

Transition Programme Update

1. INTRODUCTION

NHS Kent and Medway is progressing through a major organisational transition to implement a new operating model from 1 July 2026. This update provides a high-level overview of progress and assurance that the transition is being managed safely, with no adverse impact on patient services. The programme remains on track and is being delivered within the national running cost allowance and in line with statutory requirements.

2. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The transition supports the ICB's ambition to become a more streamlined, resilient and strategically focused commissioning organisation. The new operating model strengthens our ability to plan services, use resources effectively, and work with partners across the Kent and Medway system.

3. PROGRAMME UPDATE: WORKFORCE TRANSITION

The ICB has completed consultation on its new organisational structure. Most colleagues have now been confirmed into roles, with recruitment under way to remaining vacancies. Support is in place for staff affected by change, and the programme remains on track for full implementation by July. This work has been carefully managed to ensure no impact on patient services and to maintain organisational stability during the transition.

4. PROGRAMME UPDATE: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE

Staff experience continues to be monitored closely. National survey results show improvement across several indicators, while recent pulse surveys reflect the uncertainty typically associated with large-scale change. Wellbeing indicators remain stable, and sickness absence is below target. These findings are overseen by the ICB's People Committee, and there is no evidence that the transition is adversely affecting service delivery or organisational resilience.

5. PROGRAMME UPDATE: MAJOR SERVICE TRANSFERS



Between March and April 2026, 195 staff transferred safely from the ICB to provider organisations as part of the transition to the new operating model. All transfers were completed with no disruption to services. Key changes include:

- **Cancer Alliance and Diagnostic Network Services** transferred to Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Foundation Trust on 1 April.
- **All Age Continuing Care and Medicines Optimisation** transferred to Kent Community Health Foundation Trust on 1 May.
- **Health and Care Partnership staff** transferred to Kent and Medway Mental Health Trust, with further redesign planned by providers.
- Planning continues for the transfer of **Specialised Mental Health and Section 117 services**, ensuring the most appropriate hosting arrangements are in place.

These changes support clearer accountability, stronger clinical leadership and improved alignment with provider-led service models.

6. PROGRAMME UPDATE: SHARED SERVICE MODELS

In response to the national closure of the Commissioning Support Unit (CSU), the ICB is developing shared service arrangements to maintain resilience and reduce duplication. Current priorities include:

- **Procurement** – planning for transfer of functions and development of a South East shared model.
- **Digital, Data and Technology** – joint service development with Surrey and Sussex ICB, including future hosting of GP IT services.

These arrangements are being designed to ensure continuity of business-critical functions and to support the ICB's reduced organisational footprint.

7. KEY RISKS, MITIGATIONS AND CONTROLS

Most major strategic risks have now been mitigated, including those relating to workforce reductions and service transfers. Remaining risks relate primarily to the safe implementation of shared service models including ensuring appropriate hosting arrangements for services previously supported by the CSU. These risks are being actively managed, with clear mitigation plans in place.

8. NEXT STEPS

Next steps for the programme include:

- **Complete workforce transition and recruitment** by June 2026.
- **Finalise transfers and shared service arrangements**, including procurement and digital/technology functions, to ensure continuity and resilience post-CSU closure.
- **Produce the formal Transition Closure Report**, capturing assurance, lessons learned and handover to business-as-usual governance.
- **Transition programme oversight to standard ICB governance from 1 July**, ensuring continued monitoring of risks, workforce stability and service continuity.