

Programme Communications Update

From: Emma Meekin, Programme Manager

Subject: Monthly Programme Update – December 2025

Profiling Tool Rollout Update

Training

- Professionals' training on the Knowing Me (formerly This Is Me) profiling tool has continued. 481 professionals have now been trained across 220 organisations, including 164 schools.
- All Wirral schools have now been trained on the Portsmouth-Cornwall version of the profiling tool, which makes Wirral the Place with the largest number of professionals trained. Wirral is preparing to deliver a transition session to move schools on to the new Cheshire and Merseyside version of the tool, Knowing Me, in January.
- Parent/carer awareness sessions were trialled in November to gather feedback on the content from people with lived experience. Since then, three sessions have been delivered in December with six attendees. Further planning is taking place to identify how best to provide information on the profiling tool for parents and carers across Cheshire and Merseyside to align with the awareness sessions.

Digital

- Work is taking place as swiftly as possible on the development of a Microsoft Form that can be used to capture the outputs of the profiling tool when completed by settings and teams. This will also mean that we can track progress of profiling tool rollout robustly across Cheshire and Merseyside.
- Planning continues to establish how best to develop a comprehensive digital tool to support all elements of profiling tool completion. This includes development of the support plan and access to effective early support after completion. This is likely to make progress in mid-2026.

Planning and Engagement

- Tarnia Woods from the Beyond programme has joined us to support two critical tasks:
 - Working with the nine programme Place Leads to ensure that robust profiling tool rollout plans are in place.
 - Completing the final steps in coordinating high-quality universal resources for professionals to share with children, young people and families when the Knowing Me profiling tool is completed. This is scheduled for completion in January. It has been a joint effort across all Places in Cheshire and

Merseyside and we thank all the leads who have contributed to this important document.

- Key leaders in Local Authority Children's Services, including Education, were invited to a lunchtime briefing session in December to discuss how they could work collaboratively to support the programme. This session went well, raising the profile of why working in partnership is so critical to the success of the CYP ND Programme. The ask was for each of the nine Local Authorities to nominate a strategic representative for our Oversight Group and an operational lead to connect to ND pathway implementation and ensure that the local ND working group has strong Local Authority engagement.

For any training, comms or co-production queries, please contact [Emma Meekin](#) or [Louise Sinclair](#).

Evaluation Update by CANDDID (the Centre for Autism Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Intellectual Disability)

- CANDDID has continued to work with Parent Carer Forum reps to finalise the co-production of the new Cheshire and Merseyside profiling tool. Together, they voted on a new name for the tool, Knowing Me, in November. This has now been approved and will be used in all Place communications going forward. The exception is Wirral, who will start using the new name in January once their schools have transitioned to the new tool.
- CANDDID has completed the update of the user guide for the Cheshire and Merseyside Knowing Me profiling tool. This will be published on the ICB CYP ND website in early January on a professionals' page.
- The CANDDID study team continues to reach out to the early adopter sites of Wirral and St Helens to learn from early experiences of using a profiling tool. Young people, families and practitioners are invited to complete surveys and participate in interviews to share their views and experiences. Active work is taking place to boost engagement and increase numbers of responses.
- We are always looking for people with lived experience to support the work of the CYP ND programme. To be involved in any of the forthcoming work of the Evaluation Team, as a professional or as someone with lived experience, please contact cwp.ndprofilestudy@nhs.net.

Group Updates

ND Pathway Oversight Group

Tony Kirk, Assistant Director for Early Help, Prevention and Effectiveness, Children's Services at Wirral Council, joined us as the new co-chair of the Pathway Oversight Group. Work is underway to map services and gaps across the 10 dimensions, strengthen communications, and clarify how the tool aligns with MDT models, with early adopter areas sharing learning. Wirral's ND Hub was highlighted as best practice, with members agreeing to promote this model across other Local Authorities.

Ongoing challenges include ND waiting times, short-term funding for key support services, and the need for integrated health and Local Authority commissioning, particularly considering upcoming SEND reforms. Challenges around the digital tool have also been discussed by the group, with an agreement to use a paper-based version in the short term while a secure and sustainable digital tool is developed.

Empowerment, Early Help and Ongoing Support Group (EEHOS)

Going forward, the EEHOS group has agreed to use one meeting a month to focus on the profiling tool rollout, and one meeting a month for early help support functions (comms, digital, resources, commissioning). This will support increased attendance from the Place leads to maintain consistency as the profiling tool rollout increases.

The group met for a joint session with the Clinical & Professional Reference Group in late November, where it was discussed that early data from Wirral shows 80% of completed profiles led to reasonable adjustments, while 30% required no further input. Ongoing evaluation, strengthened data collection, and deeper engagement with education settings remain high priorities to evidence impact, refine the tool, and support wider adoption across Cheshire and Merseyside.

Better communication with/between families, schools, GPs and specialist services has been identified as a high-priority need. Work is underway to develop clear, consistent and accessible materials that will be co-produced and coordinated across Places.

Clinical & Professional Reference Group (CPRG)

The CPRG has been focusing on how stratification is being implemented across services, sharing learning from Bridgewater's approach and discussing how tools can remain flexible and clinically led. Key priorities include ensuring providers have the time and resource needed to review cases properly, respecting the importance of professional judgement, and ensuring that prioritisation approaches are fair and consistent across the region.

The group is strengthening its approach to data, communication and evaluation. This will include clearer messaging for families, improved consistency in waiting time reporting, and continued collaboration with Greater Manchester to align outcomes and digital development where possible.

ND & Mental Health Interface Subgroup

The group has now reviewed survey findings from providers and families that identify ongoing barriers for neurodivergent children accessing mental health support. These include limited training and resources for adapted interventions, restrictive service criteria, and inconsistent reasonable adjustments. The survey highlighted the ongoing exclusion of neurodivergent children from some mental health services, the implications of current service specifications, and examples of more inclusive practice that demonstrate what is possible.

The group will now use the survey findings to drive improvement, shape discussions at the 2026 stakeholder event, and inform wider system conversations. There are plans to share findings at the Northwest ODN, Transforming Care Partnerships, and other relevant groups.

ADHD Shared Care Subgroup

A provider survey that includes questions about ADHD shared care is now being finalised and will be distributed to providers in early January. The survey aims to capture clear data on prescribing activity, caseloads and monitoring arrangements. The group is also reviewing best practice from other shared care models, including Sefton, Surrey Heartlands, and the Cheshire and Merseyside adult ADHD model.

A stronger primary care role supported by specialist GPs, as used in Sefton, is felt to be the most realistic and sustainable direction, although we recognise that implementation may need to be phased. A business case will now be produced, setting out a clear model, evidence of need, system variation and indicative costs to support future commissioning decisions.

Please contact [Louise Sinclair](#) if you would like to be part of any work discussed above.

Key Dates & Reminders

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| • 8 th January | ND & Mental Health Working Group |
| • 12 th January | Pathway Oversight Group |
| • 14 th January | Early Help, Empowerment & Ongoing Support Group –
Early Help Support Functions |
| • 29 th January | Early Help, Empowerment & Ongoing Support Group –
Profiling Tool Rollout |
| • 29 th January | Clinical & Professional Reference Group |

Feedback

We would like to hear how useful you find this and other programme communications. Please email louise.sinclair@alderhey.nhs.uk to share your feedback.