



# Child Health and Wellbeing Network NENC Integration Pilot Seven Years On

## Journey of Integration

**As part of the largest Integrated Care System (ICS) nationally with the highest poverty levels outside of London and the highest growth rate of child poverty in the UK, the North East and North Cumbria Child Health and Wellbeing Network (CHWN) has needed to develop integrated models of care to benefit the large volume of disadvantaged children and young people across the region.**

Since being established in 2018, the Network has been on a journey of integration, connecting multi-disciplinary organisations working across the system of care, including primary and secondary healthcare, education, VCSE organisations and Local Authority teams, as well as children, young people and families. This included delivery of a four year Integration Centre Pilot. A review was conducted to assess to what degree integration had been achieved both across the network and the Integration Centre.

This work is contextualised within a period of great change; ICBs are being tasked to be 'pioneers of reform' and evolve into models of 'strategic commissioning'.



### **NENC CHWN Vision**

**"In the North East and North Cumbria we believe all children and young people should be given the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential, and be advantaged by organisations working together."**



# Achieving Integration

This rapid review of the NENC CHWN's journey of integration has provided evidence that great progress towards system-wide integration across the region has already been made.



## Integration Experiences

'I have had such a wonderful and unique experience working cross-sector with the CHWN; enabling me to connect to professionals and organisations who ordinarily we wouldn't come into contact with.'

Anon, Executive Headteacher.

This displays the high degree to which each of the 5 system-wide principles for integration have been met by network activities and outputs.



92%

Defining scope and goals together



100%

Building relationships and trust

89%



Use an improvement mindset



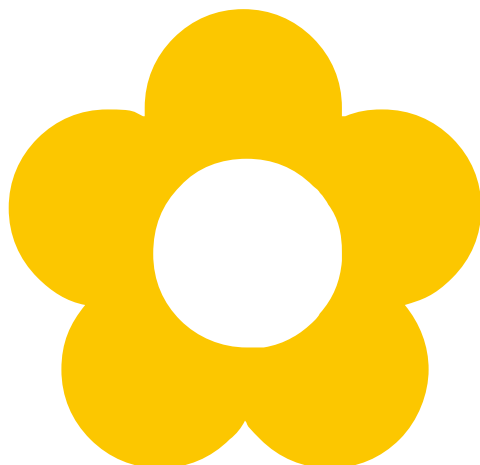
100%

Diverse expertise as an asset








85%

Developing shared system leadership



The review used the five system-wide principles for shared improvement approaches and integration (Q Community, 2024) to assess the degree of integration that had been achieved.

Principle	Definition
<b>1. Defining scope and goals together</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports sustainable improvement</li> <li>• Involves stakeholders from the whole system</li> <li>• Shared approaches for problem solving</li> <li>• Considers use of common language</li> <li>• Recognises operational and workforce challenges</li> </ul>
<b>2. Building relationships and trust</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underpins success of shared improvement approaches</li> <li>• Highlights value of connections outside the NHS</li> <li>• Supports those who have had less engagement in improvement</li> <li>• Enables collaboration between different individuals, teams, organisations and sectors</li> </ul>
<b>3. Diverse expertise as an asset</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every role has value and we are stronger together</li> <li>• Recognises improvement capability in system</li> <li>• Respects diverse experiences and ways of working</li> <li>• Supports more accessible, inclusive, practical and productive improvement work</li> </ul>
<b>4. Developing shared system leadership</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures improvement leaders at every level of the system</li> <li>• Progress requires collective ownership and leadership</li> <li>• Identifies different roles needed and who is most suitable to lead</li> <li>• Breaks down silos and frames shared problems</li> </ul>
<b>5. Use an improvement mindset</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear shared idea of what we want to achieve</li> <li>• Involves trying new things, learning from them, and making changes</li> <li>• Learning from what doesn't work as well as what does</li> <li>• Cultural as well as technical shift</li> <li>• Approach needs to adapt as context changes</li> </ul>



### Integration Experiences

Dr Ria Willoughby, Consultant Paediatrician, Deputy Medical Director at CDDFT.

**'A key element [of my integration experience] is the relationships it develops, the recognition and understanding of areas out with own personal experience or sector and the opportunities for generative conversations, that you can then contribute to and feed into other elements of work. It provides a more stimulating role and opens you up to the art of the possible to actually deliver better outcomes for our CYP.'**



# Key learning

High level learning identified in the review included:

- **Key Enablers and Barriers were identified across each of the 5 integration principles**
- **Multiple barriers to integration identified were associated to the context of great change**
- **The enablers identified in the Network's approach can be divided into 'relational' or 'operational'**
- **Relational enablers include values and principles that support connection with people**
- **Operational enablers include resources and activities that support efficiency**

Enablers and barriers to system-wide integration informed by the CHWN's Integration journey.

Barriers	Enablers	
	Relational	Operational
Professional capacity	Relationships and trust	Shared system leadership
Lack of time	Modelling	Data sharing
Lack of, siloed, and/or short-term funding	Commitment	Clear roles and responsibilities
Increasing clinical demands	Culture	Collaborative commissioning
Context of change	Equality and inclusivity	Communication and language
	Intention	Principles for integration



# Key learning (continued)

- The enablers for integration that exist within the CHWN may be leveraged to overcome system wide barriers (see table below)
- This is possible due to the embedded enablers within the network such as shared vision, shared goals and shared beliefs
- Integration is a vital enabler of strategic commissioning
- This rapid review of the NENC CHWN's journey of integration has provided evidence that great progress towards system-wide integration across the region has already been made

**CHWN enablers that may be leveraged to overcome system barriers to integration.**

System Barriers to Integration	Enablers for Integration
Context of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships and trust</li><li>• Modelling</li><li>• Clear communication and language</li><li>• Shared system governance and leadership</li><li>• Clear roles and responsibilities</li></ul>
Lack of time and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships and trust</li><li>• Modelling</li><li>• Clear communication and language</li><li>• Shared system governance and leadership</li></ul>
Funding challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships and trust</li><li>• Collaborative commissioning</li></ul>

The integration experiences and achievements of the CHWN, and the enablers that the Network hold to support integration, places the Network at the forefront of being able to support the transition to strategic commissioning, and to continue to facilitate shared improvement approaches and integration of services across the NENC region, to enable children and young people to flourish and reach their full potential.

# Top tips for achieving integration



**Top tip:** Nurturing relationships and trust can work to overcome the challenges of working in the context of change and uncertainty; an effective and functional collaborative relationship should serve to grow capacity and wellbeing through shared understanding, clear communication, clear roles and responsibilities and mutual respect.



**Top tip:** Modelling relational and operational infrastructures of integrated working will support knowledge transfer of 'how-to' as the network leads by example, as well as communicate the feasibility and efficacy of these systems – this will support uncertainty during the transitional phases of strategic commissioning.



**Top tip:** Frameworks such as the COM-B model of behaviour change (Michie et al., 2011) may help to explicitly audit or put into action, enablers for integrated working, exploring Capability for integration, Opportunities for integration, and people's Motivation for integration. Some examples how the CHWN can support capability, opportunity and motivation include:

- **Capability** – supporting colleagues to work across boundaries by consistently modelling collaborative working, ensuring clear communication and shared messaging about the expectations and goals of integration, providing clear named points of contact and clear roles and responsibilities that support connection between sectors etc.
- **Opportunity** – providing frequent and varied opportunity for people to work collaboratively and to engage with the network and other sectors, and to share learning.
- **Motivation** – maintaining feedback loops that share learning with network members and those outside the network, ensuring consistency in implementing cycles of learning and action so value from learning is realised, and using clear messaging about the values and impacts of collaborative working whilst tailoring these messages to different audiences.

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