

# A great place to live, work and learn

Kent and Medway People Strategy 2023 to 2028



# Introduction

## We want Kent and Medway to be a great place to live, work and learn

That's the collective commitment and ambition of all our health and care employers and this strategy outlines the support we offer to our current and future colleagues.

Recent years have seen unprecedented pressures and change as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and our colleagues have worked tirelessly to support our communities – leading with care and compassion.

In this context, we want to empower our colleagues to drive the improvement, innovation and service transformation needed to support the health and wellbeing of our communities – now and in the future.

To do this, we need to:

- improve the health, wellbeing and experience of our colleagues
- develop a sustainable supply pipeline
- create an inclusive culture across our system to enable staff development through learning opportunities.

### About this strategy

**The world of work and healthcare is changing at a pace never before imagined.**

Existing ways of working, models of care and organisational boundaries are being transformed, as health and care adapts to the changing needs and expectations of our population.

There is growing evidence of a direct link between staff experience and wellbeing, and care quality and patient outcomes. This strategy describes our collective commitment across local health and care employers, to create the conditions for colleagues to thrive in this context.

This strategy is not an accumulation of individual organisational people strategies; rather the collective ambitions and strategic priorities which leaders across Kent and Medway will work on together.

# National context

## Evolving to meet a changing world

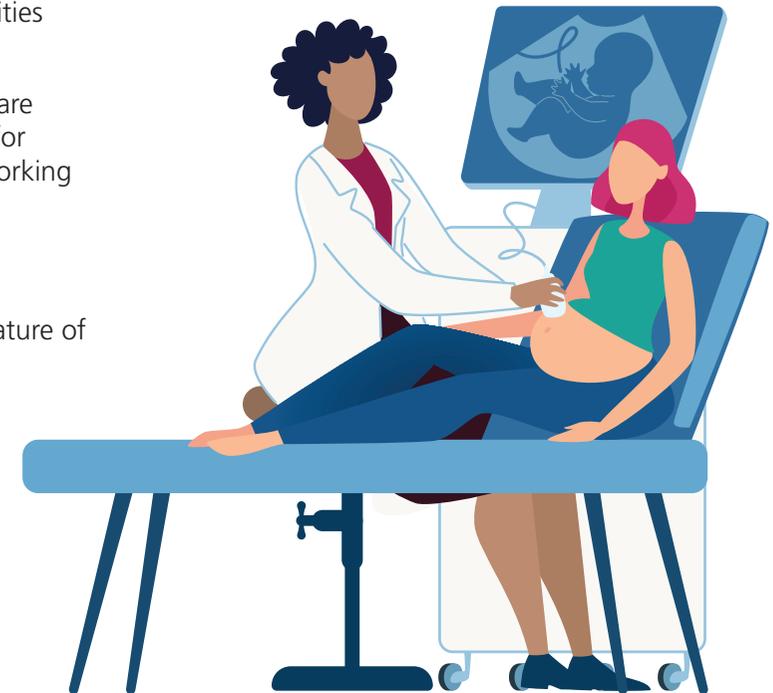
The need for change is set against a backdrop of rapid and widespread transformation across health and care services, especially in three key areas:

- **Integrated care:** The introduction of integrated care systems will drive collaboration and reduce competition, with more opportunities to scale up what works, sharing learning and resources.
- **The nature of healthcare:** The way healthcare is accessed and provided is changing, with new technologies advancing communication and interventions.
- **The nature of work:** The pandemic accelerated the move towards novel approaches to care and remote working. People want flexible arrangements that enable them to balance their job with other parts of their life and there is an increase in non-linear careers.

## The future of care

Our vision for the future of care covers four key areas:

- **Closer partnerships:** To support the growing number of people with long-term conditions, we can no longer view each patient contact as a single, unconnected episode of care.
- **A preventative approach to health:** To use population health management to better support people to stay well and reduce health inequalities across entire populations.
- **Personalised care:** The needs of the patient are likely to change, with more wanting support for self-care and prevention, which will require working across organisational and sector boundaries.
- **Technological and scientific innovation:** Improvements in artificial intelligence, digital technologies and genomics will change the nature of care and how it is delivered.



# Our ambition

## Integrated care strategy shared outcomes

### Our shared outcomes



Give children the best start in life and work to make sure they are not disadvantaged by where they live or their background, and are free from fear and discrimination.



Support people with multiple health conditions to be part of a team with health and care professionals.



Help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society to improve their physical and mental health; with a focus on the social determinants of health and preventing people becoming ill in the first place.



Ensure care is mostly available from a patient's nearest hospital; while, where appropriate, providing centres of excellence for specialist care.



Help people to manage their own health and wellbeing and be proactive partners in their care so they can live independent and fulfilling lives.



Make Kent and Medway a great place for our colleagues to live, work and learn.

### Our people ambition

We want:

- **our colleagues** to work together as one team regardless of organisation, to learn in their jobs, have fulfilling careers and reach their potential
- **our employers** to work together to attract, develop and retain health and care professionals, through talented, inclusive leadership and the offer of attractive, flexible and interesting careers
- **our communities and our carers** to be part of our wider workforce, have the skills and support to manage their own health and care with confidence and with the right support to achieve their health, social and wellbeing outcomes and goals
- **our partners** to be influential and important in delivering our strategy, whether that is education or business working together with us to meet our current and future collective needs and ambitions.

# Case for change

## Our population needs

As our population ages, demand for healthcare services is increasing and our workforce must adapt to support people to age well.

At the same time, we have increasing demand for mental health, maternity, urgent care, children and young people and social care services. Addressing health inequalities also requires us to adapt our service provision to local communities.

## Our employment opportunity

Youth unemployment (18 to 24-year-olds) across our region is above the national rate of 4.9 per cent, and as high as 9.4 per cent in Thanet. Health and social care is the second largest industry in Kent and Medway at 13.6 per cent of all employment.

As anchor organisations, we can work together to recruit more actively from underrepresented groups, including people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodiversity, veterans and carers.

## Our location

There are many great reasons to live, work and learn in Kent and Medway. There are plenty of sites of cultural interest, attractive beaches and countryside, areas of affordable housing, good schools and educational opportunities. By working together, we can maximise our employment offer, improve cross-organisational working and move away from competing for colleagues.



## New care models, innovation and collaboration

By working together and with digital tools, our workforce will provide better joined up care, with better outcomes. We are already embracing new ways of working, such as the use of telehealth technology in care homes, which enable GPs and other professionals to deliver care remotely.

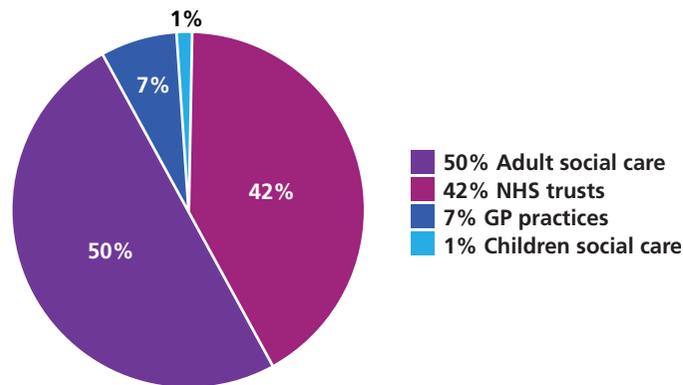
Another example is our Acute Response Team in Thanet, which works across organisational boundaries to provide holistic responses to acute needs in the community, helping people remain at home.



# Case for change

## Our workforce profile

We have a directly contracted workforce of around 90,000 people working across our health and social care services, supported by the broader voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.



## Health workforce

This diverse workforce covers around 350 different roles and is expanding and transforming to meet the increased demand and changing health and care needs of our population.

Please note these figures do not include community interest companies, voluntary sector and private organisations providing health and care services, or ambulance Trusts and primary care sector beyond those employed in general practice.

- **Trusts:** In March 2023, there were 31,709 whole time equivalent (wte) substantive roles in our NHS Trusts (4,543 wte in community, 23,847 wte in acute and 3,319 wte in mental health). There were 3,409 vacancies (9.71 per cent) and is highest for registered nurses (11.4 per cent). In January 2023, the average rolling 12 month turnover of staff was 14.2 per cent. In 2022/23, there was a £102.8m spend on agency staff.
- **General practice:** In December 2022, there were 5,071 wte colleagues employed in general practice, including 912 wte GPs, 533 wte nurses and 1,243 wte other health professionals providing direct patient care. Kent and Medway has less GPs per head of population than the national average.

In February 2023, workforce demographic across our Trusts was 60 per cent white and 28 per cent Black, Asian and minority ethnic (12 per cent unknown); 19.4 per cent were over 55 years old and five per cent of NHS staff declared a disability or long-term condition.



# Case for change

## Our workforce context

### Health and wellbeing of our workforce



**4.5%**

sickness rate in the NHS for Kent and Medway (February 2023)

After the sustained efforts in responding to the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis, staff sickness rates remain higher than pre-pandemic levels.

A range of offers have been put in place to support colleagues, but it remains a priority to ensure that recovery of our colleagues and their health and wellbeing is at the heart of all our plans.

### Recruitment and retention

Recruitment and retention challenges exist across many areas of Kent and Medway. To follow are the average rates for the region as a whole:



**11.4%**

vacancy rate within the nursing and midwifery workforce



**9.7%**

vacancy rate in the NHS



**14.2%**

staff turnover in the NHS

Similar pressures are being felt in many other areas across the health and care system, particularly in social care, primary care and the ambulance service.



# Our workforce risks and opportunities

## Risks

- Shortages of key workforce due to national and local shortages risks our ability to deliver health and care. This is particularly acute across our GPs, paramedics, nursing and midwives, and specialist medical roles.
- A limited student and trainee pipeline to grow our local workforce risks our ability to retain our existing workforce. The experience of placements for our students and trainees is critical in influencing whether they will stay within Kent and Medway.
- While the richness of diversity and experience that international recruits bring to our workforce is valued, there are ethical considerations to balance around international workforce mobility.

## Opportunities

- To work with our partners in education to redesign educational pathways, thereby improving the experience of our students and trainees, and growing our local workforce.
- To work with partners and our communities to improve employment opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- To work across our system to redesign our workforce model, creating cross organisational integrated care teams.
- To use digital tools and technologies to improve ways of working and free up the valuable time of our colleagues; improving decision making and care delivery outcomes.



# Fit with national policy and strategy

Kent and Medway is developing its People Strategy at a time when the national focus on supporting and developing staff is greater than ever before.

## Building strong ICSs everywhere: the system people function

Building strong Integrated Care Systems everywhere: guidance on the ICS people function, sets out the 10 outcome-based functions for ICBs to deliver with their partners. These are:

1. supporting the health and wellbeing of all staff
2. growing the workforce for the future
3. supporting inclusion and belonging for all
4. valuing and supporting leadership at all levels, and lifelong learning
5. leading workforce transformation and new ways of working
6. educating, training and developing people, and managing talent
7. driving and supporting broader social and economic development
8. transforming people services and supporting the people profession
9. leading coordinated workforce planning using analysis and intelligence
10. supporting system design and development

## HEE Framework 15

Framework 15 recognises that traditional approaches to planning will not produce a workforce fit for the future needs of our patients. Instead, it focuses on the skills, values and behaviours our colleagues need to deliver holistic care – informed by global and national drivers of change. Our future workforce will:

1. include the informal support that helps people prevent ill health and manage their own care
2. have the skills required to provide co-productive and traditional models of care
3. have adaptable skills, responsive to evidence and innovation to enable 'whole person' care, with specialisation driven by patient rather than professional needs
4. have the skills, values, behaviours and support to provide safe, high-quality care wherever and whenever the patient is, at all times and in all settings
5. deliver the NHS Constitution: be able to bring the highest levels of knowledge and skill at times of basic human need when care and compassion are what matters most

## NHS Long Term Workforce Plan and NHS People Promise

Building on the NHS People Plan, the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan describes the set of priority areas the NHS will focus on to ensure it has the workforce it needs for the future. These areas are:

1. train – through growing the workforce by expanding domestic education, training and recruitment
2. retain – through ensuring fewer staff leave the NHS by improving culture, leadership, and wellbeing
3. reform – through working differently by harnessing digital innovations, utilising new roles and improving learner experience.

The NHS People Promise details what we should all be able to say about working in the NHS by 2024. The promise requests a pledge from all colleagues, line managers, employers and central bodies to work together on the below themes.



# Our people pillars on a page

Making Kent and Medway a great place to live, work and learn



Enabled by:

system leadership, collaboration and partnership working

system workforce planning and intelligence

high-performing and future-focused people services

digital and technology innovation

# Our People Strategy on a page

## Growing our workforce and skills

- Expand and diversify education opportunities for colleagues and students, including increasing placement capacity for clinical and medical students.
- Create employment programmes to address long term and youth unemployment, increase employment opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities and neurodiversity, carers, our armed forces community, and widen participation from underrepresented groups.
- Provide opportunities for skills development for colleagues to better support those with complex needs, working in integrated ways, enabled by digital technology.
- Develop system leaders for the future through talent management.
- Create a holistic system employment proposition, including a Kent and Medway Nurse Model.
- Drive innovation and digital transformation with research partners.

## Building 'one workforce' at place

- Grow routes into health and care and maximise our use of apprenticeships.
- Create place based workforce plans to address local population needs through new models of care.
- Create integrated care neighbourhood teams, with supporting team based organisational development and leadership development.
- Promote local employment and careers including more local volunteer opportunities.
- Work in partnership with colleagues and volunteers to shape and improve services.
- Increase opportunities for shared roles and place based learning opportunities, working across our local authorities and wider social and third sector partners.
- Support new models of care through role redesign, new roles and transformation - with a focus on enabling holistic community-based care through roles such as physician associates in primary care, care co-ordinators and pathway navigators.
- Enable seamless rotation and movement across the system and standardisation where possible. This will include local workforce sharing agreements and digital passporting solutions.

## Looking after our people

- Develop a one wellbeing approach, and improve access for our wider health and care workforce.
- Identify health and wellbeing interventions that address inequalities and reflect population need within our own health and care workforce.
- Promote our collective commitment to zero violence, bullying, aggression, discrimination and abuse against health and care workforce.
- Implement listening approaches which best engage our colleagues and ensure continuous feedback.
- Promote our collective cost of living and benefits of working within Kent and Medway.
- Identify further areas to support colleagues in the workplace who have caring responsibilities.
- Implement local and system wide retention programmes including promoting generational needs and interventions evidenced from colleague feedback.
- Enhance opportunities for colleagues to work flexibly at all stages of life.
- Implement a one stop shop for support to internationally recruited colleagues across the system.

## Using our teams efficiently and reducing high agency costs

- Temporary staffing and workforce efficiency plan in place to deliver workforce productivity.
- Identify our hard to fill roles across the system and target recruitment at these collectively through innovative resourcing practices.
- Advance levels of attainment programme to review e-rostering and e-job planning for expansion to support reduction in temporary staffing and enhance clinical productivity (working with digital, finance and operational colleagues).
- Explore opportunities to collaborate on temporary staffing across health and social care, building on Trust, primary care and social care bank arrangements.
- Develop a long-term workforce model to right size the health and care workforce for now and for the future.
- Build stronger insights and analytical capabilities to support new ways of working through digital transformation and intelligence.
- Drive the automation of onboarding and other HR processes collaboratively, using digital technologies which also improve colleague experience and release time for direct patient care.

## Championing inclusive teams

- Develop a Kent and Medway equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy and underpinning plan with system Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), Workforce Disability Standard (WDES), Medical WRES, gender pay actions.
- Deliver a Kent and Medway talent development programme, focused on colleagues where intervention is needed to progress, starting with the Band 5 nurses pilot.
- Deliver a Kent and Medway mentoring programme to support colleagues with protected characteristics (reciprocal and reverse mentoring).
- Deliver a de-biasing recruitment programme to systematically de-bias recruitment processes.
- Develop cultural intelligence through the rollout of the Cultural Intelligence Development Programme to improve diversity in leadership, culture and behaviours.
- Embed a just learning culture in all organisations.
- Empower our EDI and staff networks to identify collaborative opportunities, including a shared calendar of cultural events, such as PRIDE, black history month, disability month etc.

# People Strategy commitments

## Growing our workforce and skills

### **Our ambition: To grow and develop our workforce**

We will develop our Kent and Medway Health and Care Academy to create a robust pipeline of local workforce, maximise the use of apprenticeships and support new ways of working, such as cross-organisational portfolio roles.

Organisations will work together to attract and retain professionals, through the provision of exciting and diverse careers and training opportunities. This will also include leadership and management development so we invest in a pipeline of leaders for the future.

### **Our commitments:**

- Employment programmes for individuals with learning disabilities and neurodiversity, carers, our armed forces community and other underrepresented groups.
- Skills development programme, including digital skills, leadership and management and supporting patients and citizens with complex needs.
- Explore opportunities for role and team redesign.

- Shared career frameworks and develop a Kent and Medway employee proposition.
- Expansion of placements and improving learner experience.

### **Our measures of success:**

- Delivery of year one staff in post workforce growth.
- Delivery plans in place for agreed shortage areas.
- Delivery of growth trajectory, including need for placements, with less reliance on international recruitment.
- Increased attraction into health and care from education and local communities.
- Increase in employment placements from underrepresented groups.
- Implement Kent and Medway nurse model.

## Case study



### **Launch of our Health and Care Academy**

In May 2023, we launched Kent and Medway Health and Care Academy at our Health and Care Conference. The academy is a partnership of organisations aimed at supporting people who are looking for careers in health and social care. It provides jobs advice, career guidance and development, apprenticeships as, well as opportunities to gain management, specialist and leadership training.

The conference saw 150 participants across our system come together with education partners to promote partnership working. Delegates tested new technologies such as virtual classrooms, which will transform the experience of learning. We also considered issues, such as how to maximise apprenticeships within the system, our priority areas for careers and education engagement, and the future skills requirements for health and care.

# People Strategy commitments

## Building 'one workforce' at place

### Our ambition: To enable our colleagues to work differently

We will create place-based workforce plans and work with our anchor institutions to create integrated neighbourhood teams which are enabled through digital technology and capabilities.

We will develop and implement new roles and ways of working to support new models of person-centred care. And we will ensure mobility for colleagues to work across the system and enable portfolio and cross-sector working, supported by workforce sharing measures.

### Our commitments:

- Create integrated care neighbourhood teams, with supporting team based organisational and leadership development.
- Create place-based workforce plans to support new models of care and address local population needs.
- Promote local employment and careers, including expanding local volunteering opportunities.
- Increase opportunities for shared roles and place-based learning opportunities.

- Support new models of care through role redesign, new roles and transformation.
- Refresh workforce sharing agreements and digital passporting solutions to enable movement across the system.
- Maximise routes into health and care with a focus on apprenticeships

### Our measures of success:

- Place-based development plans delivered.
- Increase in voluntary sector and volunteer workforce working as part of integrated care teams at place.
- Place-based workforce sharing agreements in place enabled by digital infrastructure and new ways of working.
- An increase in shared roles and place based learning and development.
- Infrastructure to maximise levy spend across organisations in place.

## Case study



### Youth volunteer programme established

We have set up a youth volunteer programme, which offers placements with rotations in different departments across three acute hospitals in east Kent. The aim is to give young people exposure and experience of working in an NHS organisation. Individuals do the National Volunteer Certificate and receive careers-related support from the trust's Apprenticeships Team. Since the launch in March 2023, more than 25 youth volunteers have been recruited and inducted at the three hospitals. Local teams have already told us that volunteers are really making a difference and we've received lots of positive feedback from patients on wards.

# People Strategy commitments

## Looking after our people

### **Our ambition: To support and look after our workforce**

Wherever you work in health and care in Kent and Medway, we want it to be a great place to work and learn. We will develop wrap-around wellbeing services for our workforce. These will support those with illnesses as well as empowering colleagues to proactively manage their wellbeing. We will identify specific interventions that align with our population health priorities, particularly with colleagues who are experiencing health inequalities.

### **Our commitments:**

- Develop a one wellbeing approach, and improve access for our wider health and care workforce.
- Identify health and wellbeing interventions that address inequalities and reflect population need.
- Promote our collective commitment to zero violence, aggression, discrimination and abuse against our workforce.
- Implement listening approaches which best engage our colleagues and ensure continuous feedback.
- Promote our collective benefits of working within Kent and Medway.

- Identify support for colleagues who have caring responsibilities.
- Implement local and system wide retention including promoting generational needs and interventions.
- Enhance opportunities to work flexibly at all stages of life.
- Implement a one stop shop for support to internationally recruited colleagues across the system.

### **Our measures of success:**

- Targeted interventions evaluated to show they address inequalities.
- Reduction in sickness absence.
- Reduction in turnover.
- Reduction in violence, discrimination, harassment and abuse of colleagues.

## Case study



### **Flexible working**

We recognise the impact flexible working can have on our colleague's work-life balance and achieving a positive staff experience. Building on 'Our Flexible Working Commitment' we created in 2022, local employers partnered with Timewise, flexible working experts, to deliver training masterclasses to colleagues across our health and care providers in 2023.

Representatives from our system worked collaboratively to design bespoke masterclasses for our HR colleagues and line managers, to develop understanding of different types of flexible working, including 'hard to flex roles' and hybrid job-design, supporting the overall delivery of the flexible working domain of Our People Promise.

As an outcome of those attending masterclasses, colleagues committed to having proactive flexible working conversations with their teams and a solutions-focused approach to flexible working requests, including considering the different flexible working options when advertising roles.

# People Strategy commitments

Using our teams efficiently and reducing agency costs

## Our ambition: To reduce our reliance on agency and improve workforce productivity

We will build a long term workforce model at system and place to ensure we have the right number of people, in the right place, with the right skills. We will work together to ensure that we reduce our reliance on temporary staffing, drive down agency cost, and improve the productivity of our teams.

## Our commitments:

- Temporary staffing and workforce efficiency plan to improve productivity.
- Identify our hard to fill roles across the system and target recruitment at these collectively through innovative practices.
- Advance levels of attainment programme to review e-rostering and e-job planning for expansion.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate on temporary staffing, building on existing bank arrangements.
- Develop a long term workforce model.

- Build stronger insights and analytical capabilities to support new ways of working through digital transformation.
- Drive the automation of onboarding and other digital processes.

## Our measures of success:

- Reduced reliance on temporary staffing and reduction of agency spend as a proportion of overall pay bill.
- Improved productivity of current workforce including rostering efficiency and job planning attainment.
- Improved use of automation and artificial intelligence.

## Case study



## Gillingham South Primary Care Network (PCN) – Triage improvement process

Gillingham South is a PCN in Kent and Medway ICS with a 40,000 patient population and six practices, including a disproportionate number of smaller practices with three single hander GPs and one double hander GP practice.

- This was an ELITE Quality Improvement project using the digital tool, APEX GP Business Intelligence, across the PCN to measure demand and capacity, which culminated in standardising triage procedures across the PCN. 2.6 per cent of GP capacity was released, giving time back to practice appointments. There are now in total 2.6 per cent more 'unavoidable' appointments available to their population (access has been improved), equivalent to an annual saving of circa £40,000.
- Data from EMIS clinical system was used. A template was used to allow GPs to audit appointments for whether they were avoidable.

# People Strategy commitments

## Championing inclusive teams

### **Our ambition: To create inclusive cultures and teams**

We will work with all our partner organisations to embed cultures that promote civility, respect and inclusion. We will provide shared talent and development opportunities for leaders and teams, grow and celebrate our diversity and be representative of our communities. We will systematically address bias, empower and develop our colleagues from underrepresented groups and celebrate diversity at all times.

### **Our commitments:**

- Develop an equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy and underpinning delivery plan.
- Deliver a talent development programme, focused on colleagues where intervention is needed to progress.
- Deliver a mentoring programme to support colleagues with protected characteristics (reciprocal and reverse mentoring).
- Deliver a programme to systematically de-bias recruitment processes.

- Develop the cultural intelligence development programme to improve diversity in leadership, culture and behaviours.
- Embed a learning culture.
- Empower our EDI and Staff Networks to identify collaborative opportunities, including a shared calendar of cultural events.

### **Our measures of success:**

- System talent development plans delivered to improve diversity of our talent.
- Improvements in Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES), Medical Workforce Race Equality Standard (MWRES) Workforce Disability Equality Standard metrics (WDES) and gender pay gap.
- Improvement in staff survey experience metrics across organisations, including levelling up of organisations.
- Measures devised to capture wider health and care.

## Case study



### **Aspiring Development Programme for staff with protected characteristics**

To improve progression opportunities for staff with protected characteristics, our NHS trusts have partnered with experiential learning specialists to design and deliver a collaborative Aspiring Development Programme for nurses from diverse backgrounds. Since March 2023 the programme has been attended by over 180 nurses, with 73 per cent of participants identifying as either non-white and/or non-British. The programme has received excellent feedback from both individuals and participating organisations.

Find out more at: [dgt.nhs.uk/working-for-us/km-development-programme](https://dgt.nhs.uk/working-for-us/km-development-programme)

# Our enablers

## Governance

This strategy will be overseen by the Chief People Officer Group and will report into the ICB People Committee.

This strategy is supported by an underpinning delivery plan, which focuses on years one and two, and links into the workforce chapter of the Joint Forward Plan for Kent and Medway.

## System leadership, collaboration and partnership working:

To deliver this strategy and support integrated ways of working, we require a mindset shift of all partners away from competition to collaboration and a change in our ways of working and delivery through partnership working. The chief people officers will support system development by creating leadership development opportunities, skills and development to support system leaders.

## System workforce planning and intelligence

To inform the delivery of this strategy and the people interventions, we will build on and improve our shared workforce intelligence and develop place based and system workforce modelling, to enable and support medium to long term workforce planning needs and supply.

## Digitally enabled

We will work with digital experts to maximise the skills of colleagues to use tools and technologies to improve ways of working, freeing up valuable time and enabling cross organisational working that improves care delivery outcomes.

## High-performing and future-focused people services

Meeting the challenges ahead will mean changing the way people professionals and managers across Kent and Medway support our colleagues.

Building on the ambition of the NHS future of human resources and organisational development, the chief people officers will work together to develop our people services to be future focused with more opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practice.

