in supporting the Trust and effectively representing the views of our public members and the community of Wirral, and I am therefore looking forward to meeting with the Chair and Lead Governor of WUTH in the next few weeks with our interim Chair, Mr Gerald Meehan and our Director of Corporate Affairs, Alison Hughes.

The governors look forward to leading the appointment process for the Joint Chair and contributing to the establishment of revised governance arrangements between the two Trusts.

We also extend a warm welcome Debs Smith, Joint Chief People Officer to the Trust and offer the support of the governors in her important role.

### **Governor elections**

We are now in governor elections and hope that we can encourage our local community to get involved in the process either through nominating themselves or voting in the elections.

There are 9 seats available in this year's election with some changes to the distribution of seats across our constituencies.

The nomination window is now open and will close on 23 October 2024, with declaration of results expected in November / early December.

There is more information on the Trust's website including how to nominate - [Become a Public Governor 2024 - Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust \(wchc.nhs.uk\)](https://www.wchc.nhs.uk) and a piece in which I share my reflections as a public governor and Lead Governor for the Trust - [Local resident Lynn Collins tells us why she loves being an NHS Public Governor for in Wirral - Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust \(wchc.nhs.uk\)](https://www.wchc.nhs.uk).

### **Staff Awards**

Every year the Council of Governors welcomes the opportunity to get involved in the annual Team WCHC Staff Awards, and this year we were once again impressed by the number and quality of the nominations.

We are looking forward to celebrating the achievements, hard work and innovation of colleagues right across the Trust at the awards evening on 25 October 2025.



**Wirral Community  
Health and Care**  
NHS Foundation Trust

**Your Voice**

The members of the Your Voice group came together in September 2024 and there was good discussion on patient experience and the Trust's approach to managing and learning from concerns and complaints. The timetable for the governor elections was also shared.

On 8 October 2024 the members of the Your Voice group also came together with the Trust's INVOLVE group which includes young people from across Wirral, Cheshire East, St Helens and Knowsley. It was a very engaging introductory meeting with members from both groups having the opportunity to share their experiences. The groups agreed that they will come together twice yearly as a wider public engagement group and share their work and consider key topics of mutual interest. The combined Your Voice and INVOLVE group will meet again in March 2025.

The Your Voice group will meet again on 25<sup>th</sup> November at 1.30pm.

**Lynn Collins**  
**Lead Governor (public governor, Wirral West)**

8 October 2024

## **Interim Chief Executive's Report - October 2024**

1. I am pleased to present this report providing updates from across the Trust and nationally.
2. It also advises the Board on the work considered by the Executive Leadership Team.

### **Local news and developments**

#### **Wirral System Review**

3. The Wirral Place Review which began in May 2024 has now been completed with formal recommendations accepted by Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Boards of both our Trust (WCHC), and Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (WUTH).
4. As reported previously the first phase identified many areas where positive partnership working, and effective collaboration is already in place, but highlighted further opportunities to align clinical pathways and services to reduce unwarranted variation for our patients and combine resources to deliver the optimum patient pathways.
5. As part of Phase 2 of the Wirral Place Review, workshops took place with the senior leadership teams from WCHC, WUTH and partners to consider the development of a preferred model for collaboration and integration. A number of recommendations were made, and these have been published in the Wirral System Review Phase Two Report.
6. The recommendations include:
  - A shared leadership model which will involve the appointment of a joint Chair and a joint Chief Executive who will lead both Wirral Community Health and Care and Wirral University Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust Boards.
  - The establishment of an Integration Programme Board to oversee the implementation of integration and collaboration between both organisations.
  - Delivery of service improvements to further build effective partner relationships across the healthcare system that will support better outcomes for the people of Wirral.
7. This model of joint leadership will enable the two organisations to work together more collaboratively and maximise the opportunities to share ideas and expertise to enhance services.
8. One of the first demonstrations of this will be the move to a joint Chief People Officer (CPO) as Claus Madsen will be leaving this Trust in October 2024 and Debs Smith, CPO at WUTH will take on the joint role.
9. We all look forward to welcoming Debs to the Trust in the coming weeks.
10. In respect of the findings from the review, the Executive Team and the Board of Directors are individually and collectively determined to positively support the process of implementation over the coming months whilst also respecting and responding to the inevitable changes this presents for our dedicated workforce.

#### **Claus Madsen, Chief People Officer**

11. On behalf of the Executive Team and the Board of Directors, I would like to extend sincere

thanks to Claus Madsen and very best wishes as he leaves the Trust and takes up a new role at Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.

12. Claus has been a highly valued and respected member of the Executive Team and has contributed significantly to the Trust over the last 2 years.

### Launch of the NHS Staff Survey



13. The annual national NHS Staff Survey launched at the start of October 2024 inviting everyone to take the opportunity to share their views about working at the Trust. It is so important that everyone takes part as we each have a voice that counts and together, we know that we can make a difference to our staff experience and our patient experience.
14. Last year 60% of staff across the Trust completed the survey and shared their feedback and this year we are hoping to hear from even more colleagues.
15. After sharing the results of last year's Staff Survey, together we developed a trust-wide action plan and asked each department to develop their own local plans based on their survey responses. There were four key areas from our Staff Survey results where we agreed we wanted to see improvements.
  - Compassionate culture
  - Feeling safe and healthy
  - Motivation
  - Work pressures.
16. The survey will remain open until the end of November and there will be lots of activity over the coming weeks to reflect on the work done in each of these improvement areas, and to encourage all colleagues to have their say and share their views.

**Team WCHC Awards 2024**



17. We are all looking forward to the annual Team WCHC Awards that will take place in Liverpool on 25 October 2024. It promises to be a wonderful evening of celebration and I will share details of all the winners in my next report to the Board in December 2024.

18. Our shortlisted nominations are as follows and I wish them all the very best of luck for the night.

Category	Name	Team/ Service
Excellence in Care	Christopher Malcolm, Nurse Practitioner	Minor Injuries Unit
	Family Nurse Partnership Team	0-19 Service Wirral
	Hannah Short, School Nurse	0-19 Service Wirral
Excellence in Learning	Katy Fisher, Practice Education Facilitation Lead	Learning & Organisational Development
	Rosie Marlow, Dental Core Trainee	Specialised Dental Service
	Terence Law, Service Performance Officer	0-25 Service, Knowsley
Excellence in Quality Improvement	Gemma Tutill, Tissue Viability Nurse	Tissue Viability Team
	Janice Naybour, Staff Nurse	Community Intermediate Care Centre
	Speech and Language Therapy Team and Dietetics Team - Children's	
Excellence in Leadership	Alison Hunt, Service Lead	Urgent and Primary Care
	Jo Gillman - Service Lead	0-19+ Service Cheshire East
	Stephanie Kermode, Health Visitor	0-19+ Service St Helens
Excellence in Partnership Working	Amie Cavanagh Williams, Service Lead	Urgent and Primary Care
	Infection Prevention and Control Service	
Excellence in Inclusion	Moreton and Meols Primary Care Network, Ageing Well and Frailty Team	
	David Williamson-Draper, Nurse Associate	0-19 Service Wirral
	Philippa Barnett, Safeguarding Specialist Nurse - Cared for 16+ and Transition	Safeguarding Team
Unsung Hero	Staff Networks	
	Christine Weatherstone, Chief Management Accountant	Finance Team

	Tiffany Williams, Community Staff Nurse	IV / nMABs
	Victoria Crosby, Health Visitor	Wirral 0-19 Service
Team of the Year	Contact Hub	
	Neurodevelopmental Team	
	Sexual Health Wirral and Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and access sexual health	
	Walk-in Centre Nurses	

### Appraisal compliance

19. Our workforce annual appraisal cycle ended at the end of September having run during the summer months with all staff being invited to and encouraged to participate in a coaching and appraisal conversation with their line manager.
20. The appraisal conversations provide an opportunity to reflect on the last 12 months and acknowledge the contributions made and recognise the moments we are proud of. They are also important opportunities to 'check-in' and for colleagues to discuss how they are feeling, how they are performing in their role and to agree future work priorities.
21. I am delighted that this year we have achieved **94.8% compliance for appraisals** for all eligible staff. This is a tremendous achievement and my thanks to everyone for supporting this important process.

### Freedom To Speak Up Month - *Here to Listen*



22. October is Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) month and the theme this year is *'Here to Listen'* focusing on the power of listening, and the important part which listening plays in encouraging people to feel confident to speak up.

23. We want everyone at the Trust to feel confident to speak up and recognise that confidence to speak up comes from knowing that if you speak up you will be listened to, and that appropriate action will be taken.

24. Our Freedom To Speak Up Guardian, Alison Jones is leading the campaign supported by over 120 FTSU Champions across the Trust which includes myself and

members of the Board. There is already so much fantastic energy for this year's campaign with lots of events planned and taking place across the Trust.

25. The FTSU process and culture we have established and embedded in this Trust, thanks to the hard work of so many is strong, evidenced by all of the concerns raised via FTSU last year with 100% of those surveyed saying they would confidently speak up again.

26. My thanks to everyone involved in Speak Up Month 2024.



### **Staff flu campaign 2024**

27. We also saw the start of the staff flu campaign in early October, and I received my vaccination last week along with Chief Nurse, Paula Simpson.
28. Through our campaign this year, we are once again encouraging all staff to get vaccinated, not only to protect themselves but also those in our care.
29. Vaccinations make a vital difference in reducing the prevalence of illnesses such as flu and we should all play our part if we can.



### **Your Experience - the importance of feedback**

30. In August 2024 we received 2,760 responses to our patient experience survey with 94% of people recommending our services as a Good or Very Good place to receive care.
31. So far this year, we have received 13,457 responses with 93.5% of people recommending our services.
32. This is a sustained, strong performance and reflects the hard work and dedication of our staff right across the organisation.

### **Marking awareness weeks at WCHC**

33. Right across the Trust we celebrate many important awareness weeks and October is an extremely busy month.
34. Along with the launch of the NHS staff survey, the annual flu campaign and FTSU month we have also recognised Community Services Week, Infection Prevention Week, Cyber Awareness Month, Black History Month, World Mental Health Day, World Menopause Day and Allied Health Professionals Week.
35. My thanks to all colleagues across the Trust who support and get involved in the activities.

### **Community Network and NHS Providers briefing - featuring WCHC**

36. We were delighted to be featured in a Community Network and NHS Providers briefing on staff recruitment and retention, published in late August 2024.
37. The briefing title, "*What Community Health Providers are doing to recruit and keep the staff they need*" showcased the work of four community providers that are innovating to improve recruitment and retention at a local level.
38. Together with WCHC, the briefing also featured Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS Trust, Livewell Southwest and Derbyshire Community Health Service NHS FT.
39. The briefing can be accessed via the following link on the NHS Providers website - [People first \(nhsproviders.org\)](https://www.nhsproviders.org)
40. Despite the challenging operational context, it is clear from the case studies shared in the briefing that community provider leaders are working hard to develop innovative initiatives

to support recruitment and retention in their local communities. Each featured case study shows the ways community providers are working to improve staff engagement, wellbeing and satisfaction.

41. My thanks to all those in the Trust who contributed to the development of the briefing and securing the Trust's involvement.

## **National news and developments**

### **New Regional Director for the Northwest**

42. Louise Shepherd has been appointed Regional Director for the Northwest with effect from 3 November 2024.
43. Louise is currently the Chief Executive of Alder Hey Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and the Chair of NHS England's Children and Young People's Transformation Programme Board.
44. Louise brings a wealth of experience and expertise and succeeds Richard Barker who retired earlier this year.

### **New Chief Executive of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) announced**

45. Sir Julian Hartley has been announced as the next Chief Executive of the independent healthcare regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
46. Commenting on his forthcoming departure, Sir Julian said:

*"It is vitally important for NHS trusts, foundation trusts and the wider health and care sector to have effective regulation to support improvement and safe care for patients. This move will give me an opportunity to really focus on that goal.*

*I have thoroughly enjoyed representing members and working with a group of dedicated, fantastic colleagues at NHS Providers. It has been a privilege to lead what I believe is an outstanding membership organisation, making a real difference for NHS trusts and foundation trusts, the communities they serve, and for patients.*

*I have absolutely no doubt that this will continue to be the case."*

### **The Darzi Review**

47. In mid-September 2024, Lord Darzi of Denham published the findings of his investigation of NHS performance in England. The review was commissioned by Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, on 11 July 2024.
48. The investigation draws on evidence from a wide range of stakeholders, along with insights from an expert reference group comprising over 75 organisations contributing to the health service today.
49. The report focuses on '*diagnosing*' the problems facing the NHS, and provides an assessment of access to care, quality of care, and the overall performance of the health system.

50. While specific policy recommendations were outside of the scope of the investigation, Lord Darzi sets out the major themes to be explored in the upcoming ten-year plan for the NHS, led by the Department of Health and Social Care.
51. These include re-engaging staff and empowering patients, shifting care closer to home, driving productivity, invest in technology, and contribute to economic prosperity.
52. The NHS Confederation has issued a summary and analysis briefing of Lord Darzi's report, called "The Darzi investigation: what you need to know" available at: <https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/darzi-investigation>

**Reports of interest published (click on heading to access report)**

53. The following are some reports recently published and of interest to members of the Board.
  - [NHS Confederation - Improving our nation's health](#) - This report from NHS Confederation and the Boston Consulting Group suggests that a 'whole-of-government' approach is needed to tackle causes of ill health and reduce NHS demand. The analysis states that reintegrating between half and three-quarters of people of who have dropped out of the workforce for reasons of ill health since 2020, could deliver an economic boost of between £109bn and £177bn to the UK's GDP and unlock between £25bn and £57bn in fiscal revenue by 2029. The report called for the new government to break down the departmental silos that have held back the collaboration needed to tackle this issue.
  - [NHS Confederation - AI in healthcare: navigating the noise](#) - The NHS Confederation has released a comprehensive guide to AI to support healthcare leaders. Aimed at board members and wider teams, the guide explains the language surrounding AI and offers examples of how organisations and systems are using it. It also includes case studies on how AI can help with did-not-attends and cancellations, transforming wound care, improving patient triage and establishing a better cataract care pathway.
  - [NHS Confederation - The state of integrated care systems 2023-24](#) - A new survey of integrated care system (ICS) leaders has found that while 9 in 10 are committed to shifting more care out of hospitals, there are widespread concerns that a lack of long-term investment and planning is holding them back.
  - [NHS Providers - Priorities for the NHS workforce: the NHS trust perspective](#) - This briefing provides an overview of the following areas of NHS workforce policy: building an NHS fit for the future, pay, and culture and staff wellbeing.

**Communications and Engagement**

**Get Together - Team WCHC Briefing**



54. The monthly on-line Get Together meetings continue to be well attended by over 100 staff and we continue to use this important engagement platform to share news and

updates whilst providing a place for dialogue on anything our staff wish to raise.

55. We announce the monthly Stand Out winner at each Get Together and it is always so satisfying to see the appreciation and celebration that colleagues have for each other.
56. We also enjoy hearing from services and staff across the Trust providing a 'spotlight on services' and my thanks to the Birkenhead Community Nursing Team and James Hanson who shared their experiences of caring for a patient at the August Get Together, and Carrie Catterall, Team Leader for the 0-19+ / 0-25 Contact Hub who gave a presentation on the establishment of the centralised duty hub across Wirral, Cheshire East, Knowsley and St Helens and to Yvonne Wilson who shared her perspective as a clinical professional working with the duty hub at the September Get Together.
57. I look forward to these sessions every month and the opportunity to engage with so many members of Team WCHC.

### **Congratulations!**

58. Congratulations to Alison Hughes, Director of Corporate Affairs and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) who was shortlisted in the **Cyber Executive/SIRO of the Year 2024 Awards**.
59. Congratulations to our NHS Cadets Project Team who were shortlisted in the **HPMA Excellence in People Awards 2024**.



60. Our monthly Stand Out winners for August and September 2024 were Chris Allen and Helen Nevin from the Knowsley 0-25 Targeted Team and 0-19+ South and Nursery Nurse Teams, St Helens.
61. In nominating Chris and Helen, Pippa Caldwell said;

*"I would like to put forward our wonderful Strategy Nurses Chris Allen and Helen Nevin for a Standout due to their excellent contribution in the development of the Strategy Nurse role and ensuring on-going sustainability.*

*The Strategy Nurses have adapted to significant changes over the last 6 months, as their roles and responsibilities have evolved. They adapt to change with commitment, they are dynamic, and problem focussed and always ready to take on new challenges and give things a go. They are currently involved in 2 pilots with Children's Social Care (CSC).*

*One relates to Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) screenings and another to The Out of Court Disposal (OOC) meetings. Their work to ensure these pilots are established and evaluated is second to none, they are transparent in their approach, open about barriers but always looking for solutions. They have contributed to these pilots through coordination of meetings, development of pathways, communicating with partners, establishing evaluation tools and providing regular feedback.*

*They are compassionate in ensuring the voice of the child is front and centre of everything they do, using critical analysis to ensure difficult decisions are made to safeguard children and young people....*

*Chris and Helen have a wealth of knowledge and experience and embrace sharing this knowledge through supporting staff and students, recognising that Teams work best together when they are supported and have a shared vision.*

*Aside from their excellent work ethic and professionalism, they are just great people to be around, kind and caring and always smiling. They truly are aligned to the Trust values."*

62. In nominating the 0-19+ Team, Louise Aspinall said;

*"St Helens 0-19 had high numbers of development reviews due over a long period. The team responded by putting on additional clinics and completing additional appointments, and the Nursery Nurses also pulled together, working in partnership to help the South Team to ensure that every child was seen. The Nursery Nurses supported each other and considered each other's wellbeing.*

*In September the South Team achieved 100% completion of the two year reviews, so all the children were seen before two years six months. They really are amazing and go above and beyond for each other and the families of St Helens."*

### **Summary of Executive Leadership Team (ELT) business**

63. ELT has continued to receive regular updates on the following:

- The local and national financial position including the implementation of efficiency measures such as review of vacancies and control of discretionary non-pay expenditure.
- Wirral system position including measures introduced to support discharge from the hospital and address system flow and updates on the work of the joint Director of Integration and Delivery.
- Developments across the national, ICB and Place health and care systems.
- The work of the various UECUP (Urgent & Emergency Care Upgrade Programme) committees and workstreams.
- Relevant upcoming contract opportunities, including approval of a revised pre-tender process and tender decision-making template.
- Plans for the future provision of medical and pharmacy services in the Community Intermediate Care Centre.

64. During August and September 2024, the following were presented to ELT for scrutiny and approval:

- Applications for use of the Trust's charitable funds
- The programme for the visit of the NHS Pay Review Body on 1 October 2024 to gather perspectives from staff, managers and trade union representatives to inform their recommendations to the government on pay
- A request for funding of the sponsorship costs of the international nurses employed by the Trust
- The findings of a review of the Trust's claims management process, with recommendations to strengthen the governance for the approval of claims
- The findings of a review of the Trust's education, training and development funding streams with recommendations to strengthen governance processes

65. Additional items were also presented to ELT for assurance or discussion including:
- Feedback from the extraordinary meetings of the BAME Staff Network which were held to provide support to staff following the episodes of civil disturbance which took place over the summer.
  - The Partnership Working Improvement Plan which had been developed jointly with the Staff Side Co-Chairs.
  - The Premises Assurance Model self-assessment report which would be submitted to NHSE to provide assurance on the effectiveness of the Trust's estate including fire safety, patient experience, governance and facilities management maturity.
  - An overview of the Trust's response to 'Exercise Calliope', the 'no notice' emergency response exercise conducted by the ICB on 29 August 2024.
  - Updates on the completion of staff appraisals.

### **Conclusion**

66. I recommend this report to the Board of Directors for assurance on key activities across the Trust. This report can be received alongside the Chair and NED reports and the Integrated Performance Report.

**Mark Greatrex**  
**Interim Chief Executive**

Alison Hughes  
Director of Corporate Affairs

10 October 2024