



Our Strategy 2025 – 2030


'Listening to our communities and helping improve health and social care services.'

healthwatch
Cambridgeshire


healthwatch
Peterborough

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We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



Our job is to make sure that those who run local health and care services understand and act on what really matters to people.

People's views come first, especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We are here to listen to what people like about services and what they think could be improved, no matter how big or small the concern.



About Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Local Healthwatch organisations were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to be a champion for people using health and social care services.

Our responsibilities

By law all local Healthwatch are required to:

- Provide information and signposting about health and social care services.
- Monitor concerns and complaints.
- Enable people to feed back about their experiences of health and social care services.
- Collate information and compile reports about people's experiences and views.



Local Healthwatch have the benefit of a national umbrella organisation, Healthwatch England, from whom we receive development and support.

Healthwatch England collects intelligence from the Healthwatch network, identifying national themes and producing reports on common areas of concern. They can raise issues at a national level.

We meet our responsibilities by:

- Listening to people from all communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough about their experiences of health and care services.
- Helping involve people in decisions about their care and how it is delivered.
- Giving people information to make choices about their health and care.
- Working in partnership to make change happen.
- Challenging when improvements can be made.
- Showing the difference we make.



Our vision is that health and social care services work well for local people. Where we hear that services are not working for people, especially vulnerable groups, we will speak out.

Healthwatch England Shared Values:

Equity – We're compassionate and inclusive. We build strong connections and empower the communities we serve.

Collaboration – We build internal and external relationships. We communicate clearly and work with partners to amplify our influence.

Impact – We're ambitious about creating change for people and communities. We're accountable to those we serve and hold others to account.

Independence – Our agenda is driven by the public. We're a purposeful, critical friend to decision-makers.

Truth – We work with integrity and honesty, and we speak truth to power.

Our Values:

Independence – from the local authorities and all health and social care services, providers and commissioners, whether public or private.

User-focus – we champion the voice of local people, patient and service users in the health and social care system.

Inclusivity – we will work with many different patient and service user groups across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Respect – we respect the opinion and experience of all people and work collaboratively with all groups, networks and organisations to pursue common goals.

Credibility – local people, commissioners and partners can trust the reliability of our information.

Transparency – open and accountable in all we do.



Our Strategic Priorities

The following pages present the five priorities that we will work on over the next five years.

Outcomes will be measured against a set of key performance indicators and these will be reviewed annually.

As national and local priorities change, so will the work required to meet the needs of the public and patients.



Priority One: Mental Health Services

Listening to the voices, of individuals, families and partner organisations

Too many people are struggling to access the right support to manage their mental health, leading to worsening conditions, increased pressure on crisis services, and long-term impacts on individuals, families, and communities. Barriers such as long waiting times, service gaps, stigma, and difficulties navigating the system prevent people from getting the help they need when they need it. By identifying mental health as a strategic priority, we acknowledge the voices of individuals, families, and partner organisations who have shared their challenges in accessing timely and effective support.

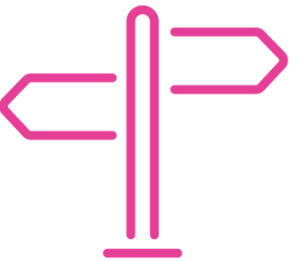
Activities

Our annual Summit in 2025 will spotlight mental health services.

- Our learning disability and carers partnership groups will contribute towards service developments in mental health.
- We will support local neighbourhood partnerships lead by the NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- We will facilitate health & care two-way communication with the public and health service providers.
- Our information & Signposting service will support people to find appropriate services.

What do we want to achieve

- More people to report better overall experiences of services.
- More people to receive better information and awareness of what to expect from services.
- More service providers work with people with lived experience to coproduce services.



Priority Two: Primary Care (GPs, dentists, pharmacy and ophthalmology)

Addressing access and accessibility concerns, with a focus on underserved places

GPs, dentists, and pharmacists are vital first points of care, yet 51% of our feedback last year highlighted difficulties accessing these services. Issues include long waits, appointment barriers, and NHS dentistry shortages, impacting health and increasing pressure on emergency care. Addressing these challenges is a priority. We will amplify public concerns, work with providers, and push for fairer, more accessible services, ensuring children, families, and vulnerable groups receive the care they need.

Activities

Our annual Summit in 2026 will spotlight primary care services.

- GP patient groups will come together to tackle patients concerns and share good practise.
- Our information & signposting service will support people with finding appropriate services.
- Our enter and view service will support health and care providers with improving their services.
- We will support local neighbourhood partnerships lead by the NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- We will facilitate health & care two-way communication with the public and health service providers.



What do we want to achieve

- More people report better overall experiences of services.
- More people receive better information and awareness of what to expect from services.
- More service providers work with people with lived experience to coproduce services.

Priority Three: Children and Young People

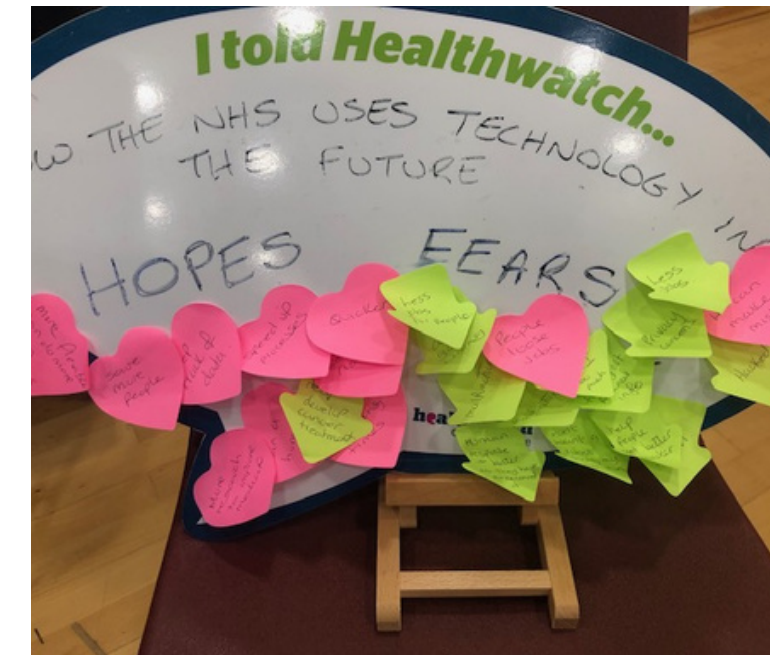
Increasing our engagement with children and young people

Many children and young people struggle to have their voices heard in shaping health and care services, leading to unmet needs and poorer outcomes. Barriers like lack of awareness, limited opportunities, and accessibility issues hinder participation. Prioritising their engagement ensures we listen to their experiences and ideas. By collaborating with families, schools, and services, we can create inclusive, youth-friendly support systems that drive positive change.

Activities

Our summit in 2027 will spotlight children and young people's services.

- Youthwatch volunteer membership will increase to support wider engagement.
- We will work with other organisations to collect feedback, and share information about services.
- Our information & Signposting service will support people with finding appropriate services.
- We will support local neighbourhood partnerships lead by the NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.
- We will facilitate health & care two-way communication with the public and health service providers.



What do we want to achieve

- More young people feel they can trust us to amplify their voices and to help them feel heard.
- More young people feel confident to speak up and get involved in shaping health services.
- We are able to gather more information to influence children and young people's services.

Priority Four: Joined Up Care

Helping to bridge gaps between primary and secondary care

People have shared their struggles in accessing timely and appropriate care, particularly with GP referrals to hospital treatment. They also highlight poor communication between care providers and patients as a significant barrier.

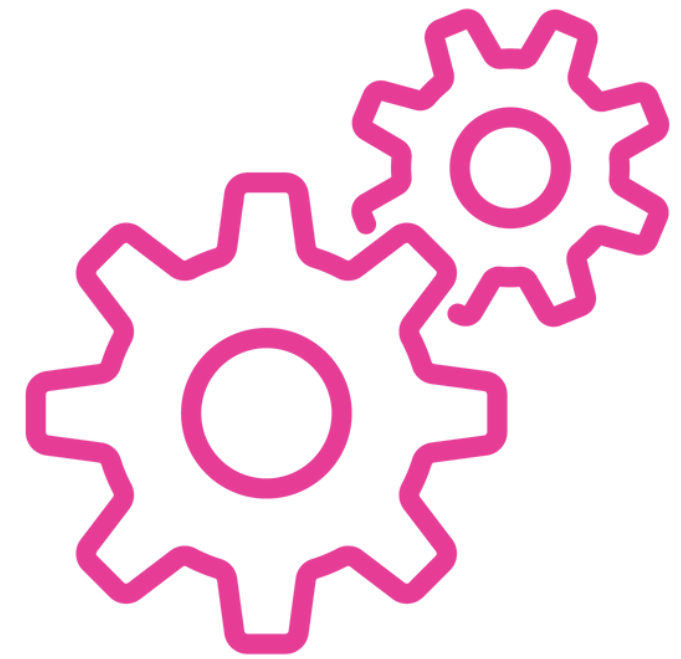
Activities

Our summit in 2028 will spotlight collaborative and joined up care.

- GP patient groups will come together to tackle patients concerns and share good practise.
- Our enter and view service will support health and care providers with improving their services.
- We will engage with health providers such as GP, hospitals, clinics and have regular onsite meetings.
- We will facilitate discussions with health and care services and the public and promote joined up working.
- We will provide health and care providers with stories and feedback from patients experiencing the processes.
- We will facilitate health & care two-way ongoing communication with the public and health service providers.

What do we want to achieve

- More people will report better experiences when moving between GPs and hospital treatment.
- More people will experience less confusion around referrals, discharge and follow up services.
- Health and Care providers will improve services to meet people's needs.



Priority Five: Health Inequalities

Amplifying the voices of people who are not often heard

Health inequalities mean that some people struggle more than others to access the care they need. Factors like income, where you live, disability, and cultural background can affect the quality of healthcare you receive. People have told us they face barriers such as long wait times, difficulty accessing services, and a lack of support that meets their specific needs. By listening to these experiences and working together, we can help create fairer, more accessible health and care services for everyone.

Activities

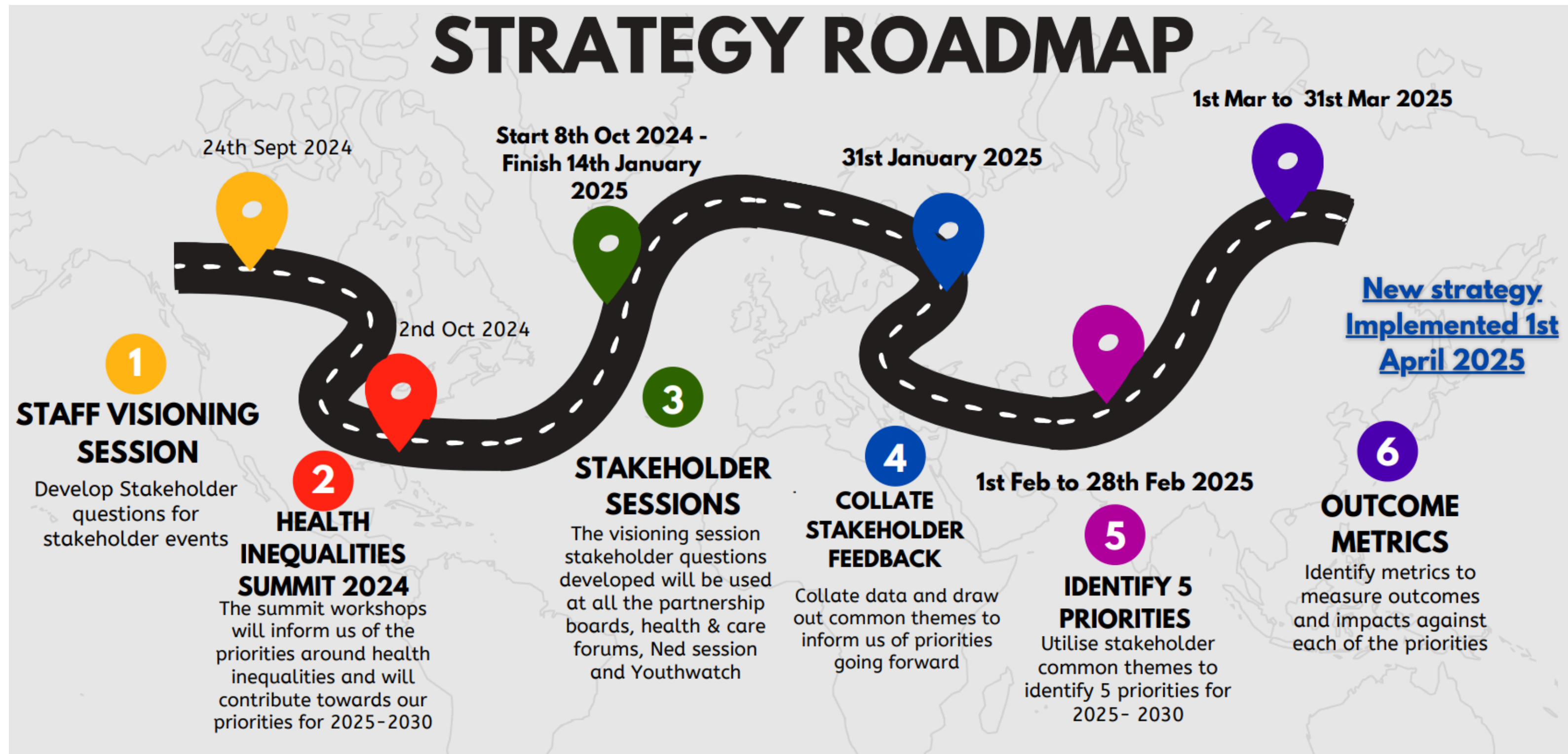
Our summit in 2029 will spotlight health inequalities. We will showcase achievements since the last Health Inequalities summit in 2024, and raise awareness on the challenges faced by people.

- We will provide representation on high level boards to amplify the voices of those who struggle to be heard.
- We will host listening and engagement events in those areas of need.
- Our partnership groups will enable adult social care services to engage with and learn from people with lived experience.
- We will work with other organisations and support integrated neighbourhoods to amplify the voices of those who struggle to be heard.

What do we want to achieve

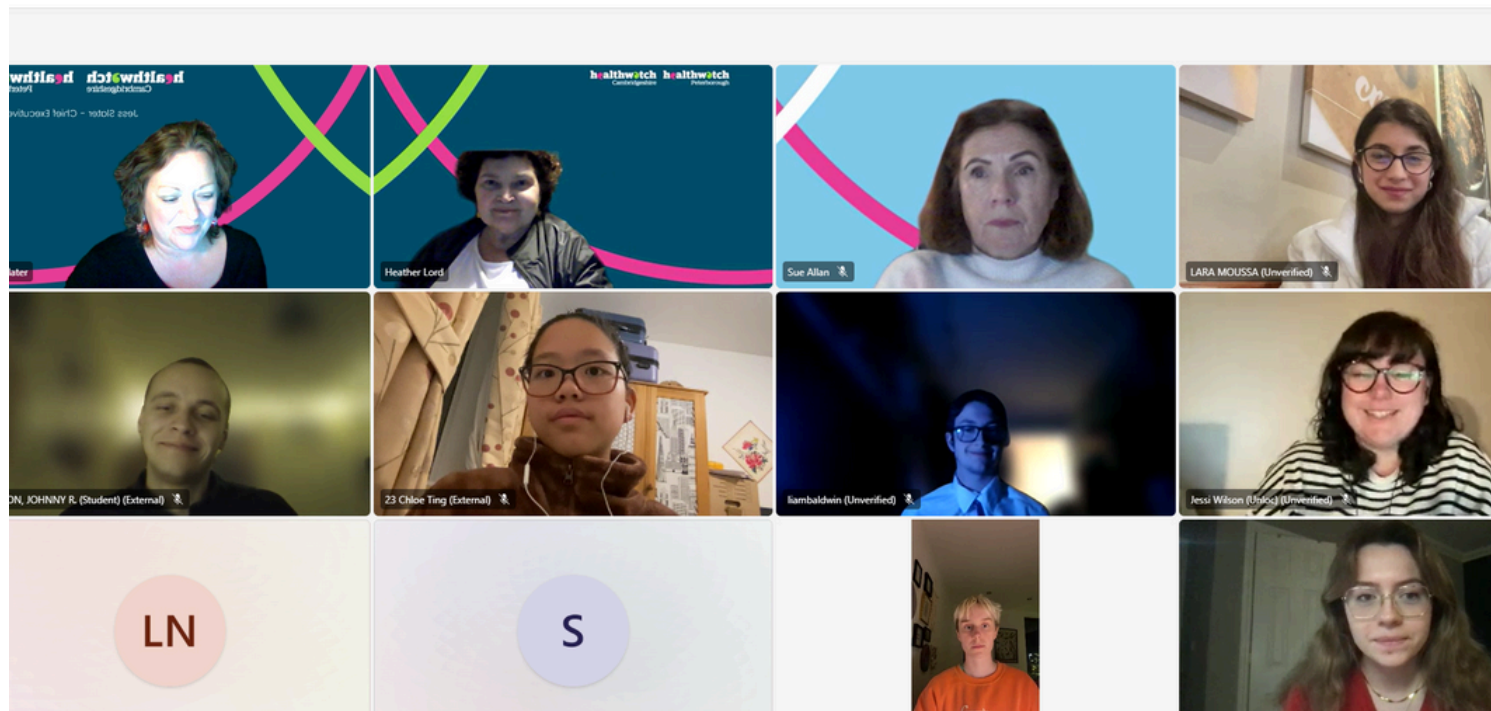
- Increased awareness among local service providers of barriers faced by seldom heard communities.
- Higher level of engagement from diverse communities.
- Health and Care service improvements and inclusive care planning and delivery.
- People with lived experience consulted on adult social care services and practices.





How we set our five priorities continued...

We held thirteen community stakeholder sessions and engaged with the public through our Health & Care Forums, the partnership groups, staff, non-executive directors, volunteers and our young volunteer group 'Youthwatch',



Top left - Our Sensory Partnership Group stakeholder session
Top right - Peterborough Health & Care Forum stakeholder session
Bottom left - Youthwatch Volunteers Group stakeholder session

More than 200 people have been consulted and have contributed to shaping our priorities. Our Health & Care Forums, Youthwatch, and Partnership Boards also include the participation of health and care professionals, ensuring a well-rounded perspective

How we set our five priorities continued...

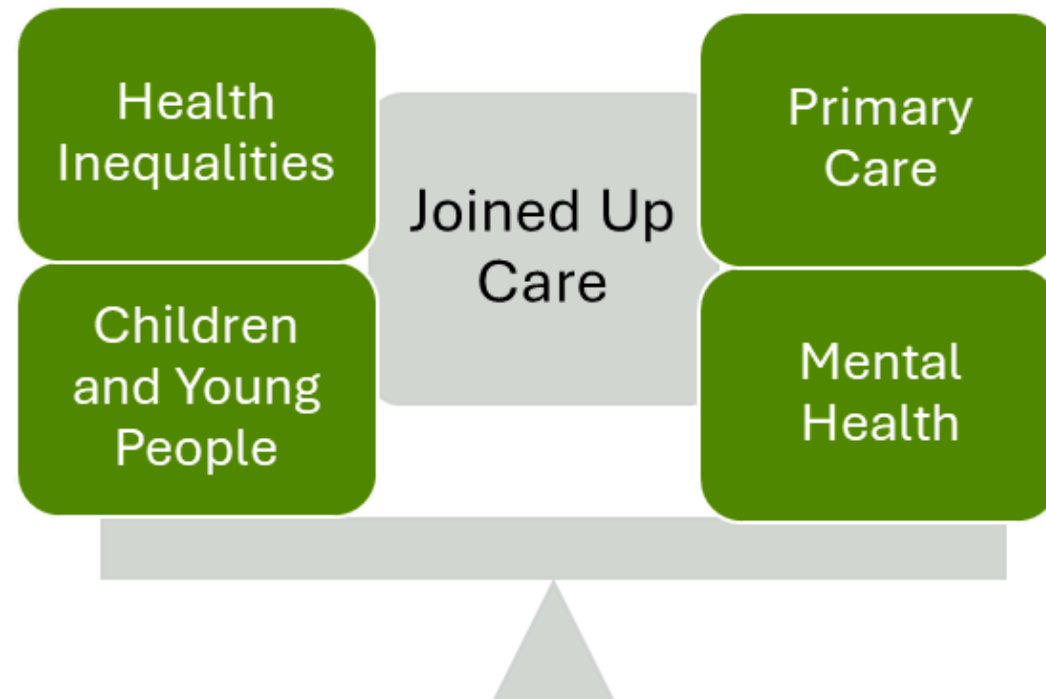
Delivering health and social care in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is complex.

The new 10-year NHS Plan and the 2024 Darzi Review provide a framework for improving access, reducing inequalities, and strengthening community care.

As local Healthwatch, we have a broad remit but limited capacity, so we prioritise key public concerns to drive meaningful change.



Prioritising and finding the right balance



Improving health and care services requires everyone working together—NHS, councils, charities, and community groups. No issue stands alone; they are all connected. By tackling priorities together, we can better influence those in charge, ensuring services reflect what people truly need.

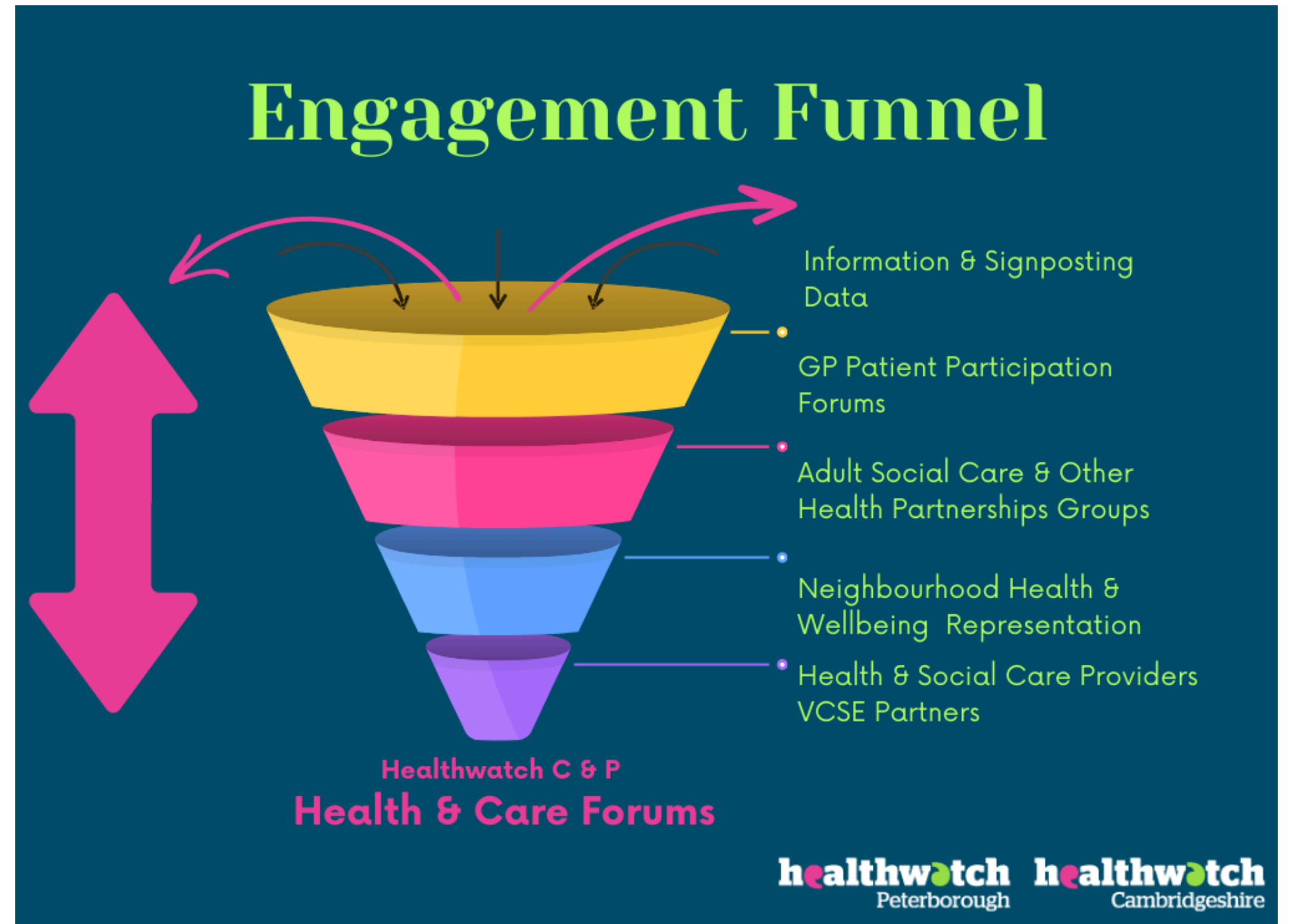
Change happens when we listen to patients, families, and communities, using their experiences to shape better care.

A joined-up approach means stronger, more effective services that make a real difference in people's lives. By working in partnership, we can support positive changes that matter most to the public and ensure services work well for everyone who needs them.

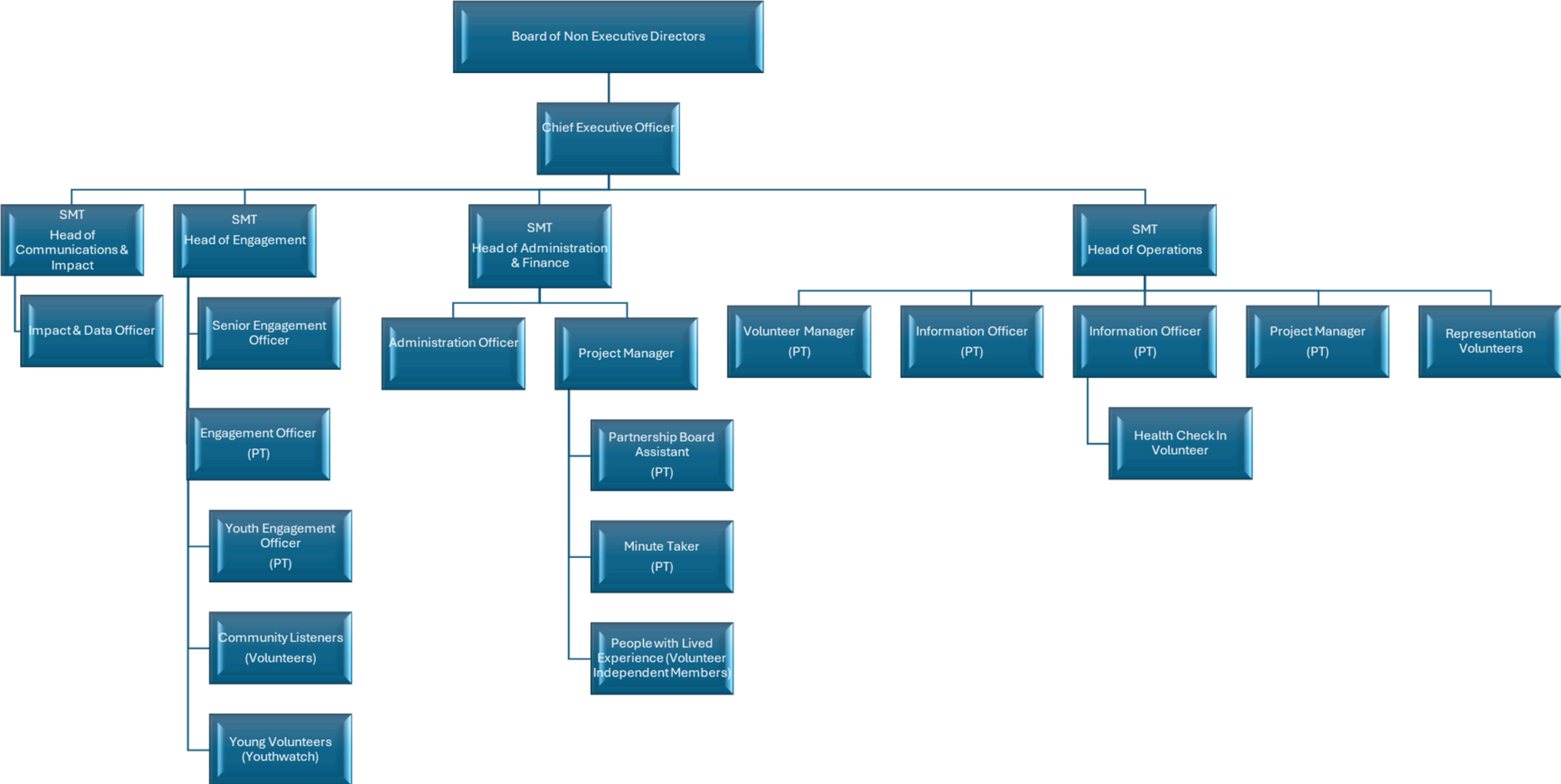
How we will work

Listening to communities and facilitating a two-way feedback process

The Health & Care Forums are open to everyone, providing a space for the general public to engage. In contrast, other partnership groups and platforms operate with a membership structure. These forums play a vital role in facilitating two-way communication between the public and health and social care providers, ensuring that community voices are heard and acted upon.



Our staff and volunteers



Governance

As a Community Interest Company (CIC) we are governed by our Articles of Association and the requirements of a CIC. Strategy and direction of travel are overseen and managed by the Board of Directors, comprising a Chair, Non-Executive Directors and the CEO.

The Board meets four times each year in public. The agenda and reports about our activities and finances are uploaded on our websites and widely publicised.

The Board meets a further three times each year for development sessions which supports the Non-Executive Directors local health care knowledge and education.

Questions from the public are welcomed at every meeting.

The General Purposes Group of the Board oversees the financial and workforce aspects of the organisation; making recommendations to the Board for approval of policy and budgets.

Funding

Our primary funding is secured through a grant agreement with Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, ensuring our statutory core support.

To achieve our full potential and sustain our role as a responsible employer, we must maintain financial resilience. This enables us to invest in staff development, enhance skills, and create opportunities for career progression.

We recognise the importance of diversifying our income streams by building strategic partnerships with local organisations and securing additional funding for public and patient engagement from alternative sources.

Our organisational structure and culture will remain adaptable, proactively seeking income-generating opportunities that align with our Healthwatch values and areas of expertise





To make a donation to support our work or to enquire about volunteering, contact us at enquiries@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk

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Find out more about our work at

www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk

www.healthwatchpeterborough.co.uk

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Our Vision is that health and social care services work well for local people. Where we hear that services are not working for people, especially vulnerable groups, we will speak out.

Our purpose: We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share what people tell us with those with the power to make change happen.

Working with others: Improving health and care requires collaboration between the NHS, councils, charities, and communities. Issues are interconnected, and change happens by listening to people’s experiences. A joined-up approach strengthens services, ensuring they reflect real needs. Working together influences decision-makers and drives meaningful improvements for everyone who relies on these services.

Our Priorities	What we want to achieve	What people have told us	How we will do it
Mental Health	More people will report better service experiences, receive clearer information on what to expect, and benefit from services co-produced with those who have lived experience.	Too many people face barriers like long waits, service gaps, and stigma in accessing timely mental health support.	In 2025, we will spotlight mental health services, support local NHS partnerships, enhance two-way communication, and help people access the right care.
Primary Care: GPs, Dentist, Pharmacy and Eye Care	More people experience better services, receive clearer information, and help co-produce improvements with service providers.	GPs, dentists, and pharmacists are vital, yet 51% of our feedback highlighted access issues, worsening emergency pressures.	Our 2026 Summit will highlight primary care, unite GP groups, support services, strengthen NHS partnerships, and enhance public-provider communication.
Children & Young People Engagement	More young people trust us to amplify their voices, speak up, shape services, and influence change	Many children and young people face barriers to shaping health services, but prioritising engagement supports inclusive, impactful change.	Our 2027 Summit will spotlight youth services, expand Youthwatch volunteer group, enhance engagement, support partnerships, and improve public-provider communication.
Joined-Up Care	More people will have smoother transitions between GPs and hospitals, with clearer referrals and improved care services.	People face delays in care, GP referrals, and poor communication between providers and patients.	Our 2028 Summit will spotlight joined-up care, unite GP groups, support providers, enhance engagement, and strengthen public-provider communication.
Health Inequalities	Greater awareness of barriers, increased engagement, inclusive care improvements, and lived experience consultation in social care.	Health inequalities limit access to care, but listening to experiences and collaboration can create fairer, more inclusive services.	Our 2029 Summit will spotlight health inequalities, showcase progress, amplify voices, host engagement events, and support inclusive partnerships.