

Health and Wellbeing Board

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Update on the development of a Neighbourhood Health Plan

Report from/author: David Whiting, Director of Public Health and
Abigail Kitt, Deputy Director, Neighbourhood Health
Transformation, ICB

Summary

This report provides an update for the Health and Wellbeing Board on the development of a neighbourhood health plan. A framework has been published recently that clarifies what is expected of Health and Wellbeing Boards in 2026/27 and how the Integrated Care Board (ICB), local authorities and other partners should work together to develop neighbourhood health plans.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to identify two or three key priorities for Medway.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. The NHS England (NHSE) [Neighbourhood Health Guidelines 2025/26](#) were published in January 2025. These guidelines provide strategic direction for integrated care boards and partners to shift care towards community-based, preventative models as part of the preparations for the 10-year health plan.
- 2.2. The NHS "[10-Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future](#)", published in July 2025, reinforced the role of Health and Wellbeing Boards in developing neighbourhood health plans, but did not provide details on the nature of the plans.
- 2.3. On 17 March 2026, the [Neighbourhood health framework](#) was published. The framework will be updated regularly to reflect learning from around the country.

3. Background

- 3.1. The development of neighbourhood health is happening within the context of the wider agenda of public sector reform, which is guided by three principles; to:
- integrate services so that they are organised around people's lives;
 - improve long-term outcomes for people through a focus on prevention, relying less on expensive crisis management;
 - devolve power to local areas, which understand the needs of their communities best, with services that are designed with and for people, in partnership with civil society and the impact economy.
- 3.2. The government's ambition for neighbourhood health is to build an integrated, multi-disciplinary service that:
- delivers more personalised care closer to where people live;
 - empowers people to lead healthier, more independent lives; and
 - offers genuine choice in how people access support.
- 3.3. Local authorities and ICBs are encouraged to consider how services can be reconfigured to focus more on prevention and early intervention.
- 3.4. The neighbourhood health framework asserts that similar proposals have been set out over the last 15 years and many other countries have moved to a similar way of working. However, over the last 10 years, the system has orientated more to hospitals, with significantly greater spend and investment in hospitals than in primary and community care. It is clear what needs happen, however, the challenge has been the ability of the system to make the change. The changes that come with neighbourhood health aim to provide the conditions to make the necessary change.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. A group of officers representing Medway Council, Kent County Council, the ICB and NHS service providers are developing a structure for the plan that takes into account the need to have a coherent approach across the whole of Kent and Medway and yet is able to be responsive to local needs.
- 4.2. The proposed structure of the plan is as follows:
- An overview of what Neighbourhood Health is, the strategic context from the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Integrated Care Strategy and what the NHS is required to do within the Neighbourhood Health Framework;
 - Priorities;
 - The clinical model for neighbourhood health that was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board earlier this year;
 - Learning from the pilot projects in Folkestone and Chatham Central will be used to illustrate how Neighbourhood Health can be delivered in practice;

- Indicators of success. The number will be deliberately small but will represent progress in key areas;
- Enablers and Governance.

4.3. A key action for Medway's Health and Wellbeing Board is to identify a small number of key priorities. The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy covers a broad range of priorities across a number of themes and work is being done across each of these themes. The development of the delivery of neighbourhood health will be incremental and in these early stages we need to identify two or three priorities that we want to focus on. We will develop a separate session to identify priorities and request that members of the health and wellbeing board begin to think about what the key priorities might be for Medway.

5. Risk management

5.1. Risk management is an integral part of good governance. The Council has a responsibility to identify and manage threats and risks to achieve its strategic objectives and enhance the value of services it provides to the community.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Failure to collaborate	Medway Council and the ICB fail to collaborate and produce a neighbourhood health plan via the Health and Wellbeing Board	Medway Council is represented on the Neighbourhood health programme board; The ICB is represented on the Health and Wellbeing board	C2

For risk rating, please refer to the following table:

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very likely	1 Catastrophic
B Likely	2 Major
C Unlikely	3 Moderate
D Rare	4 Minor

5.2. The accompanying report guidance provides assistance in completing this table.

6. Climate change implications

6.1. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the Integrated Care Strategy delivery plan document. There may, however, be potential benefits or costs arising from future commissioning or place-based service decisions that could have an impact on Medway.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Lead officer contact

David Whiting, Director of Public Health, Gun Wharf, 01634 332636 and david.whiting@medway.gov.uk

Appendices

None

Background papers

None