

Questions Raised – Sept 2025 ICB Board

Question Received - Board	By
It has been noted in the strategy documents online that there are no clearly identifiable individuals with responsibility for staff education, training and development – given the fit for the future NHS plan that specifically refers to the development of career pathways <i>what are your plans to ensure career development within the primary care sector for nursing and AHP staff?</i> Sub questions: • How will you engage with HEI's to support this? • What are your plans for growth and recruitment in relation to ACP's? • What plans do you have in place to support career development for nurses and AHP's within the primary care sector?	Eleanor Fenney Subject Head – Postgraduate Education, Advanced Practice and CPD. LJMU
Response	
As part of the ICB Blueprint – Primary Care Operations and Transformation, will be retained at a system level and transfer to neighbourhood health providers over time. Currently the Primary Care (General Practice) workforce support is delivered in close collaboration with the NHS England North West School for Primary Care & through our delivery partner C&M Primary Care Training Hub. This covers all professions from GPs, Nurses, AHPs, Pharmacy & wider clinical & non-clinical support workforce. Workforce planning for General Practice & PCNs is developed within each of the 9 C&M Places and reports to the System Primary Care How will you engage with HEI's to support this? - Continued engagement with NHS England North West – Director of Workforce Training & Education & Regional Professional Leads across Nursing, Midwifery & AHP Professions also close working with the NHS England NW Primary Care School – as the organisational changes for NHSE / the ICB persist into 2026. - NHSE Workforce, Training & Education Directorate colleagues will continue to meet with Deans of Health & Care/Medical Schools as part of its regional engagement & education commissioning processes (ETAP -Education, Training & Activity Programme). - Operationally, and linked to practice & placement engagement NHSE / ICB professional leads attend the North West Practice Education Group & C&M HEI Consortium to discuss current issues & opportunities for education/curriculum reform. What are your plans for growth and recruitment in relation to ACP's? - This is subject to individual NHS Provider Trust plans with support of the NHS England NW Advanced Practice Faculty – specifically for demand projections for new advance practice trainees. - Key principles include aligning ACP growth to service & system pressures particularly across UEC & children/neonatal pathways, frailty services and general practice. - C&M ICS has an active Advanced Clinical Practice Leads network – chaired by an AP in General Practice & supported by AP Lead – Ewan Armitage at the C&M Primary Care Training Hub	

- **To Note:** given the C&M Financial Recovery Programme – dedicated posts at a system level for APs / AHPs are no longer funded & the activity for delivering plans sits across networks & individual organisation portfolios

What plans do you have in place to support career development for nurses and AHP's within the primary care sector?

- This is subject to individual NHS Provider Trust plans with support of the NHS England NW Clinical Leads across Nursing & Midwifery and Allied Health Professions.
- C&M has an active Chief Allied Health Professions (AHP) network – which covers elements of workforce/career development for AHPs – including Primary Care & non-NHS providers.

Question Received	By
Regarding Workforce on p.34/35 paragraphs 29-31 'extended provider and system vacancy controls have been further strengthened in April 2025 including a recruitment freeze on non-clinical posts.' Given the trajectory of the WTE graph on p.34 – Question: - How will the reduction of staff be achieved without cutting frontline staff? E.g. UHLG alone is expected to make a reduction of 1,158 WTE staff of 15,000, equal to a 7.7% cut, which they describe as a significant reduction. - Doctors, nurses and midwives are reported in medical journals and the press to be finding difficulty in obtaining posts, what are the unfilled vacancies across the ICB in these areas? - Which Allied Health Professional staff are being recruited & where?	Lesley Mahmood
Response	
How will the reduction of staff be achieved without cutting frontline staff? E.g. UHLG alone is expected to make a reduction of 1,158 WTE staff of 15,000, equal to a 7.7% cut, which they describe as a significant reduction. • The 25/26 NHS Operating Planning Guidance - Published on 30th Jan 2025 - specifically required Trusts & ICBs to "live within our means, reducing waste and maximising productivity - with some key targets around reducing spend on temporary staffing and support functions' • Temporary staffing is a key area of focus as part of the system cost improvement plan across all providers for all staff groups in C&M. Efficiencies across 'support services' including HR/IT/Payroll/Finance teams were identified in productivity packs produced by NHSE - with a view to accelerating digital compatibilities, shared services or cost efficiencies from consolidation/renegotiation of current service contracts. • Following submissions of the 25/26 Annual NHS Operational Plans to NHS England, in April 2025 - NHS Cheshire & Merseyside was put into interventional measures & several of our Trusts are receiving dedicated support from Simon Worthington & PWC to review their 25/26 plans - including workforce forecasts to Mar-25. Doctors, nurses and midwives are reported in medical journals and the press to be finding difficulty in obtaining posts, what are the unfilled vacancies across the ICB in these areas? • As of 15th September 2025, there were 243 medical / clinical advertised vacancies across all 16 Trusts across C&M.	

- NHS England NW is supporting all Trust & Health and Care Providers through a N&M Posts Task & Finish Group to support recently / newly qualified clinicians secure jobs in the region - including roles in Primary Care & Social Care, with appropriate support & preceptorship opportunities.

Which Allied Health Professional staff are being recruited & where?

- As of 15th September 2025 - there were 75 AHP roles advertised on NHS Job at 15 out of 16 of the C&M Trusts. Predominantly at a Band 6 / 7 level (64.9%)
- NHSE North West & the ICB Financial Control & Oversight Group receive weekly updates on advertised vacancies from NHS Trusts (attached specific detail for AHPs in C&M)