

# Chief Executive's Report to the Trust Board January 2026

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report updates the Board on strategic activity undertaken since the last meeting and draws the Board's attention to any other issues of significance or interest.

## 2.0 STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM (ICS)

### People with Learning Disabilities and Autism in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent star in new NHS vaccine films.

Local people with learning disabilities and autism are working with the NHS in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to boost confidence and encourage more people to get vaccinated through three informative films.

The first film follows a patient with learning disabilities and their carer as they visit their GP practice for a vaccination, showing what to expect on the day and helping to ease any worries. In the second video, local people with learning disabilities put their questions directly to a public health consultant, who tackles common myths, checks the facts and discusses their own concerns about vaccines. The third video shares the same key information in an accessible Easy Read format.

The videos are now available on the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS YouTube channel.

## 3.0 OUR TRUST

### 3.1



### North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust again ranked number one 'Non-Acute' NHS Trust in England.

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust has been ranked the number one Non-Acute' NHS Trust in England by NHS England and the Department of Health for the second quarter in a row. The ranking was published as part of the latest quarterly update of the new NHS National Oversight Framework (NOF), which assesses NHS Trust's across England against a range of agreed metrics.

High-performing Trust's such as Combined Healthcare may also benefit from greater autonomy – including the ability to reinvest surplus budgets directly into frontline services and improvements. NHS England has launched an interactive public dashboard that provides clear league tables and overall performance ratings for every Trust in the country.



## Cost Improvement and Efficiency

At month 8, the Trust is forecasting full achievement of its £7.4m CIP target, with a total of £6.9m fully achieved/transacted, £0.2m fully developed and £0.3m opportunities identified. The Trust is also forecasting full achievement of the additional 3% increase in productivity ask from NHSE.

During December there have been six Project Initiation Documents (PIDs) approved and implemented, across a range of areas. Our internal auditors MIAA facilitated a targeted session with the SLTD on 9th December, featuring three breakout discussions that generated ideas and highlighted improvement opportunities.

Following the SLTD session and December operational plan submissions, the CIP meeting on 12 January will review schemes proposed in operational plans, assess the viability of 14 schemes deferred previously and explore potential new ideas.

The Trust continues to use a variety of external and internal sources, including the NHSE Model Hospital and NOF Framework, NHS Benchmarking Network and Service Line Reporting to explore areas for further improvement regarding productivity and efficiency.

## Out of Area Performance

Ongoing reliance on Out of Area (OOA) mental health placements reflects sustained pressures on local bed capacity following dormitory eradication and rising demand in line with national trends. This continues to impact continuity of care, discharge planning, and patient experience, while increasing system inefficiencies and costs. The Trust remains committed to meeting NHS England's requirement to eliminate inappropriate OOA placements by 2026, except in exceptional circumstances.

A recovery plan is in place to optimise bed management and strengthen system-wide coordination. Key actions include daily bed flow meetings, embedded Red-to-Green processes and enhanced multi-agency oversight through a Strategic Oversight Group. Community teams are actively engaged in discharge planning, repatriation and crisis prevention, supported by real-time communication and a new Standard Operating Procedure for OOA management.

Progress is monitored through executive reporting and risk governance processes to ensure accountability and alignment with national targets. More detailed information in relation to OOA can be found within the IQPR and Quality Committee Quad A Report.

## Combined Healthcare showcases Trust's pioneering use of virtual reality in Parliament

Dr Becky Chubb, Consultant Psychiatrist and Deputy Clinical Director, and Joe McCrea, Associate Director of Communications, appeared before the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee in Parliament in December. Together, they showcased two examples of innovation delivered by North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust – combining clinical science with the latest developments in innovation and technology.

The two projects showcased at the Committee sit within the Trust's Combined Virtual Reality (CVR) programme: virtual reality delirium training and virtual reality service walkthroughs. Virtual reality delirium training was created to mark World Delirium Awareness Day 2022. The training is a film created for frontline staff such as those in A&E and on acute wards who may care for people with dementia but are not dementia specialists. Virtual walkthroughs were created to reduce the anxiety that patients and families can feel before attending a



mental health hospital, due to negative stereotypes far from the reality of modern, compassionate care environments.

Virtual reality delirium training can be found on the Trust YouTube channel, while virtual walkthroughs can be accessed through the Trust website.

3.2



### **Combined Healthcare celebrates excellence and achievement with the REACH Awards 2025**

The Trust's annual REACH (Recognising Excellence and Achievement at Combined Healthcare) Awards 2025 took place on 13 November to celebrate Combined's staff, service user representatives and carers, and recognise their achievements over the last year.

The awards recognise outstanding achievements in the following categories: Diversity and Inclusion Award, Leading with Compassion Award, Learner of the Year Award, Lived Experience Shining Star Award, Partnership Award, Proud to CARE Award, Research and Innovation Award, Rising Star Award, Service User and Carer Council Award, Team of the Year Award, Unsung Hero Award, and Chair's Award.

Highlights from this year's ceremony are now available on the Trust website and YouTube channel.

3.3



### **Combined Healthcare colleagues spotlight dementia care services in Stoke-on-Trent**

Combined Healthcare colleagues helped to spotlight Stoke-on-Trent's pioneering dementia care services, as the city received a special visit from representatives from Baroness Casey's Independent Commission on Adult Social Care in November.

Colleagues from the Trust joined representatives from Alzheimer's Society and Dougie Mac, at a special event led by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, to share information on a range of new services the organisations are delivering in partnership to support people with dementia in Stoke-on-Trent.

Dr Rebecca Chubb, Consultant Psychiatrist at North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust, showcased the Trust's dementia partnership working and pathways during the visit, which took place at Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Marrow House, in Longton – the home of the Trust's Eaves Memory Clinic.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

Once again, it has been a busy month at Combined, full of further examples of the initiatives and activities that continue to contribute to us being outstanding in all we do and how we do it.

