

**North East and North Cumbria  
Integrated Care Board**

**Annual Involvement and  
Engagement Report**

**2022 - 2023**

## Table of Contents

Innovative ways to listen .....	4
Involvement toolkit .....	4
Citizens panel .....	5
Storyteller Process.....	5
Raising awareness of involvement in the ICB.....	6
Secure Data Environment.....	7
Shaping services through listening.....	8
Respite services for people with learning disabilities .....	8
Waiting Well.....	9
Post-Covid Syndrome – Tees Valley .....	10
Affordable transport for care leavers - Gateshead.....	10
Quality Strategy - County Durham .....	11
Collaborative listening .....	11
Northern Cancer Alliance oncology service review.....	11
Integrated approach to review local advocacy services - County Durham.....	13
Coproducting a new health resource for teenagers and young people - Gateshead .....	14
Co-production training review .....	15
Working with our communities .....	16
Working with Healthwatch .....	16
Community Mental Health Transformation - Gateshead.....	16
Community Mental Health Grants .....	16
Community Mental Health Conference .....	17
Health Inequalities Fund.....	17
Equalities, health inequalities, and vaccinations - North Tyneside .....	19
DigitalMe – giving a voice to vulnerable people - Gateshead .....	20
Listening forums .....	21
Health and Care Engagement Forum in County Durham.....	21
Sunderland and South Tyneside Involvement Partnership (SSTIP).....	21
North Tyneside Patient Forum .....	22
Newcastle Patient, Public and Carer Engagement Forum .....	22
Gateshead Engagement Forum .....	23

Supporting quality improvement in Primary Care .....	23
Urgent Care services .....	23
Integrated Urgent Care in South Tees .....	23
Urgent Care Listening Exercise in Newcastle .....	24
Enhanced GP access - Sunderland.....	25
Urgent Community Response - County Durham .....	26
GP commissioning engagement.....	27
Normanby and Manor House GP Practice Merger in Redcar & Cleveland .....	27
Identifying Penicillin allergies - North Tyneside .....	28
Maternity clinics for covid and flu vaccination .....	29

## **Innovative ways to listen**

### **Involvement toolkit**

The ICB has developed a toolkit as a practical guide to help colleagues in the North East and North Cumbria to involve people in their work. The easy-to-follow guide includes advice, techniques and templates that can be used with a variety of audiences and topics to engage meaningfully and improve the quality of services.

The people and communities we serve should be involved in all parts of the commissioning cycle to ensure we make the right decisions when it comes to the future of the healthcare services they use.

The toolkit covers engagement, when the ICB is developing relationships and partnerships so that the voice of local people and partners is heard, and consultation, which refers to the statutory duty for NHS organisations to consult with overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs), patients, the public and stakeholders when considering proposals for a substantial variation of how local health services are provided.

ICB staff work alongside members of the Involvement team to plan, research, engage, analyse, monitor and report back on involvement projects, with full transparency. On our website you can find details of our past and current engagements to see examples of the work we deliver.

We promote a range of engagement methods when involving local people, including surveys, focus groups, co-production events, public meetings and events, pop up stalls, working with people with lived experience, community outreach, interviews and our citizens' panel.

Our aspiration is to 'be the best at getting better' and so it is essential that the North East and North Cumbria is a place where continuous improvement and learning is at the heart of all we do and the way in which we work. We have therefore established a Learning and Improvement Community Network with a focus on quality improvement.

The Involvement toolkit is a mechanism for ensuring staff strive for excellence and can feedback learning through the Learning and Improvement Community Network. This enables our staff to lead, persuade and move forward, with the patient voice at the heart of what we do, so that improvement becomes a value and not just a behaviour.

[Tools to help us involve | North East and North Cumbria NHS  
\(northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk\)](https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk)

## Citizens panel

The NENC ICB are currently setting up a citizens panel, so we can learn from the thoughts and opinions of residents throughout our region.

A Citizens' Panel is a panel of people who agree to regularly share their thoughts and opinions, usually through completing surveys. However, people may also be invited to take part in other activities and involvement events, such as group discussions and focus groups.

We are hoping to set up our panel soon and aim to recruit residents from across the North East and North Cumbria region. We will be asking people to share their thoughts about different health and social care topics, and we will let you know what we do with the information you share.

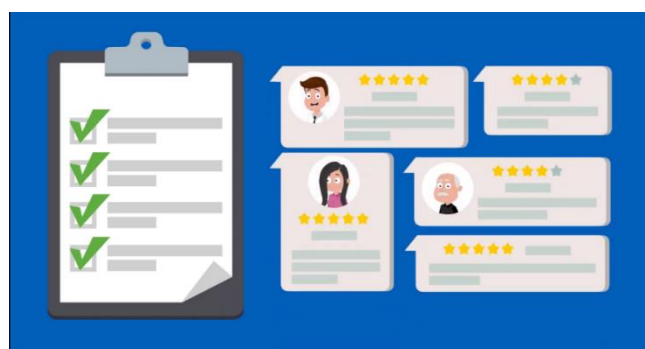
To help us develop a plan for a citizens panel, the NENC ICB commissioned an external contractor to conduct research to scope out a future enduring Citizen's engagement model. This research aimed to explore the benefits, drawbacks, and resource requirements of differing models of Citizen's engagement, and provide recommendations on an approach that will meet the needs of the ICB on an ongoing and enduring basis.

The learning from this research is being used to help shape citizens engagement across the North East and North Cumbria.

[Your voice | North East and North Cumbria NHS \(northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk\)](https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk)

## Storyteller Process

Across the ICB, there is a desire to be able to hear the lived experiences of patients, families, and staff in relation to the breadth of services we commission.



To enable this to happen, the Involvement Team have developed a tailored approach to being able to effectively capture and share these experiences directly with senior leaders across the organisation.

Following the approval of the 'Storyteller protocol' at the Quality and Safety Committee meeting in February 2023, work has continued in conjunction with the ICB communications team.

This is centred around the production of a short, animated video to help raise awareness of the opportunities for individuals (staff and patients) to share their experiences. This will be supported with a promotional poster as well as social media materials.

Distribution of these materials will cut across a broad range of networks in each 'place' and build upon the strong in working relationships in each area. The opportunity to reach out to staff within provider organisations across the region will also be part of the approaches once the materials are available, in recognition of the valuable perspectives that they have in identifying good practice or areas for improvement.

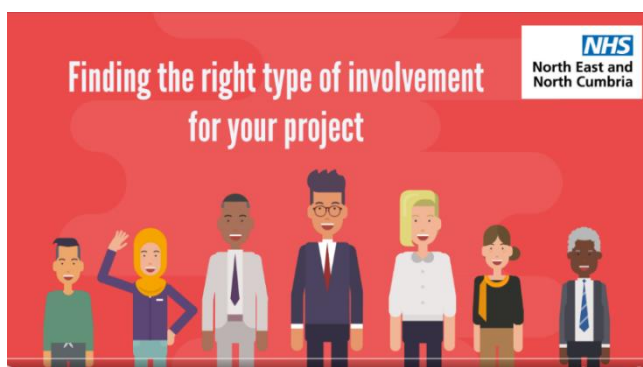
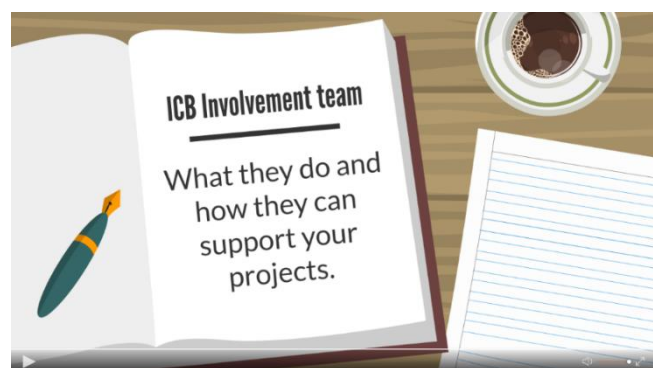
[Your voice | North East and North Cumbria NHS \(northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk\)](http://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk)

### **Raising awareness of involvement in the ICB**

Internal awareness of the role and function of the Involvement team across the ICB has also been a key priority during the year.

The team have designed and created two specific animations specifically for the wider staff teams throughout the North East and North Cumbria ICB.

The first animation provides an overview of the range of skills and expertise that exist within the Involvement team and as a result, the types of support that is available to colleagues. This animation also highlights the relevant statutory duties that the ICB has in relation to involving people in our work and the requirements to deliver this effectively.



The second animation produced by the team focussed on providing more detailed information about the types of approaches to involving people that a team/ project can employ. This video summarises the varying 'levels' of involvement activity including co-production and consultation and what these terms mean in practice for a project.

These animations, along with the Involvement toolkit will continue to be rolled out across the organisation as part of staff awareness and induction sessions.

## **Secure Data Environment**

Public involvement consistently confirms the need for use of health and care data to be of benefit to the public.

Secure Data Environments (SDEs) are a major step forward in addressing public concerns about the safe use of patient data as it means that data linked to an individual will be used in a secure server and only for agreed purposes. SDE has been established as a national programme, led and funded by NHS England (NHSE).

The NENC is one of eleven 'sub-national' SDEs and is led by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) with a range of healthcare and academic partners.

The project aim is to establish SDE capability aligned to national standards, regional governance, processes, and data platform to support evidence-based transformation, closely aligning the health and care system and academic partners supporting the NENC Digital Strategy.

To support this work, an involvement and communications strategy has been developed which takes a transparent and open strategic overview. It considers historic and situational issues in relation to public confidence around use of NHS data for research and is aligned to the legal, regulatory and policy requirements for public involvement at a national, regional, sub regional and local level.

The intention is to build upon the knowledge and lessons learned of the past (nationally, regionally, and locally) so that the NENC programme can benefit from key insights gained in developing it's joined-up involvement and communications activities to make the very best of available expertise and resources. The NENC SDE programme's involvement objectives are to:

- Create the conditions to develop partner, stakeholder, patient and public two-way relationships and trust in the SDE NENC programme
- Demonstrate listening, learning, and understanding including ideas and early warnings on issues from involvement activities to shape the programme implementation
- Enhance patient and public support and enthusiasm for use of NHS health data to drive research and development
- Ensure the public voice is a part of the governance structure

# Shaping services through listening

## Respite services for people with learning disabilities

A respite centre which provided break respite services to people with learning disabilities was temporarily closed for safety reasons in 2020 due to the 19 pandemic.



short  
with

Covid-

was

An independent research report commissioned in May 2022 to understand the needs of patients and their carers, what was important to them, and their thoughts on respite care and other short break services. Conversations with service-users, families, carers began in November 2022 and continuing through to March 2023. Engagement included

- Initial contact with 18 families to understand communication needs and conversation preferences of patients.
- Survey with parents and carers of service-users
- Workshop sessions with patients and their family members
- System-wide workshop with wider stakeholders to feedback what service-users and families had shared
- Final feedback workshop held with families and patients to summarise the learning and discussions from the system-wide workshop
- Conversations with individual families who could not attend the event



As part of this engagement work, we developed a video to demonstrate how we have engaged with service-users with learning disabilities, including individuals with complex communication needs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG9tqtdY3CI&feature=youtu.be>



## **Waiting Well**

The Waiting Well programme aims to engage with patients to support them to adopt healthier lifestyles whilst waiting for surgery. Eight areas across North East and North Cumbria have received funding to deliver the programme. NENC ICB conducted engagement from December 2022 to March 2023. This included seven 30-minute stakeholder interviews, and a series of patient focus groups arranged with support from Healthwatch organisations and other voluntary and community sector organisations. 193 individuals participated in the focus groups.

The programme was generally perceived well by both members of the public and stakeholders, who discussed how patients can often feel 'left or abandoned' whilst awaiting surgery which can impact upon their physical and mental wellbeing. Participating in Waiting Well was thought to bring benefits to patients, as well as the wider healthcare system, such as helping patients make healthier lifestyle choices, improved physical and mental health, increased readiness for surgery, less surgery cancellations and improved surgical outcomes.

Some members of the public were less certain of the benefits of the programme due to a lack of information, saying they felt that its impact would depend on factors including how patients are invited to the programme, how the benefits of the programme are communicated, and the type of support offered. Some felt the programme might add pressure to an 'already stretched' healthcare system, that it might be a 'waste of money', that it might be an initiative to 'mask surgical waiting times' or there might be personal barriers to access.

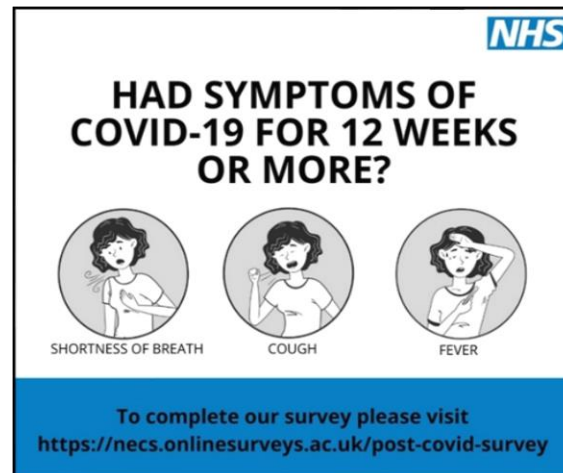
Most participants said they would feel happy if invited to participate in Waiting Well, perceiving that something positive was happening, that they had not been forgotten or that it was part of the preparation process for their surgery. However, this was not the case for all with some indicating they, or others, may feel patronised, angry, or apprehensive about the programme. When asked what the programme would look like in an ideal world, participants described how patients would receive personalised support tailored to their health and wider needs. Some patients spoke of the provision of regular support from a named contact to enable patients to build trusted relationships, and recognition that some will require more intensive support than others.

[waiting-well-engagement-findings-report-final.pdf \(northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk\)](https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/~/media/Waiting-Well-Engagement-Findings-Report-Final.pdf)

## Post-Covid Syndrome – Tees Valley

Across the Tees Valley, Local Authorities and NHS Trusts offer a wealth of support to people living with post-Covid syndrome.

In late 2022 and early 2023 the ICB carried out a review of services in Tees Valley relating to Post-Covid Syndrome, where symptoms persist past twelve weeks. Patients who have accessed these services were invited to share their feedback on via a confidential online survey.



In total, 62 patients provided feedback, with the most common symptoms reported to be anxiety, memory problems, poor sleep, headaches, fatigue, and reduced activity. Two out of five respondents (40%) felt their symptoms had significantly affected their lives. Half (49%) of respondents accessed their GP practice for support, a quarter (26%) were referred to a hospital clinic and 7% accessed support via community services. Over half (53%) said the local hospital services had had an overall positive impact on symptoms. The feedback from these conversations will enable health professionals to review the effectiveness of the services available to support in the planning of future service delivery.

## Affordable transport for care leavers - Gateshead

Poor access to affordable transport is a significant contributing factor to poor mental and physical health, as it can lead to social isolation, missed health appointments, and an inability to access secure employment.

An innovative partnership pilot was established between the NENC ICB, Gateshead Council, and local public transport provider Nexus. Through this partnership arrangement, in Autumn 2022, we funded and provided full travel passes for 133 care-experienced young people in Gateshead. The initiative is the first of its kind in the country.

The programme is being evaluated throughout 2023, to monitor the impact the travel passes have had on the life of each young person, for example in helping them attend health appointments as well as improving their emotional, mental health and wellbeing. For more information about this project, see our [media release](#).

## Quality Strategy - County Durham

Working across the County Durham Care Partnership a joint Quality Strategy was developed in collaboration with wider partners and sets out the aims and priorities for high quality care in County Durham over the next three years.

The content of the strategy was developed through a series of iterative workshops over a period of months across the summer and autumn of 2022 which involved providers, commissioners, and community partners.

Having outlined the nine key Quality Priorities for the strategy, these were tested out with engaged public partners and representatives. This feedback was then used to refine the priorities, the language used and specific focus of certain elements.

The final strategy was shared with the County-wide Patient Reference Group in May 2023.

## Collaborative listening

### Northern Cancer Alliance oncology service review

A review of oncology services in the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) is currently being undertaken with clinical leadership from the Northern Cancer Alliance and a steering group of regional stakeholders, including representation from all Trusts.



The aim of this review is to develop a new and sustainable clinical model for oncology services that will seek to address the current issues being experienced within the existing service delivery model, these include:

- A national shortage of the oncology workforce
- Increasing demands on oncology services.

The oncology service review engagement process has included three stages, each with a specific function and purpose:

- **Governance** - There is a Northern Cancer Alliance Lay Representative who is a member of the service review steering group and the Northern Cancer Alliance Public Involvement Accountability Forum (PIAF). Both provide oversight and scrutiny of engagement activities across the lifespan of the service review. PIAF receive regular updates detailing the progress of the service review as a whole and the development and delivery of public

engagement activities. Updates to the forum are provided by the service review project lead and the Lay Representative steering group member. Public engagement assurance reports are approved by PIAF and presented to the Cancer Alliance Board by a Lay Representative board member at agreed intervals.

- **Understanding what matters most** - This involved a working group whose membership is drawn from the PIAF. The membership is reflective of health inequalities and people with lived experience. The purpose and function of the group is to inform and influence the development of the oncology service model. Ensuring it is reflective of what matters most to patients, their families, and carers, in particular those members of our community who experience the greatest levels of disadvantage and health inequalities. This group also contributed to understanding in the impact of potential change and drew on existing sources of patient experience data and insight to inform the development of the service model.
- **Understanding the impact of potential change** – this included both recent and future patients, to understand how any potential changes to the service model will impact on oncology patients going forward. This included understanding the impact on patient experience and the potential for widening/reducing health inequalities and/or inequity of access.

There has been a lot of evidence collected over the past few years which has helped to identify potential scenarios to support the ongoing and future challenges faced by this service. This evidence has been collated through conversations and research with several stakeholders, including through patient forums and service-user feedback.

In addition to engagement around the longer-term service review for the whole of the North East and North Cumbria, there is also a need to build upon the service-user experience exploring the impact of the temporary measures implemented by Newcastle Hospitals.

There is a detailed plan for wider engagement throughout 2023-24, which includes surveys and interviews to understand service-user perspective on the temporary measures and lessons and feedback to incorporate into final proposals. Furthermore, detailed collaboration with patients and stakeholders will continue, demonstrating an evolving and collaborative approach to listening through coproduction, and integrating these conversations into to future working model.

## **Integrated approach to review local advocacy services - County Durham**

The Integrated Commissioning team in County Durham implemented a review of the local advocacy services to understand what was working and what could be improved for those people using this specialist service.

The approaches were co-designed together with community partners Inclusion North and Healthwatch County Durham. Working collaboratively, these two partners delivered the engagement with people who have experience of the advocacy service to provide independence from the commissioners and encourage participation.

The involvement included a series of drop-in sessions at community hospital sites as well as directly reaching out to individuals who had received support from the advocacy services in the past year.

Overall, findings suggested that people who live in the community received a positive advocacy experience. For people living in hospital however, most people reported a poor advocacy experience.

As a result of the feedback obtain, further awareness raising of advocacy services and how individuals can access them has been undertaken. This has targeted service users as well as staff and will continue in the future too. Weekly drop-in sessions for patients to find out about advocacy services have also been implemented.

In addition, having listened to what people told us, the revised service specification includes the following requirements and more:

- The service is driven by the needs and wishes of the service user and the service always reflects the best interests of the individual.
- The provider promotes self-advocacy and builds resilience across communities.
- The provider demonstrates that engagement and co-production is embedded within service practice to ensure that customers / service users feel valued and listened to.
- Advocacy plans are developed with the service user to ensure the service can meet their needs and identify / agree what their anticipated outcomes are.
- Provide a clear pathway and fewer transition points between services and for the service user can keep the same advocate rather than having to be transferred to another advocate.

## **Coproducing a new health resource for teenagers and young people - Gateshead**

At the beginning of 2023, we launched a new print and online resource called "The Little Book of Useful Stuff".

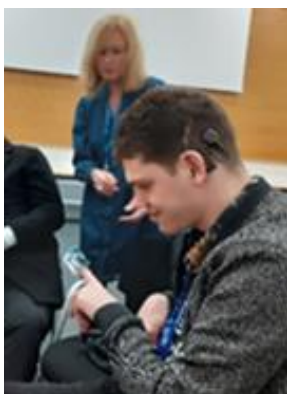
This toolkit provides a wide range of health advice to support young people as they move through their teenage years and into adulthood.

The product was co-produced with young people directly informing the content and design, including identifying which health topics they wanted covered, as well as developing the language, design style and visual imagery used to illustrate the products. We also spoke with parents, carers, and professionals across Gateshead, undertook three electronic surveys, face-to-face focus groups, as well as virtual a 'Menti' group session, to test the draft content, and the feedback has helped steer the content of the final products.

The resource is available on the [Healthier Together website](#).



## **Co-production with parent carers of children and young people with SEND- North Tyneside**



North Tyneside place successfully bid from NHSE for a small project fund to undertake some co-production work with parents and carers of people with learning disabilities. This was off the back of a 'you said, we did' engagement exercise with the Participation and Engagement Team within North Tyneside Council.

Twisting Ducks, a local media production company are working with a group of parents and carers to write and produce some short videos on the main issues around special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The videos will be in the format of 'top tips' as feedback identified this was the preferred format. The key messages parents would like to share are:



1. Where to go to get information and support with other parent carer networks and professionals
2. The importance of looking after yourself as a parent carer
3. How to find out about suitable social opportunities for children with SEND and how to access them

This will be produced and shared across various social media channels, schools, and community settings summer 2023.

### **Co-production training review**

The Cumbria Learning and Improvement Collaborative has commissioned a review of co-production materials, which has been funded by the North East and Yorkshire Leadership Academy. The work is being led by New Local and independent think tank and network of councils with a mission to transform public services and unlock community power.

A review of the current CLIC co-production training and co-design of a refreshed training programme for leaders at all levels, aims to build capability and understanding of working collaboratively with an empowered community.

The output will be a refreshed online training programme that can be accessed by all health and care partners across the North East and North Cumbria and will build knowledge, skills, and capability to work with and alongside our communities.

The four facilitated and interactive, practice based modules are designed to stand alone or be completed as a programme:

- “The Essentials” of Community Powered Health and Care
- Principle 1: Community Power in Decision Making
- Principle 2: Mobilising Community Assets
- Principle 3: Growing a Community Focused Organisational Culture

The modules will be further developed and co-designed with partners in June and piloted in July with a broad range of stakeholders. The programme will be delivered on behalf of the NENC Learning and Improvement Community by members of the CLIC / NENC ICB Learning and Improvement team.

## **Working with our communities**

### **Working with Healthwatch**

The ICB are committed to listening to local communities, and to work with community-based organisations to help support these two-way conversations.



One of the ways we will do this is through close partnership working with Healthwatch, who are a health and social care champion in ensuring people's feedback is used to improve standards of care. Healthwatch plays an important role in representing the views of patients across the region and are present at many forums and groups. Funding has been secured to work alongside Healthwatch across our region, to support the ICB to embed engagement and involvement in everything we do.

We also work with a wide range of other local Voluntary Community Organisations across the region to support these two-way conversations. This helps us to reach and involve our wide and diverse populations in shaping local health services.

### **Community Mental Health Transformation - Gateshead**

#### **Community Mental Health Grants**

In 2023, the Gateshead Community Mental Health Transformation team launched the second round of an innovative pilot community grant scheme. The programme is designed to support community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing and mitigate and protect against the impact and distress of mental ill health in children, young people & adults.

After extensive conversations with the community about what they would value in terms of mental health support, grants of up to £10,000 were made available to community organisations, to pilot innovative solutions to mental health challenges, outside of the traditional clinical model.

The scheme was publicised through our Gateshead ICB Engagement Forum as well as online and through our organisational partners, including the local authority, Healthwatch and VCSE partners, as well as through social media. We will be evaluating the success of the scheme through the year, to see how it has made a difference to the mental health and wellbeing of our community.



Projects we are funding through this initiative include a community group that is using art to engage isolated women from the South Asian Community; a running club that is organising 'run & talk' programmes to support people facing mental health challenges; and a group that is creating facilitated safe spaces where young people can come to talk about their mental health.



### Community Mental Health Conference

In February 2023, we held a major Mental Health Conference in Gateshead. Around 150 delegates attended, representing communities and organisations from across the borough.



As well as being an opportunity to facilitate discussions around how we can transform mental health provision in Gateshead, the day also involved a thought-provoking and honest dramatized performance by the Lawnmowers Theatre Group, providing a valuable insight into "How the System Works" if you are disabled or have a learning disability.

### Health Inequalities Fund

Residents in North Tyneside brushed up on their culinary skills by taking part in nutritionist led cooking sessions at the Linskill Centre. The free cooking classes taught participants tasty but nutritional recipes that can be replicated easily at home.

Each of the cooking course was led by a qualified nutritionist and on average six participants attend



the classes each week to learn new recipes, gain knowledge about ingredients and develop their cooking abilities.

Made possible by almost £30,000 funding from the Health Inequalities Fund which is hosted by VODA and funded by North Tyneside Council and the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the classes were part of the Linkskill and North Tyneside Development Trusts commitment to helping its community improve its health.

Participants on the courses include parents and carers and dedicated classes ran after school for children, young people, and young carers.

With the cost-of-living impacting households across the borough, the courses also included meal planning on a budget, and taught parents how to make healthier meals for the whole family while still keeping costs as low as possible.

The Trust has also used the funding to increase the capacity of its allotment to grow more fruit and vegetables, meaning that young and old people have come together promote health, wellbeing, and learning.

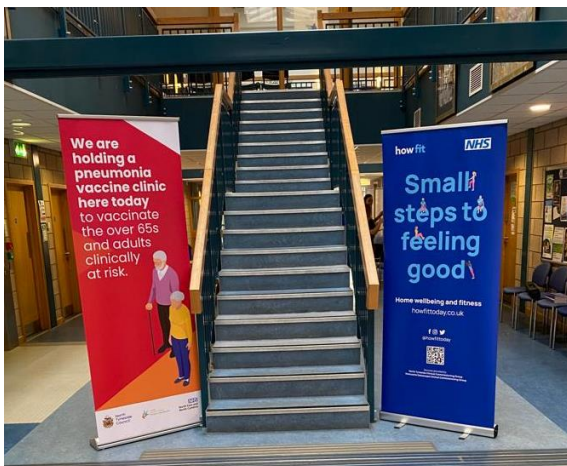
The Health Inequalities Fund, developed by the members of the Better Together group, awarded grants of between £10,000 and £30,000 to fourteen Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations in Summer 2022.

All funded activities focused on delivering outcomes relating to the key themes of the recently published Equally Well strategy for North Tyneside – ‘Equal life chances for all’, ‘Thriving places and communities’ and ‘Maintaining independence’.

<https://voda.org.uk/health-inequalities-funding-encourages-residents-to-cook-up-a-storm/>

## Equalities, health inequalities, and vaccinations - North Tyneside

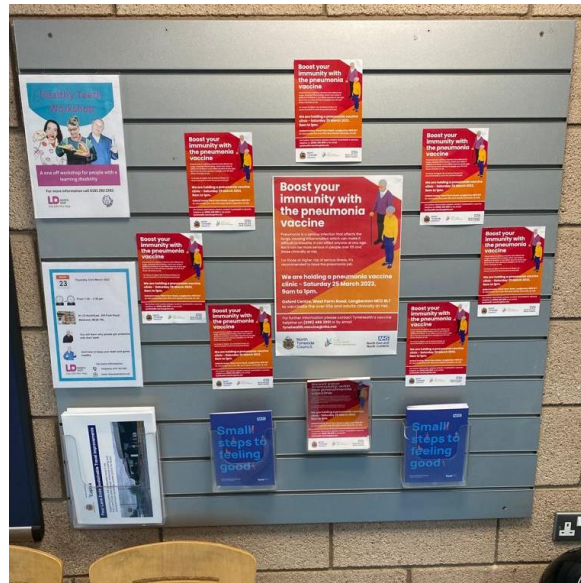
A cross sector health inequalities group was set up early on during the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued to meet regularly to collectively address any identified health inequalities. Membership includes NHS North Tyneside place, North Tyneside Council, Public Health, VODA, GP Federation, Primary Care Network Directors (PCN), Pharmacy representative, and Healthwatch North Tyneside. When certain topics are being discussed, subject matter experts are also invited to attend to ensure service and patient voices are included, such as learning disability, severe mental health, school immunisation team, etc.



Questions were raised on what the borough's vaccine uptake was like for all other immunisations programmes, not just COVID. Data was presented which showed that overall North Tyneside was higher than the regional or England average for most vaccines, except for the pneumonia vaccine. The group agreed to pilot a targeted approach following the flu vaccine programme. Feedback via Healthwatch had shown that patients had vaccine fatigue and some were generally confused about what vaccine they had

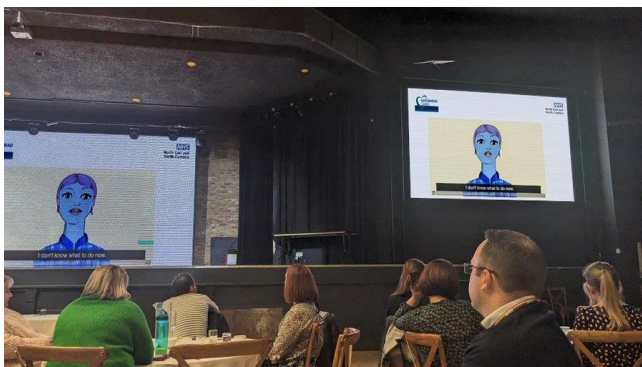
received, what they should have had and when to have it. An action plan was put together to try and increase the vaccine rate for pneumonia across the North West PCN. This included case finding patients who had no record of the vaccine for all 65 year olds and above and immunosuppressed patients. The PCN then invited all eligible patients via letter to a special clinic at the local PCN community centre. After letters were received but no contact to the practice had been made to book a vaccine appointment by the patient, staff then rang people to invite them to the clinic and answer any queries the patient or their carer may have had on the vaccine to overcome any perceived barriers and vaccine hesitancy.

As many patients eligible for the vaccine are aged 65 and above, by making every contact count, the group decided to highlight other services which may be useful to this cohort by making the clinic more of an event. HowFit booklets were given out to patients at the clinic. HowFit is a fitness plan designed to help members of the public get fit in their own homes. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service was in attendance and offered to do blood pressure (BP) and atrial fibrillation (AF) checks on patients and carers during the clinic. They also offered general health advice and signposting to other services, as well as highlighting the safe and well checks they conduct free of charge.



The clinic vaccinated 228 patients with the pneumonia vaccine and undertook 61 BP and AF checks during the clinic. A further clinic was scheduled the following week due to high demand.

### DigitalMe – giving a voice to vulnerable people - Gateshead



The DigitalMe project gives a voice to vulnerable people who are often ignored or afraid to talk about their mental health.

We worked in partnership with a local not-for-profit social enterprise, Digital Voice for Communities, to support individuals to make anonymised, artistic video self-portraits, where

they could send powerful messages to peers, health and social service providers, as well as the voluntary and community sector, about their experiences and expectations of what constitutes good mental health support.

## Listening forums

### Health and Care Engagement Forum in County Durham

Building on the integrated approaches to involvement between the NHS and the Local Authority, the County Durham [Health and Care Engagement Forum](#) was established in July 2022.



The Engagement Forum exists to provide local assurance and guidance to staff in the Integrated Commissioning team around developing, implementing, and monitoring their involvement activities. The membership of the Engagement Forum is made up of a diverse range of community organisations able to help represent the views of varying elements of the local population, as well as having 12 public member positions.

In addition, a Lay Member with responsibility for Engagement has been appointed in County Durham Care Partnership. As part of their role across they sit across the Health and Well-being Board, CD Care Partnership Executive they also chair the Health and Care Engagement Forum. This senior leadership and connection is proving a great asset to the recognition and profile of engagement activity locally.

The Forum is part of the local governance arrangements, sitting underneath the County Durham Care Partnership and above the three main workstreams of Starting Well, Living Well and Ageing Well.

### Sunderland and South Tyneside Involvement Partnership (SSTIP)

The Sunderland and South Tyneside Involvement Partnership (SSTIP) group meet every 6 weeks to coordinate involvement activity. This makes it easier for members of the public to contribute to involvement activities and will also reduce duplication and confusion.

The key responsibilities of the Partnership are to:

- Share examples of best practice.
- To make best use of resources.
- To provide updates on involvement activities.
- To discuss how the SSTIP can support partner involvement activities.
- To reduce health inequalities and ensure inclusion is considered in our work for Sunderland and South Tyneside residents.

This group also provides assurance to partners on how they involve members of the public whilst meeting the Public Sector Equality Duties to foster good relations.

### **North Tyneside Patient Forum**

The North Tyneside Patient Forum is made up of residents, GP practice patient participation group (PPG) members, and ICB colleagues. Its aim is to encourage members to be involved in engagement processes and act as a critical friend to the ICB.

Agenda items for the forum are a mixture of North Tyneside Place areas for discussion and member-led issues, ensuring two-way engagement between the ICB and local patients. As well as the forum, there are a series of smaller working groups which enable more in-depth discussion on specific subjects. These include end-of-life, future care, mental health, communications and engagement, innovations, and cancer.

All working groups and related topics were decided by forum Members and are compatible with strategic plans and priorities in North Tyneside. In addition, all groups also have a watchful eye on carers, children and young people, mental health, and self-care.

### **Newcastle Patient, Public and Carer Engagement Forum**

The Newcastle Patient, Public and Carer Engagement Forum is for people who would like to share their opinions with NHS representatives and contribute to decisions about healthcare provision in the area.

Members meet in both a face-to-face and online setting and can find out about the ICB's priorities, offer constructive critiques, share experiences, issues and views of services and take part in involvement exercises.

Members are also able to request discussion topics for future forums, and guest speakers are invited to support with these. Recent examples include dentistry, making every contact count, and the impact of literacy on health.

## **Gateshead Engagement Forum**

Gateshead's Engagement Forum is a broad partnership between the public, patients, voluntary and community sector groups, as well as representatives from commissioners and providers of both health and social care services, and broader public service providers. Because of the broad nature of the membership, the group has been able to facilitate a wide range of innovative networking partnerships, bringing



together talents that would not necessarily come together in more traditional spaces.

Through the period April 2022-March 2023, the group received presentations and facilitated lively public discussions, bringing together patients and members of the public with Homeshare Independent Living, Make Every Contact Count (MECC), Togetherall Mental Health, Gateshead NHS Community Mental Health Transformation's team, Gateshead's NHS Children, Young People and Families team, Gateshead Older Person's Assembly, Healthwatch Gateshead, and the National Literacy Trust.

## **Supporting quality improvement in Primary Care**

### **Urgent Care services**

#### **Integrated Urgent Care in South Tees**

The ICB carried out a public engagement between August and late October 2022 on proposals to introduce a new model of urgent care delivery in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland. The proposals included a new Integrated Urgent Treatment Centre at The James Cook University Hospital, GP Out of Hours to be relocated to The James Cook University Hospital, and increased opening hours at Redcar Primary Care Hospital. Proposals included a standardised offer, so that wherever a patient lives in Tees Valley, they will have the same access to the same high standard of urgent care around the clock.

**Have your say...**

**...on urgent care proposals in Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland.**

A new Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) is being proposed at The James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough as part of a new set of urgent care proposals.

The Middlesbrough GP out of hours service would move to The James Cook University Hospital site.

The UTC at Redcar Primary Care Hospital would also increase its opening hours to be open 24/7, 365 days a year.

The GP out of hours service for Redcar & Cleveland patients would remain at Redcar Primary Care Hospital.

**To book a place, please visit [iuc.eventbrite.com](http://iuc.eventbrite.com) or scan the QR Code.**

**You can also book a place by emailing [necsu.comms@nhs.net](mailto:necsu.comms@nhs.net) or via 01642 745401.**

**Have your say by completing a survey**

Complete an online survey at [necs.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/iuc](https://necs.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/iuc) by 9th October 2022 or request a paper copy on 01642 745401.

Paper copies of the survey and freepost reply envelopes are also available to collect from all Middlesbrough GP practices.

For more information, please visit [necr-teesvalley.icb.nhs.uk/iuc](https://necr-teesvalley.icb.nhs.uk/iuc)

**Have your say at a Public Event in September**

**Saturday 24 September, 1.30pm-3.30pm**  
The Trinity Centre, Holy Trinity Church, The Market Place, North Ormesby, Middlesbrough, TS3 6LD

**Tuesday 27 September, 6.00pm-8.00pm**  
Redcar and Cleveland College, Corporation Rd, Redcar, TS10 1EZ

**Monday 26 September, 9.30am-11.30am**  
The Parkway Social Club, Parkway Shopping Centre, Dalby Way, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TJ

The engagement consisted of a survey, public meetings, and targeted engagement with the local community.

Please [click here](#) to read the findings of this engagement. This report will help inform the next steps and the development of proposals to ensure services are equipped to best meet the needs of the local population.

### Urgent Care Listening Exercise in Newcastle

A listening exercise was undertaken by the ICB to understand the thoughts and experiences of people who live and work in Newcastle on urgent care services.

Urgent care services in Newcastle consist of three urgent treatment centres, at Ponteland Road, Molineux Street and Westgate Road (which is temporarily closed). Patients can also access urgent care support in pharmacies, their GP practice, and services in the Royal Victoria Infirmary, such as the Minor Injuries Unit.





The engagement ran in two phases and began with a patient and public survey, an NHS staff survey and funded Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) led focus groups, to find out how people currently use urgent care services in the city and what they would like to see in future.

Following this initial phase, the ICB expanded on the listening exercise by funding additional VCS focus groups (ensuring that communities who were under-represented in the first phase were encouraged to be involved) and inviting people to attend six public events, where NHS leaders provided an update on what the ICB had learned and facilitated discussions on where services could be improved.

### Enhanced GP access - Sunderland

During August and September 2022, the NENC ICB worked in partnership with Sunderland Healthwatch to understand people's experiences of accessing the GP practice. This piece of work was a priority for Healthwatch Sunderland for 2022-2023 and was chosen by members of the public.

In total, 1261 people shared their thoughts through the survey, and information was also gained through conversations with 14 GP practice managers from across the city. The themes identified from patient feedback remain consistent across the city.

- **Booking appointments** – Citywide half of the survey respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the length of time they wait for their call to be answered and most patients gained an appointment within a week. Most patients citywide booked their appointments via the telephone (84%). Common issues reported when booking appointments were long telephone queues, patients being asked to call at 8am, the lack of booking for future appointments, lack of on-line booking facility and lack of face-to-face appointments with doctors.
- **Staffing** – Most patients were positive about doctors, nurses, and receptionists within the practices and used complimentary comments when describing them. Patients commented that they provide high levels of patient care and professionalism and acknowledged the pressures practices were currently facing.



- Prescriptions - Citywide an overwhelming majority (84%) of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the prescription service at their GP practice.
- Extended Access Service - Around half of the survey respondents citywide had heard of the service and one third had used it. Levels of satisfaction from patients who had used the service were high, with 72% of respondents rating it either excellent or good.
- Practice managers discussions – The main challenges highlighted by Practice Managers during our discussions were lack of resources (staffing, funds, and physical space), increase in demand, lack of patient knowledge around self-care and lack of understanding by patients of what services are available within primary care

[GP access report | Healthwatch Sunderland](#)

### **Urgent Community Response - County Durham**

Nationally, there is a requirement for each area to deliver an [Urgent Community Response](#) (UCR) service. This requires us to work collectively across a range of health and care teams to identify and be able to respond to someone's needs within a specific timeframe.

The support provided is designed to help care for someone in their own home and provide a response that helps prevent them from needing to be admitted to hospital – if that is the right things for their needs.

In County Durham, there is already a significant amount of joined up working between our health and care staff in hospitals, those that work with people where they live, as well as with charities and other organisations such as Care Homes. The implementation of the national requirements has built on these joined-up ways of working between teams of staff and provider organisations across the County.

A collaborative approach to this engagement took place between the ICB and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust to identify and develop appropriate implementation methods.

Patient questions were developed locally and then shared with the regional UCR working group for approval. Following an interaction with the UCR service and the immediate resolution of their presenting needs, patients are provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience. The implementation of engagement began in quarter 4 of 2022-23. The patient engagement will be collected over a long-term period to support the continual improvement / implementation of the service.

Staff that operate community services within the Urgent Community Response were also invited to provide their feedback on its initial implementation. There were unfortunately low levels of response initially, so further opportunities for staff to comment are being implemented to build upon the emerging themes that were identified.

## GP commissioning engagement

### Normanby and Manor House GP Practice Merger in Redcar & Cleveland

Normanby Medical Centre and Manor House Surgery in Redcar & Cleveland conducted an engagement exercise in January 2023 to propose a practice merger.

From the end of January until March the ICB worked with the practices to seek the views of patients, carers, stakeholders, and the local community on the proposed merger. Under the proposals there would be no changes to the practices opening hours, number of appointments, staffing levels, and service would continue to be delivered from both sites, allowing for patient choice of where to be seen. The practices wrote to all registered patients aged 16 years and over, carers of registered patients, local stakeholders, and the wider community to invite feedback and to help inform the next steps. The engagement included a survey and drop in events.

The feedback received from the engagement was mixed. Some patients felt the merger would result in more patient choice or flexibility, and some expressed positive experiences of the current service. However, some patients thought the quality of service could potentially decrease after the merger and there

were also concerns one of the sites could close. The practices are continuing their work, linking with key stakeholders as plans develop.

**Normanby Medical Centre and Manor House Surgery  
Proposed Practice Merger**

Normanby Medical Centre and Manor House Surgery are considering merging together to become one GP practice. This will help us continue to improve the quality of care for all our patients because we will be able to work more efficiently by sharing and developing the expertise of a larger clinical team.

There will be no changes to practice opening hours, appointments, staff or services, which will continue to be delivered from both sites. You would be able to book an appointment at either site, giving you access to more clinical staff and more choice of where you want to be seen.

**Have your say**.....

**1. Via our survey**

We are inviting patients aged 16 years and over, carers of registered patients, stakeholders and the wider community to complete our online survey by **Friday 10th March 2023**.

<https://necs.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/normanby-manoorhouse>

If you need support completing the online survey, please contact Healthwatch Redcar & Cleveland by calling **0800 1181691** and they will be happy to assist.

Paper copies of the survey can also be collected from and returned to both practice receptions, Monday to Friday between 08:00-18:00, by Friday 10th March 2023.

**Attend a drop-in session**.....

In addition to completing our survey, you are invited to come along to one of our drop-in sessions to ask questions and provide feedback on the proposed merger. All are welcome to attend any of these sessions.

Manor House Surgery Embswood Road Middlesbrough TS6 0HA Tuesday 7th February 2023 18:00-19:00	Normanby Medical Centre Low Grange Health Village Normanby Road Middlesbrough, TS6 6TD Wednesday 8th February 2023 18:00-19:00	Normanby Medical Centre Low Grange Health Village Normanby Road Middlesbrough, TS6 6TD Thursday 9th February 2023 13:00-14:00	Manor House Surgery Embswood Road Middlesbrough TS6 0HA Thursday 16th February 2023 12:00-13:00
---	--	---	---

This information is also available on each practice website  
[www.normanbymedical.co.uk/](http://www.normanbymedical.co.uk/)  
[www.themanorhousesurgery.co.uk/](http://www.themanorhousesurgery.co.uk/)

## Identifying Penicillin allergies - North Tyneside

It was identified that some patients which had a record of 'allergic to penicillin', had indeed been prescribed penicillin based antibiotics with no record of any side effects. This indicated they were probably not truly allergic.

Many people were told that they had a reaction to penicillin as a child. This was often a rash, which was likely caused by a viral infection as opposed to an allergy or drug reaction. True penicillin allergy causes a range of symptoms. In most cases these are non-severe and require no treatment. In rare cases, allergic symptoms are severe and can include breathlessness, wheezing, lip/tongue swelling and collapse. Most people labelled as having a penicillin allergy will have had none of these symptoms.

Around 1 in 10 of the UK population (6.6 million people) are currently labelled as having a penicillin allergy. However, research suggests that over 5 million of these people are not truly allergic. Having a penicillin allergy means that alternative, second-line antibiotics must be used to treat these problems.

A workstream to try and qualify any record of a penicillin allergy was started to engage both practices and patients. An assessment criteria which helped patients to understand and self-assess the probability of the patient having a penicillin allergy. Practices undertook case finding to identify eligible patients and sent a covering letter and a copy of the assessment criteria for the patient to complete. SMS messages were sent to patients linking to the animation to summarise the purpose of the assessment.

The points based assessment the allowed patients who scored lowly to proceed to remove the penicillin allergy from their record to ensure that they could then be prescribed penicillin-based antibiotics to treat bacterial infections as appropriate and would avoid the significant risks associated with being truly penicillin allergic.

To support patients understanding, a short animation video was developed. The storyboard was shared with the Patient Forum for their comments to ensure the video was understandable to members of the general public - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arQfLCtfm40>

Following the COVID-19 pandemic it was acknowledged that ensuring patients were prescribed appropriate medication straight away was a high priority. Having a record of penicillin allergy means that alternative, second-line antibiotics must be used to treat problems.

## Maternity clinics for covid and flu vaccination

National data emerged that nearly 20% of the most critically ill COVID-19 patients were pregnant women who had not been vaccinated. In North Tyneside, Northumbria Foundation Trust had identified this trend and wanted to ensure there

was a co-ordinated effort to vaccinate pregnant women. Feedback from women admitted to hospital on why they had not been vaccinated was general confusion as early in the COVID-19 vaccination programme it was recommended not to vaccinate pregnant women. They were also unsure when to get the vaccine with sites in North Tyneside changing and varying availability of vaccines.

The health inequalities group developed an action plan which was a local approach to target this vulnerable cohort. A variety of pop-up clinics were put on across the borough, with some locations identified in deprived areas. Again, the overriding factor in low uptake was deprivation.

### Catalyst Penicillin Allergy Assessment Criteria

It is estimated that over 5 million people in the UK are incorrectly labelled as having a penicillin allergy. These people unnecessarily miss out on the best and safest treatments for common bacterial infections. These include chest, throat, sinus, inner ear and skin infections. They also have an increased risk of complex, prolonged hospital admissions and severe infections.

By completing a simple allergy screening questionnaire, it is possible to identify people who are not truly allergic to penicillin. You can then discuss removing this label with your GP or Pharmacist.

These patients will then be able to use penicillin-based antibiotics to treat bacterial infections as appropriate and will avoid the significant risks associated with being truly penicillin allergic.

Have you ever been told that you have a penicillin allergy?  Yes  No

**Tell us about your suspected allergy**

Was this suspected allergy within the last 10 years?  Yes (2 points)  No (0 points)

Did you experience breathlessness, wheezing, lip/tongue swelling or collapse?  Yes (2 points)  No (0 points)

Did you experience a severe, blistering or peeling skin reaction?  Yes (2 points)  No (0 points)

Did you require any treatment (e.g. antihistamines) for your reaction?  Yes (1 points)  No (0 points)

**IF YOU SCORED...**

**0 points** There is <1% (less than 1 in 100) chance that you have a penicillin allergy.

**1-2 points** There is a 5% (1 in 20) chance that you have a penicillin allergy.

**3+ points** There is at least a 20% (1 in 5) chance that you have a penicillin allergy.

**Did you experience any of these non-allergic symptoms?**

Did you experience nausea, vomiting, mild abdominal pain?  Yes  No

Did you experience headache, mild confusion, changes in your mood?  Yes  No

Did you get thrush or *C.difficile* bowel infection after taking penicillin?  Yes  No

These symptoms are common to all types of antibiotics and do NOT represent an allergy.

If you scored 0 points on the questionnaire, then please feel free to contact your GP practice to discuss this.

Your GP or Pharmacist can help you to remove the 'penicillin allergy' label from your medical records if appropriate.

Contact

All the pop up clinics were delivered by a midwife who would be on hand to discuss any queries with the pregnant women and partners. Initially these were delivered as drop in sessions, but the flow of patients was erratic, patients wanted to book in time to fit around their daily life. As a response to this, clinics were changed to have a mix off booked and drop in appointments. TyneHealth accommodated this with a booking tool which was linked to personalised SMS invite messages to eligible women.



TyneHealth would extract the report of eligible women as this was an ever moving cohort with women then giving birth, becoming pregnant or no longer being pregnant. Then personalised invites to the next clinic with the date, allocated appointment time, location and details of the helpline were sent via SMS.

By using this personalised approach, uptake increased significantly, and the vaccine was also offered out to partners and family members to support entire households being vaccinated. Clinics were scheduled to coincide with young family groups and toddler groups to increase exposure of the clinic. The Trust also regularly had COVID-19 vaccine clinics at the hospital base as pregnant women attended pre-natal clinics. Midwives in the community regularly prompted pregnant women at appointments.




**COVID-19 vaccination bus is travelling across North Tyneside to vaccinate all eligible groups, including pregnant and post-natal women and children over 5 years old.**

Midwives and Health Visitors will be on hand to provide advice for a healthy pregnancy and infant feeding support.

**On Monday 25 July the bus will visit:**

**9:30am – 11:30am**  
The Cedarwood Trust,  
The Avenue, Avon Avenue,  
North Shields, NE29 7QT.

**12:30pm – 2:30pm**  
Howdon Gateway, Denbigh Avenue,  
Howdon, Wallsend, NE28 0PP.

**3pm – 4:30pm**  
Wallsend High Street, Market Square.  
(opposite Home Bargains entrance)



**Had COVID-19 recently?** You need to wait at least four weeks from when your symptoms started or you tested positive. For 5-17 years old you need to wait 12 weeks or speak to a health professional about your individual circumstances.

As part of the communications around the clinic social media assets were created addressing the common concerns and questions asked by pregnant women. The approach in North Tyneside event attracted national TV attention with a segment on Good Morning Britain with Piers Morgan. [Northumbria Healthcare midwives urges pregnant women to get their booster jabs as a priority - Chronicle Live](#)