

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

2025 Strategy: Executive Summary

OUTSTANDING CARE

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

AND A GREAT PLACE TO WORK



Our Trust strategy

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to providing outstanding care, creating healthy communities and making this a great place to work.

We have developed a new Trust strategy to deliver this vision and provide the health and care services our communities need in the future. Our strategy will take us through to the mid-2020s and beyond. We can only achieve this ambition for our population, patients and people with investment in modern, welcoming and fit for purpose environments.

Taking what we have learnt in recent years, listening to what people have told us and learning from national and local policies we have developed a new strategy. Our vision is to provide outstanding care, create healthy communities and make Buckinghamshire a great place to work.

We learnt important lessons during the COVID-19 response. We need to be prepared for future pandemics and keep people safe by delivering care with greater guarantees of infection prevention and control. We need to support people in communities to have healthy lives and make the most of new digital technologies.

Providing acute and community healthcare in Buckinghamshire gives us a great opportunity to support people in their homes as well as in hospitals. By working with our partners in Buckinghamshire Council and Primary Care people will have access to outstanding integrated health, social care and wellbeing services close to their homes.

We will bring together our rehabilitation and therapy services and build on the heritage of Stoke Mandeville – the birthplace of the Paralympics to create a centre of excellence for rehabilitation helping people recover from injury and illness quickly and effectively.

By strengthening emergency care services and delivering them separately from planned care services people will achieve the best outcomes and we will deliver the right care, at the right time in the right place.

To deliver outstanding sustainable healthcare we must resolve our infrastructure challenges. The age and quality of large parts of our buildings makes it difficult to provide modern, efficient and effective services for our patients.

Context

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on healthcare delivery across the country and in many parts of the world. We have learned some important lessons during the global pandemic, and it is now time to press on with the process of improvement and transformation.

We need to move rapidly and develop our plans for the future of health and social care in Buckinghamshire if we are to grasp new opportunities as soon as they arise. The NHS organisations that were successful in accessing financial support from the government's Health Infrastructure Plan (HIP) for new infrastructure were those that had credible, compelling plans for the future of clinical services that could be progressed quickly.

Our thinking on the future of the Trust estate follows from our new Trust strategy which sets our vision of delivering **outstanding care, creating healthy communities and making Buckinghamshire a great place to work.**

Our thinking is consistent with the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (ICS) strategy and our Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) strategy as the concept of "Place" is becoming ever more important in the context of integrated health and care delivery.

As we develop our thinking, we will fully involve our partners and stakeholders including local MPs, Buckinghamshire Council, NHS organisations, business interests, the third sector and

local academic partners. We will also involve patients, carers, families and residents to ensure that any options for change are consistent with the best possible care for the largest number of people.

We will take full account of the direction of travel articulated in key national and local strategy documents such as the NHS Long Term Plan, the NHS People Plan, the Naylor Review of NHS estates and the One Public Estate agenda.

We will bear in mind the key lessons arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapidly accelerating use of digital technology, the greater focus on infection prevention and control and the growing need to develop facilities that address the zero-carbon agenda.

We have a strong history of working together locally and we have the ingredients for success – a single unitary council, a largely federated general practice, an integrated acute and community NHS Trust and strong partners in mental health and the ambulance service. We are uniquely placed within the London economic ecosystem and major growth corridors to contribute to the development of our region.

The case for change

The demand for health services in Buckinghamshire is rising rapidly as our population grows and as people live longer with multiple illnesses. COVID-19 has shone a light on health inequalities. People living in deprived areas and some people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups were disproportionately affected by the virus, have lower life expectancy than we would expect and spend much of their lives in poor health.

COVID-19 reminded us how challenging and rewarding careers in health and social care are and what a difference people working in health and social care make in all our lives. We must address our workforce challenges as many of our staff approach retirement age and we need to attract people to jobs in a competitive recruitment market.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the importance of infection control and impacted our ability to deliver essential planned care services alongside emergency services. We are well placed through this strategy to provide high quality services in a more efficient way. By strengthening emergency care services on a single site and separating them from planned services we can reduce duplication and disruption caused by varying levels of emergency demand or future pandemics. Developing a planned care centre focussed on high volume expert care we will achieve the best outcomes in the most efficient way.

Crucially we need to modernise and upgrade many of the buildings. Our estate consists of buildings ranging from the early Victorian period through to some modern buildings. While the most recent buildings are designed to modern standards and provide efficient clinical accommodation the older buildings are in poor condition, they lack the capacity to deliver care for a growing population and they limit the capability of our staff to provide high quality care. With the hospital tower at High Wycombe now very close to the end of its useful life we face a register of backlog maintenance totalling in excess of £200m.

The case for change is clear and strong. To deliver our new Trust strategy we need an estate that enables new models of care and which meets the developing and growing requirements of our local population. We need modern, energy efficient buildings that help reduce overheads, meet our net-zero carbon ambitions and bring maintenance costs under control.

Direction of travel

We are on a journey of engagement and discovery. No decisions have been taken about major services changes in Buckinghamshire, nor will any decisions be taken without a full and proper period of engagement and consultation with residents.

Our mission is what we do every day at work to deliver personal and compassionate care every time. At the heart of our strategy is our vision to deliver outstanding care, healthy communities and to be a great place to work.

Outstanding care that is compassionate and inclusive and delivers the best possible outcomes in the most efficient way. People deserve nothing less.

Healthy Communities where we play our role in communities to support people to live independent healthy lives at home.

A great place to work that is inclusive and compassionate. A workplace that learns and improves together and values the health and wellbeing of our colleagues because we know happy, healthy people deliver the best care.

Our **Clinical Strategy** will drive our vision by:

- **Strengthening emergency care** services and delivering them together on one acute site.
- **Separating planned care services** from emergency care in order to manage the backlog, deliver more efficient high volume elective services and better outcomes working much more with our partner hospitals.
- **Providing swifter diagnostic care** by create diagnostic networks using digital technology in pathology and radiology services and investing in modern state of the art equipment in diagnostic hubs.
- **Integrating our community services** with primary care and social care so that people living with frailty or long term conditions can live independently at home.
- **Supporting health and wellbeing**, prevent illness and reduce health inequalities especially for children.
- Building on the legacy of the Stoke Mandeville spinal injuries unit and bringing together our rehabilitation services to create a **centre of excellence for rehabilitation** that is nationally and internationally recognised.

Our clinical strategy can only be delivered if we:

- Invest in a **digital future** where more people are supported to have control over their health, deliver care anywhere and reduce duplication and waste.
- Invest in our **estates** – create new, modern, welcoming facilities and hospitals of the future that meet the needs of the growing population of Buckinghamshire.
- Focus our efforts on reducing duplication and waste so we become **financially sustainable**.

Engagement and consultation

Our new Trust strategy – including our estates strategy – will only succeed if it is led by our doctors, nurses and other clinicians. We are committed to deep and comprehensive clinical engagement not just with our own Trust clinicians but with local GPs and clinicians in neighbouring Trusts.

But our engagement will go much wider than our clinicians. We will adopt a culturally competent approach to engagement that involves stakeholders and staff, patients and communities.

We will start a “big discussion” with our stakeholders about the health needs of our local population and how best to meet those needs. We will launch a public campaign to stimulate interest, energy and enthusiasm for change. We will engage all voices and all communities.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has demonstrated how the NHS can respond in a magnificent, heroic fashion when faced with an emergency. It has also shone a bright light on the need for change.

The public appetite for transformation is growing. We now have an opportunity to contribute to the wealth and health of our population beyond the traditional boundaries of healthcare organisations. As an organisation deeply rooted in our communities, and as part of a wider health and care system, we can become not just a service for treating the sick but an organisation dedicated to helping people prevent illness and live longer and healthier lives.

We want to deliver outstanding integrated care and strengthen our emergency services by bringing them together on an acute site. We want to separate planned care so they can run uninterrupted and we can safely respond to future pandemics. With our clinical strategy driving changes in our estate we can reduce the excessive costs of maintenance and become a sustainable system delivering the best outcomes at the lowest possible costs.

Delivering our new Trust strategy, with its implications for our hospitals and other health facilities, is a major priority. This will be a long journey, with the right resources and enough investment in people, equipment and buildings we can deliver long-term sustainable changes to meet the needs of the people we serve.