



**Hertfordshire and
West Essex Integrated
Care Partnership**

The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Strategy



**Working together
for a healthier future**



Welcome

This strategy has been agreed by the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership – a group of organisations involved with, and responsible for, improving the health, care, and wellbeing of the 1.6 million people who live and work in our area.

It sets out the ways in which the organisations in the partnership will work together to ensure that we can all live, work and play in healthy and safe communities where everyone has the opportunities and the support they need to thrive.

We hope you find this useful and interesting. There are details of how you can find out more and get involved later in this booklet.



Councillor Richard Roberts, Leader of Hertfordshire County Council, Chair of Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership



Right Honourable Paul Burstow, Independent Chair of Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board, and Vice Chair of Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership



Councillor John Spence, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Essex County Council

Introduction

Each person's health and wellbeing is shaped by their childhood experiences, the home and environment they grow up in, their education and employment opportunities and the health conditions they are born with, or go on to develop.

Caring for our residents' wellbeing and supporting those who face the biggest challenges to living healthy, independent lives, is at the heart of this ten-year strategy.

The six priorities in this strategy have been developed by listening to the views and experiences of our residents and the people who work to support them. We have looked at the information which shows where needs are greatest and focused on the areas where we can make the biggest positive impact together.

The priorities are:

- **Give every child the best start in life**
- **Support our communities and places to be healthy and sustainable**
- **Support our residents to maintain healthy lifestyles**
- **Enable our residents to age well and support people living with dementia**
- **Improve support for people living with life-long conditions, long-term health conditions, physical disabilities, and their families**
- **Improve our residents' mental health and outcomes for those with learning disabilities and autism**



Underpinning these are a set of guiding principles:

- plan and deliver services in a joined-up way
- help people to stay healthy and well
- act quickly when they need help or support
- tackle the inequalities which lead to physical or mental ill health
- involve the people who use services in designing them



This strategy will be updated and reviewed regularly. You can give your views on what you have read here by emailing hweicbenh.engagement@nhs.net

To follow the progress of our work to deliver the priorities in this strategy, to find out more or to get involved, go to <https://hertsandwestessexics.org.uk>



Priority 1: Give every child the best start in life

We will ensure that children in Hertfordshire and west Essex have the best opportunity to be safe and well and to reach their potential at school and beyond.

Why this matters

Children brought up in families and communities where they are supported and nurtured have the best opportunity of enjoying happy childhoods and fulfilling adult lives.

When a child is disadvantaged, this can have a lasting impact on their health and wellbeing, and on the health and wellbeing of future generations too.

There are many reasons why some children don't have the best start in life. Living with a special educational need or disability can make life very tough for children and their families. Growing up in poverty, in the care of a local authority, or in a household where adults are struggling or find it hard to put their child's interests first, can also have a huge impact.

Some very young children have already fallen a long way behind by the time they start school, and the number of children and young people who need specialist mental health help is increasing.

We will:

- Offer families and children support as soon as they need it, with public and voluntary sector organisations working together effectively to help with any problems as soon as they arise.
- Help every child to be ready to start school, by making early learning opportunities open to all.
- Give children with special educational needs and disabilities, and their families, the help they need without waiting for formal assessments to be completed.
- Keep children safe from abuse and neglect, by linking all of the organisations that are involved in working with them, their families and neighbourhoods.
- Extend the local support available to children, young people and their families by turning our family centres for 0-5 year olds into family hubs. Family hubs will support families with children aged up to 19 years old, or up to 25 years old if they have a special educational need or disability.
- Focus on improving children's emotional and mental health and wellbeing by making support easily available to them and their parents and carers, including in schools and community settings.



“When a child is disadvantaged, this can have a lasting impact on their health and wellbeing”



Priority 2: Support our communities and places to be healthy and sustainable

We will work with people in Hertfordshire and west Essex to help make their communities safe and healthy places to live, reducing the gap in health and life expectancy between our healthiest and least healthy residents.

Why this matters

Poor quality and overcrowded housing is harmful to people's health. Children who live in cold homes are twice as likely to suffer from breathing difficulties as children living in warm homes. Adults' and children's mental health also suffers when their homes are not warm and comfortable.

Outside the home, air quality has a big impact on health too, with air pollution causing heart disease, lung cancer and asthma. Being able to get out and about easily into good quality green spaces improves people's physical and mental health.

There are big differences in health between the most and least healthy people in our area, and these differences are directly related to poverty and where you live. Residents of the most deprived areas of Hertfordshire and west Essex spend up to 18 more years of their lives in poor health than those who live in better off areas. We want to reduce the health gap between our residents.

“Residents of the most deprived areas of Hertfordshire and west Essex spend up to 18 more years of their lives in poor health than those who live in better off areas”



We will:

- Work to get more homes built that people can afford, and make sure that all homes in the social and private rented sector meet decent standards.
- Support people to get into and remain in work – particularly people with disabilities or health conditions, and those living in our most deprived communities.
- Create healthy streets and develop more green spaces, making it easier and safer for people to walk or cycle, with better access to good, reliable public transport.
- Work with local people to develop ways that people of all ages can get actively involved and connected with their communities.
- Put in place extra support in the areas and communities where we know that people face the biggest health challenges. This will include extra maternity care, increasing the number of annual health checks for people with severe mental illnesses, increase the take-up of vaccinations, diagnosing cancer earlier and finding and treating people with high blood pressure.



Priority 3: Support our residents to maintain healthy lifestyles

We will support people in west Essex and Hertfordshire to be physically active, eat healthily, maintain a healthy weight and provide support and advice to prevent tobacco, alcohol and substance misuse.

Why this matters

Eating well, being a healthy weight and staying physically active are essential for good health and preventing disease.

If you have a poor diet and are not physically active you are much more likely to become unwell and suffer from serious illnesses, such

as strokes, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

In our area, on average 62% of adults are overweight, although the number of overweight people varies a lot between district council areas. The number of children who are overweight or obese is also worrying, and childhood obesity is particularly an issue in poorer communities.

Smoking and drinking alcohol can dramatically increase a person's risk of premature death and are among the main causes of serious ill-health. The use and availability of illegal drugs is also linked to poor health and outcomes for adults and young people.



We will:

- Provide residents with more and better opportunities to be physically active, making sure that services meet people's needs.
- Look at how to make leisure centres and exercise classes more affordable.
- Offer new and better stop-smoking services for: pregnant women and their partners; people admitted to hospital; long-term users of mental health services; and adults with learning disabilities.
- Improve care for people who have mental health issues and drug or alcohol problems.
- Support people on low incomes to have better access to healthy and affordable food and provide information and advice to children and young people about maintaining a healthy weight.
- Make sure that people have good access to information and advice about how to avoid the harm caused by alcohol, smoking, gambling and drugs.



Priority 4: Enable our residents to age well and support people living with dementia

We will ensure that residents in west Essex and Hertfordshire can age healthily and get advice and support to help them live well and independently for as long as possible.

Why this matters

A growing proportion of the population of Hertfordshire and west Essex are aged over 65, with one in five people in our area expected to be over 65 years old by 2043.

Older people are at risk of being hospitalised due to illnesses and conditions which could have been prevented by proactive care and

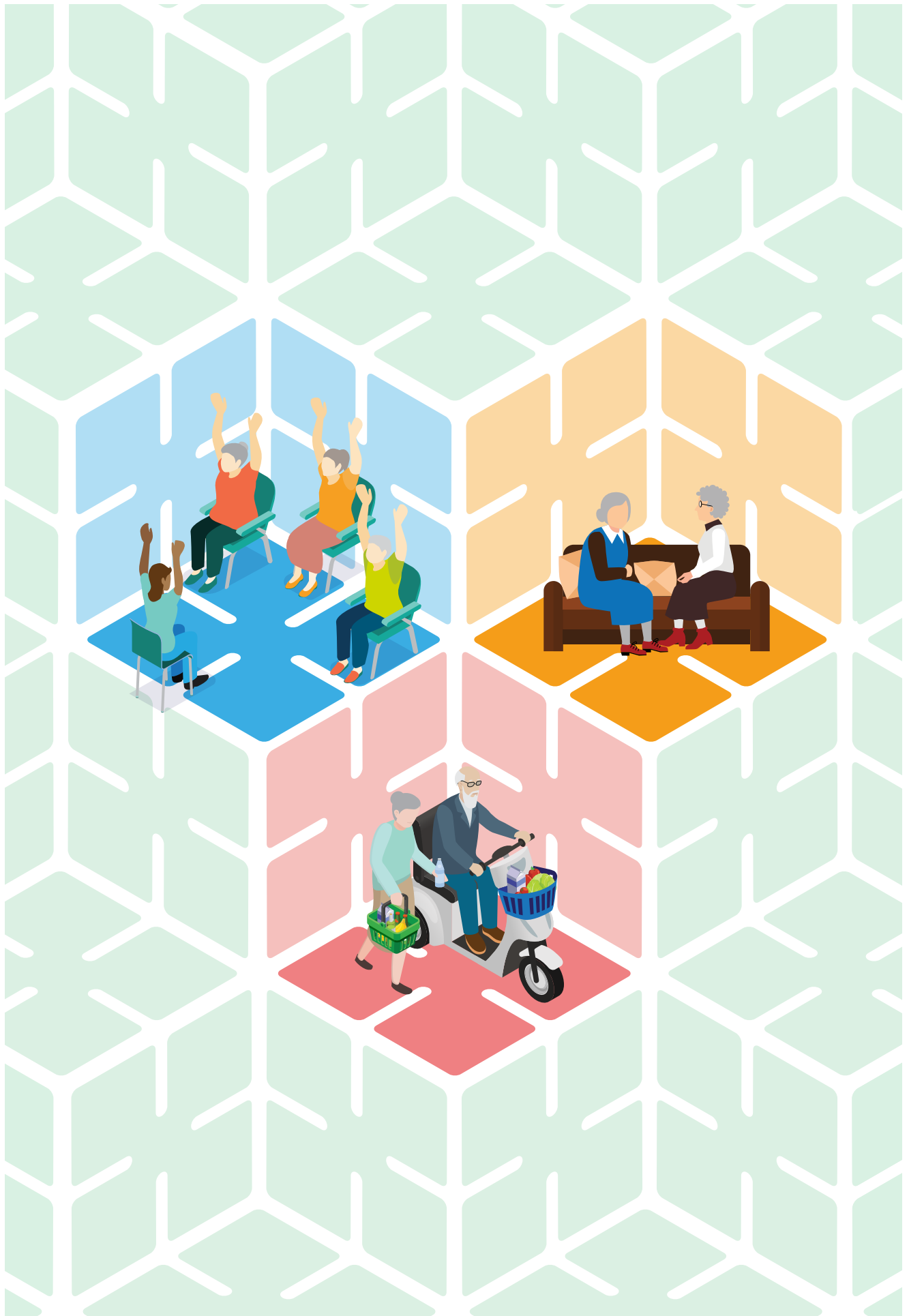
better use of community-based health services. 20-30% of the hospital admissions for over 85s could be avoided with better care for people who are becoming frail or unwell. Long-term conditions, falls and loneliness can all have an impact on people's quality of life as they age.

Dementia is more common as people grow older and around one in three people aged 85 or more are estimated to have the disease. The NHS and social care services spend more money looking after people with dementia than they do on caring for people with cancer and heart disease. Looking after a loved one with dementia can be very challenging for friend or family carers and it can be difficult to find the right support.

We will:

- Promote the take-up of NHS health checks for people aged between 40 and 74 to help reduce their risks of developing diseases such as cancer, stroke and dementia.
- Support people to stay active and reduce loneliness by connecting them with advice, activities and support in their local communities.
- Train the health and social care workforce to have a better understanding of dementia.
- Build more extra care housing so that people can live independently for longer.
- Ensure that buildings, public spaces, transport, and local services are accessible to older people and those with dementia.
- Improve support for carers who look after family members or friends.
- Make it easier for older people to be discharged from hospital with the care they need.





Priority 5: Improve support for people living with life-long conditions, long-term health conditions, physical disabilities, and their families

We will support people living with life-long conditions, long-term health conditions, physical disabilities, and their families, so that they can take more control of their health and have a good quality of life.

Why this matters

Around one in seventeen people in our area are affected by a life-long health condition that they are born with, like cystic fibrosis or Huntington's disease. More than a quarter of our residents are believed to be living with at least one long-term health condition, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a lung condition which causes them to have breathing

difficulties. Living with a life-long or long-term health condition puts people at a much higher risk of having mental health problems too.

Poorer people in Hertfordshire and west Essex are much more likely to have long-term health conditions which could have been avoided. These conditions can lead to them being admitted to hospital for emergency treatment.

Around 14% of people in Hertfordshire and west Essex have physical disabilities which limit their ability to carry out normal daily activities, and 6% of adults have serious physical disabilities. Services to support people with long-term conditions and disabilities are not always joined up, and don't always take into account all the needs that a person might have or the challenges they face.



We will:

- Support and empower people with life-long and long-term health conditions along with those with disabilities and their carers to live healthily and independently, with joined-up care and more control over the care they receive.
- Reduce the likelihood of people developing long-term conditions by helping them to reduce their risk factors, and improving the detection, diagnosis, and early help available to them.
- Support people with physical disabilities and neurological conditions to improve their physical health.
- Increase the number of residents who receive NHS health checks, particularly for those with severe mental illnesses, learning disabilities and those who are frail.
- Ensure women's health and wellbeing is prioritised through the menopause with the treatment and support they need. This will reduce their risk of developing dementia, hip fractures and cardiovascular disease in later years.



Priority 6: Improve our residents' mental health and outcomes for those with learning disabilities and autism

We will provide early help to people in Hertfordshire and west Essex to help prevent mental illness and support the health and wellbeing of people with a severe mental illness, learning disability or autism.

Why this matters

People who are affected by poor mental health are much more likely to face struggles in other areas of their lives. Children's friendships, families, and their performance at school are affected if they have mental health difficulties. Adults who are mentally unwell are more likely to smoke, drink and use drugs, to live in poverty and to find it difficult to find and keep jobs. We know that mental health problems can lead to people being disadvantaged; poverty and disadvantage can also cause mental health problems. Men and women with poor mental

health are likely to die earlier than those with good mental health.

Living with a physical health problem, particularly a long-term illness or condition, often contributes to poor mental health – such as depression or anxiety. People with poor mental health often find it difficult to stay physically fit and well. Mental disorders are the second largest single cause of disability in the UK for people of all ages, with 1 in 4 adults experiencing at least one mental health problem each year.

People with learning disabilities are more likely to be affected by the issues that we know lead to poor mental health. These include inadequate housing, unemployment, social isolation, violence and financial hardship. Women with learning disabilities die an average of 27 years younger than the general population and men die 23 years younger.



We will:

- Ensure that everyone can have the psychological therapies they need, when they need them.
- Reduce the gap in life expectancy between people with a learning disability or severe mental illness and the rest of our residents.
- Put in place services for children and young people who are neurodiverse, for example children with autism or those with attention deficit disorders.
- Develop services for people with autism that support them at every stage of their lives, at home, school, as they become adults and when they need help with housing and employment opportunities.
- Work with employers to ensure they develop suitable job opportunities for people with learning disabilities and severe mental illnesses, so that they can develop new skills and be supported to get on well at work.
- Help people with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and mental illness to access housing, education, employment and skills, and support their carers.
- Reduce suicides through better suicide prevention across health and care services.



Next steps

People working in the organisations responsible for this strategy have now started to work on action plans for these priorities. If you would like to get involved in this work, please email hweicbenh.engagement@nhs.net

The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Partnership is made up of a range of organisations responsible for public and voluntary services in this area.

This includes:

- NHS organisations, including hospital trusts and mental health trusts
- county councils
- district and borough councils
- the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector
- the police, and police and crime commissioners.

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