

Item: 15

REPORT CLASSIFICATION	✓	CATEGORY OF PAPER	✓
Official		Proposes specific action	✓
Official: Sensitive Commercial	✓	Provides assurance	
Official: Sensitive Personal		For information only	

BOARD
26 NOVEMBER 2024

Report Title: North East and North Cumbria VCSE stocktake

Purpose of report

To highlight the importance of the VCSE sector in the North East and North Cumbria as key partners that make a huge difference to health and wellbeing outcomes, and to propose a refresh of the ICB's partnerships with the sector, including recommendations for system-wide and place-based working.

Key points

The VCSE sector is a vital cornerstone of a progressive health and care system, and guidance from NHS England is clear that ICSs should ensure their governance and decision-making arrangements support close working with the sector as a strategic partner in shaping, improving and delivering services and developing and delivering plans to tackle the wider determinants of health.

This paper makes recommendations for the refresh of our partnership arrangements at system level to ensure that the voice of the sector and its service-users is listened to, and that this is set out in a formal agreement for engaging and embedding the VCSE sector in system-level governance and decision-making. These refreshed arrangements will help to strengthen communication links with the sector, support VCSE organisations to develop the skills of their leaders and increase opportunities for peer support and learning, and develop a repository of good practice case studies where VCSE services have demonstrated their impact on health and care outcomes. This data can then be utilised to advocate for increased grant giving and commissioning from the sector with key health partners.

With the formation of our ICB Local Delivery Teams, we also have the opportunity to strengthen how we work with the VCSE sector at place level. This will include ensuring the sector's involvement in our emerging place based ICB governance and partnership arrangements, reviewing the effectiveness of local social prescribing arrangements, and consider ways to increase the value and percentage of local commissioning on VCSE services, and the percentage of VCSE grants and contracts that are longer than 12 months in duration to support the sustainability of the sector.

Risks and issues

Without longer-term funding there is a risk that many VCSE organisations may become unsustainable.

Assurances and supporting documentation

We have consulted widely with the VCSE sector, NHS England and other key partners in the development of this stocktake to identify key areas of focus that can best support VCSE sustainability and strengthen our working relationships with the sector.

Recommendation/action required

The Board are asked to:

- support a refresh our strategic infrastructure for working with the VCSE sector at scale, and to strengthen how we work with the VCSE sector at place level through our ICB Local Delivery Teams
- endorse the following proposed actions:
 - Work with the VCSE sector to refresh our current VCSE Partnership Programme structures, to ensure that the voice of the sector and its service users is listened to
 - To set out these arrangements in a formal agreement for engaging and embedding the VCSE sector in system-level governance and decision-making.
 - Strengthen communication mechanisms with the sector via regular bulletins and a programme of VCSE summits and learning events.
 - Support the VCSE sector to develop the skills of their leaders and increase opportunities for peer support and learning via a dedicated VCSE learning network hosted on our Boost platform and VCSE participation in our Workforce Development programme.
 - Develop a standard grant-making and commissioning framework and investment criteria for ICB commissioners based on learning from the Assura-funded pilot programme.
 - Ensure that when commissioning VCSE organisations that we have a balanced and proportionate approach to impact measurement that is realistic and proportionate to the size of the funding, the type of work being carried out, and the size of the respective organisations involved.
 - Develop a repository of good practice case studies where the VCSE have demonstrated their impact, and use this data to advocate for increased grant giving and commissioning from the sector with key health partners
 - Strengthen the relationships between ICB commissioners and local philanthropic donors, including the local Community Foundations, to identify shared priorities and broker investment into VCSE projects that support ICB objectives

Acronyms and abbreviations explained

NENC ICB – North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
 ICS – Integrated Care System
 VCSE – Voluntary, community and social enterprise sector
 NHSE – NHS England
 VONNE - Voluntary Organisations Network North East

Sponsor/approving executive director	Claire Riley, Chief Corporate Services Officer
Date approved by executive director	27 September 2024
Report author	Dan Jackson, Director of Policy, Involvement & Stakeholder Affairs

Link to ICP strategy priorities (please tick all that apply)

Longer and Healthier Lives	✓
Fairer Outcomes for All	✓
Better Health and Care Services	✓
Giving Children and Young People the Best Start in Life	✓

Relevant legal/statutory issues

Note any relevant Acts, regulations, national guidelines etc

Any potential/actual conflicts of interest associated with the paper? (please tick)	Yes		No	✓	N/A	
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N/A

Equality analysis completed (please tick)	Yes		No	✓	N/A	
If there is an expected impact on patient outcomes and/or experience, has a quality impact assessment been undertaken? (please tick)	Yes		No	✓	N/A	
Key considerations						
Financial implications and considerations	The recommendations have implications for our level of spend with the sector.					
Digital implications	Not Immediately					
Clinical involvement	Yes					
Health inequalities	N/a					
Patient and public involvement	Yes					
Partner and/or other stakeholder engagement	Yes					
Other resources	Not immediately, but the recommendations have implications for our level of spend with the sector.					