



Applicant Information Pack

Independent Non-Executive Member

Introduction from our Chair, Sir Liam Donaldson

This is an important time to join our ICB. As we sharpen our focus as a strategic commissioner, effective governance, independent insight and constructive challenge will be central to our success. By joining the Board, you will have the opportunity to help shape the next phase of our development and support the delivery of better health for our communities.

Our ICB is the statutory NHS organisation responsible for planning, funding and improving health and care services for people across one of the largest health and care systems in England.

Our region stretches from the Scottish borders to North Yorkshire and across to North Cumbria, serving a population of around 3.2 million people across a diverse geography that includes both major urban centres and rural communities.

Working closely with providers, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector, we are leading the delivery of our Integrated Care Strategy, *Better health and wellbeing for all*. In addition, our *clinical conditions strategy* targets the 12 health conditions that have the greatest impact on our people.

Over the past few years, we have continued to make progress in improving access to care and strengthening services across the region. This includes expanding community diagnostic centres, increasing activity to reduce waiting times, improving access to women's health services and strengthening mental health provision. Through partnership working across housing, employment and local government, we are addressing the wider factors that shape health and wellbeing.

At the same time, we are entering a new phase.

Following the publication of NHS England's national ICB Blueprint, we are refining our role as a strategic commissioner. This places greater emphasis on long-term system planning, improving value and productivity, reducing unwarranted variation in outcomes, and working through strong place and neighbourhood partnerships. We are also focused on delivering the ambitions of the NHS 10-Year Plan: shifting from treatment to prevention, hospital to community, and analogue to digital.

While our organisational structure and ways of working are evolving, our core purpose remains unchanged: improving outcomes, tackling inequalities and maintaining strong, collaborative partnerships across our health and care system.

Despite progress in many areas, the health of our population remains a significant challenge.

While smoking rates and deaths from cancer and heart disease have reduced, life expectancy across parts of our region remains among the lowest in England. Many communities experience high levels of deprivation, unemployment and poor housing, contributing to some of the widest health inequalities in the country. Addressing these challenges is central to our work and to our partnerships across the region.

Strong governance and effective Board leadership are critical to achieving these ambitions. As a Non-Executive Director, you will play a key role in providing oversight, support and constructive challenge as we continue to develop as an organisation and deliver improvements for our communities.

This is a crucial moment to join the Board and contribute to shaping the future of health and care across the North East and North Cumbria.



Professor Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair

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1. The opportunity

We are looking for an independent non-executive member to join the Board of NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) who will also be a member of the ICB's committees, including chairing the relevant committee(s).

This is required to provide assurance to the Board that there are robust processes and governance mechanisms in place for the effective management of the ICB's commissioning agenda across the ICB, supporting the organisation to deliver its strategic objectives relating to the commissioning of high-quality and safe care.

As an independent non-executive member (INEM), you will help to shape a long-term, viable plan for the delivery of the functions, duties, and objectives of the ICB, and be accountable as a member of the unitary board for the good stewardship of the funds allocated to the board.

You will bring independent oversight and constructive challenges to the priorities, plans and performance of the ICB. You will promote open and transparent decision-making that facilitates consensus and help to hold the executive to account.

You will need to operate beyond traditional organisational boundaries, driving forward the vision of integration, collaboration, and system-working, by forging productive relationships across local health, social care and voluntary partners.

You will have a key role in ensuring that the voice and needs of patients and communities are central to ICB discussions and decisions, so that strategies and services are inclusive and accessible to the whole population and deliver the best possible health outcomes for all.

This is a unique opportunity to help shape the future of local services, contributing to the shared responsibility for improving the health of the ICB's population by sharing your expertise to help transform our commissioned services and deepen the collaborative working essential to making a positive difference to all our communities across the North East and North Cumbria footprint.

We know there is clear evidence that diverse boards make the best decisions. We want to increase the diversity of our NHS leadership in the North East and North Cumbria and recognise the value of different diversities of experience, thought, opinions. We want to reflect this in our future board appointments and are really interested in receiving applications from people with different backgrounds, skills and experience.

2. About us

NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB is the statutory NHS organisation responsible for planning, funding and improving health services for one of the largest and most diverse health and care systems in England.

With a £7 billion budget and an NHS workforce of 170,000 people across health and care, we serve a population of around 3.2 million people. Our geography stretches from the Scottish borders to North Yorkshire and across to North Cumbria, including both major urban centres and large rural communities.

Working closely with NHS providers, local authorities and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, we lead delivery of our Integrated Care Strategy – *Better health and wellbeing for all*. This sets out our shared ambition to improve outcomes, reduce inequalities and ensure people across our region can live longer, healthier lives.

Our work also supports the ambitions of the NHS 10-Year Plan, including the shifts from treatment to prevention, hospital to community and analogue to digital.

Our region

The North East and North Cumbria has many strengths. Our region is home to world-class clinical services, leading universities and nationally recognised centres of excellence, including pioneering work in genetics, cardiovascular medicine and surgical innovation.

Our system benefits from a strong research and innovation infrastructure through organisations such as Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria and the Applied Research Collaborative, supporting the development of new treatments, technologies and models of care.

Despite these strengths, our region faces significant health challenges. While there have been improvements in recent years – including reductions in smoking rates and deaths from cancer and heart disease – healthy life expectancy remains among the lowest in England.

Many communities experience high levels of deprivation, unemployment and poor housing, which contribute to some of the starkest health inequalities and highest rates of ill health in the country. Addressing these challenges is central to our work.

Improving health and reducing inequalities

We have developed a set of priorities to improve population health, based on evidence and informed by clinicians, partners and communities. These include:

- Prevention, early detection and effective management of the biggest causes of premature mortality, including cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness
- Improving lung health and achieving a smoke-free generation

- Supporting people with frailty to live independently at home wherever possible
- Improving maternal health and early years outcomes
- Strengthening emotional wellbeing and mental health support for children and young people
- Improving outcomes for people experiencing severe and enduring mental illness
- Supporting people to have a good death and to die in the place of their choice
- Protecting the health and wellbeing of our workforce

Our Integrated Care Strategy has been developed in partnership with local authorities, NHS organisations and voluntary sector partners. It sets out how we will reduce the gap in life expectancy between our region and the rest of England, improve healthy life expectancy and ensure fairer health outcomes for all communities.

We are also working to ensure that health and care services are consistently high quality and joined up, so people can access the right care in the right place, regardless of where they live. A copy of [our full strategy is available on our website](#).

Improving access to care

Over the past year, we have continued to improve access to care and strengthen services across the region.

With partners across the system, we have focused on improving urgent and emergency care. Our ambulance services have consistently delivered some of the fastest response times in England, with the region ranked among the top-performing systems nationally for responding to the most urgent incidents. Work is also underway across hospitals, ambulance services and community providers to improve patient flow, reduce ambulance handover delays and ensure people receive the right care in the right place.

We have expanded community diagnostic centres and increased activity to reduce waiting times, helping more people access tests and diagnosis closer to home.

Women's health

We have made targeted investment to improve women's health services. This includes the development of women's health hubs, bringing together services such as gynaecology, menopause support and contraception in community settings to provide more coordinated and accessible care.

Additional investment is supporting one-stop gynaecology clinics, enabling more women to receive quicker diagnosis and treatment for conditions that can significantly affect quality of life and ability to work.

Mental health

We have strengthened support for people experiencing mental health crisis, including expanding crisis services and developing crisis cafés and safe havens that provide alternatives to hospital admission. We are also working to support patients with longer-term conditions closer to home.

Alongside this, the system continues to prioritise children and young people's mental health, ensuring more young people can access help earlier.

Addressing the wider determinants of health

Beyond healthcare services, we are working with partners across housing, employment, education and local government to address the wider factors that influence health and wellbeing.

Work and health

We have secured £30 million of Government investment over two years to support people whose health affects their ability to work.

Through our WorkWell programme, a network of advisors now provides personalised support through around 300 GP practices, helping people manage health conditions that affect employment. The programme also includes investment in musculoskeletal, mental health and women's health services, alongside initiatives such as Waiting Well, which helps people prepare for surgery and improve recovery, as well as providing support to our health and care workforce.

Housing and health

We have established a Housing, Health and Care Programme with partners to strengthen collaboration across housing, health and care services.

A Memorandum of Understanding sets out a shared commitment to improve housing conditions, support people to live independently and align commissioning to address the wider determinants of health. Our Housing Market Position Statement provides a clear picture of housing and support needs across the region and supports future planning.

The programme focuses on shared priorities including warm, safe homes, better housing options for older people and improved support for people with complex needs, recognising the vital role that housing plays in supporting health and wellbeing.

Tackling the region's biggest health challenges

Encouragingly, there have been improvements in population health. Smoking rates have continued to fall, and deaths from cancer and cardiovascular disease have reduced.

However, life expectancy and healthy life expectancy remain below the national average. Addressing these inequalities is central to our strategy.

Our Clinical Conditions Strategy focuses on the twelve conditions that have the greatest impact on health outcomes in our region, including cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness.

We are also strengthening services through place and neighbourhood partnerships, ensuring people can access consistent, high-quality care wherever they live.

Our workforce

Achieving our ambitions depends on supporting our workforce and developing the next generation of health and care professionals.

The region is home to leading medical schools at Newcastle, Sunderland and Cumbria, alongside strong partnerships with colleges and universities to widen access to careers in health and care.

Learning and improvement

We are strengthening our approach to quality, learning and continuous improvement across the system.

Through our regional learning and improvement community, BOOST, organisations work together to share learning, identify opportunities for improvement and embed best practice. We also work closely with NHS trusts and partners to review serious incidents and ensure learning from patient safety events leads to improvements in the quality and safety of care.

Sustainability

Sustainability is also a priority. Working with partners across the public and voluntary sectors, we are committed to reducing the environmental impact of health and care services and supporting the region’s ambition to become England’s greenest region.



3. Role priorities and accountabilities

Priorities

The INEMs on the Board will:

- Work collaboratively to shape the long-term, viable plan for the delivery of the functions, duties and objectives of the ICB and for the stewardship of public money
- Ensure that the Board is effective in all aspects of its role and appropriately focused on the four core purposes, to: improve outcomes in population health and healthcare; tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access; enhance productivity and value for money; and help the NHS support broader social and economic development
- Be champions of governance arrangements, collaborative leadership and effective partnership working, including with local government, NHS bodies and the voluntary sector
- Support the Chair and the wider Board on issues that impact organisations and workforces across the Integrated Care System (ICS), such as integration, the people agenda, digital transformation and emergency preparedness, resilience and response challenges.
- Play a key role in ensuring that the ICB meets its statutory duties, building strong partnerships and governance arrangements with system partners

Accountabilities

The INEMs of the Board:

- Are accountable to the ICB Chair
- Have designated areas of responsibility as agreed with the ICB Chair
- Have a collective responsibility with the other members of the ICB to ensure corporate accountability for the performance of the organisation, ensuring its functions are effectively and efficiently discharged and its financial obligations are met.

4. Role responsibilities and competencies

You will work alongside the Chair, other non-executive members, executive directors and partner members and as equal members of a unitary board. You will be responsible for specific areas relating to board governance and oversight and will:

- Bring independent, external perspectives and respectful challenge to the plans, aims and priorities of the ICB
- Promote open and transparent decision-making that facilitates consensus aimed at delivering exceptional outcomes for the population.

You will need to be able to demonstrate you can use your knowledge, skills and experience to:

- Work alongside other non-executive members and executive colleagues as an equal member of the Board.
- Hold the executive to account by providing purposeful, constructive scrutiny and challenge.
- Shape and actively support a healthy culture for the ICB.
- Chair meetings in an inclusive way and in line with the ICB's values.

Personally, you will bring a range of professional knowledge and expertise as well as community understanding and experience to the Board. We are interested in your life experience and personal motivations that will add valuable personal insights such as: being a patient, carer or service user; experience of gender and women's issues; engaging with diverse social, economic and cultural groups and communities; experiences and challenges of younger people; and those with lived experience of mental health issues and/or living with physical chronic conditions or disability.

As a member of a unitary Board and an NHS leader, you will demonstrate a range of leadership competencies and contribute to a wide range of areas as set out below:

Strategy and transformation

- Setting the vision, strategy and clear objectives for the ICB in delivering on the four core purposes of the ICS, the triple aim of improved population health, quality of care and cost-control.
- Aligning partners in transforming the [Long Term Plan](#) and the [People Plan](#) into real progress.

Partnerships and communities

- Promoting dialogue and consensus with local government and broader partners, to ensure effective joint planning and delivery for system working and mutual accountability

Social justice and health equalities

- Advocating diversity, health equality and social justice to close the gap on health inequalities and achieve the service changes that are needed to improve population health
- Ensuring the ICB is responsive to people and communities, and that public, patient and carer voices are embedded in all of the ICB's plans and activities
- Promoting the values of the [NHS Constitution](#) and modelling the behaviours embodied in [Our People Promise](#).

Sustainable outcomes

- Overseeing purposeful arrangements for effective leadership throughout the ICB and the ICS
- Fostering a culture of research, innovation, learning and continuous improvement to support the delivery of high quality services for all
- Ensuring the NHS plays its part in social and economic development and achieving environmental sustainability, including the Carbon Net Zero commitment.

Governance and assurance

- Collectively ensuring that the ICB is compliant with its Constitution and contractual obligations, holding other members of the ICB to account through constructive, independent and respectful challenge
- Maintaining oversight of delivery of ICB plans, ensuring expected outcomes are delivered in a timely manner through the proportionate management of risks.
- Ensuring that the ICB operates to deliver its functions in line with its statutory duties, and that compliance with the expected standards of the regulatory bodies is maintained.

People and culture

- Supporting the development of other board members to maximise their contribution
- Providing visible leadership in developing a healthy and inclusive culture for the organisation, which promotes diversity, encourages and enables system working and which is reflected and modelled in their own and the Board's behaviour and decision-making
- Ensuring the Board acts in accordance with the highest ethical standards of public service and that any conflicts are appropriately resolved.

5. Additional requirements

You will need to have a genuine commitment to patients and the promotion of excellent health care services.

You will have experience in a Board level role with a demonstrable track record of delivering improvements at a strategic level within the health sector.

As a member of an ICB Committee, you will need to constructively challenge, influence and support the Executive Team to ensure the organisation fulfils its responsibilities to patients, carers and local communities ensuring that the patient is central to all the ICB's decision making.

Knowledge and experience of current NHS legislation and multi-agency working is essential.

You will ensure that the ICB commissions high quality and safe services for the populations we serve, and be responsible for providing appropriate oversight, governance and leadership to the ICB in the pursuit of its strategies to commission effective and high-quality services.

You will gain assurance as to the integrity of financial, clinical and other information, and that financial and clinical quality controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible.

All INEMs must champion the **standards of public life** – by upholding the highest standards of conduct and displaying the principles of:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership.

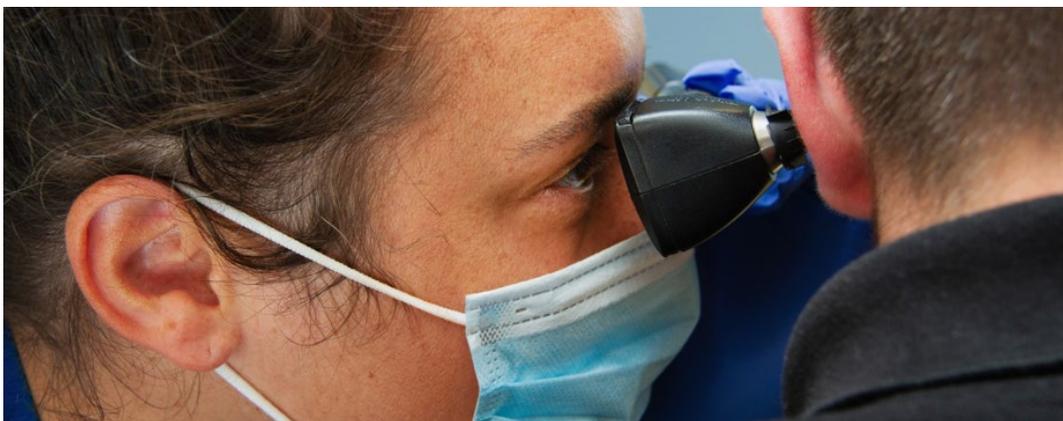
As a leader within the NHS, the successful candidate will be able to demonstrate the range of behaviours required to contribute effectively to this board level role. These are outlined in the NHS Leadership Academy's Healthcare Leadership Model and NHS Leadership Competency Framework.

Given the significant public profile and responsibility members of NHS Boards hold, it is vital that those appointed inspire confidence of the public, patients and NHS staff at all times.

The ICB undertakes a number of specific background checks to ensure that those we appoint are 'fit and proper' people to hold these important roles.

More information can be found on our website on the following link:

[Home | North East and North Cumbria NHS \(northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk\)](https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk)



6. Person specification

Competency	Knowledge, Experience and Skills required
<p>Setting strategy and delivering long-term transformation</p> <p>Building trusted relationships with partners and communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of health, care, local government landscape and/ or the voluntary sector • A capacity to thrive in a complex and politically charged environment of change and uncertainty • Experience leading change at a very senior/board level to bring together disparate stakeholder interests • An understanding of different sectors, groups, networks and the needs of diverse populations • Exceptional communication skills and comfortable presenting in a variety of contexts • Highly developed interpersonal and influencing skills, able to lead in a creative environment, which enables people to thrive and collaborate • Experience working collaboratively across agency and professional boundaries
<p>Leading for social justice and health equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An awareness and appreciation of social justice and how it might apply within an ICS • Record of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in leadership roles • Life experience and personal motivation that will add valuable personal insights
<p>Driving high quality, sustainable outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving skills and the ability to identify issues and areas of risk, leading stakeholders to effective resolutions and decisions
<p>Providing robust governance and assurance</p> <p>Creating a compassionate and inclusive culture for our people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of good corporate governance • Ability to remain neutral to provide independent and unbiased leadership with a high degree of personal integrity • Substantial experience contributing effectively in complex professional meetings at very senior/board level • Models respect and a compassionate and inclusive leadership style with a demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in respect of boards, patients and staff • Creates and lives the values of openness and transparency embodied by the principles-of-public-life and in Our People Promise

7. Eligibility

Given the significant public profile and responsibility members of NHS boards hold, it is vital that those appointed inspire confidence of the public, patients and NHS staff at all times. We will undertake a number of specific background checks to ensure that those we appoint are 'fit and proper' people to hold these important roles. More information can be found on our [website](#).

You will be able to demonstrate that you meet the requirements of the fit and proper person test and that you have no substantial conflicts of interest that would interfere with your ability to be independent and offer an impartial perspective.

The successful applicants will not have an ongoing leadership role (hold positions or offices) at another health or care organisation within the same ICS footprint. You will need to stand down from such a role if appointed to the ICB independent non-executive member role.

Elected officials, including MPs and members of councils, are excluded from the ICB independent non-executive member role.

Applicants must be living in, or have a connection to, the North East and North Cumbria area.

Applications will be assessed on merit, as part of a fair and open process, from the widest possible pool of candidates. The information provided by applicants will be relied on to assess whether sufficient personal responsibility and competence have been demonstrated in previous/other roles, to satisfy the experience, skills and values being sought.

We value and promote diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity for all. We believe that the best boards are those that reflect the communities they serve.

The ICB is taking positive action to increase the diversity of its Board members and reflect the diverse population we serve. In non-executive roles nationally, we know that women, people from the local Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, LGBT communities, younger people and those with lived experience of disability are all under-represented.

We value and recognise the contribution of all people who show an interest in these roles. We are really interested in receiving applications from people with different backgrounds, skills and experience and particularly encourage and welcome applications for those under-represented.

Should you wish to have further discussion about the role then please get in touch to organise a meeting.

8. Terms of appointment

The remuneration: £13,000 - £16,000 (standard rate for all non-executive members), depending on time and experience.

The subsequent term of office as an ICB independent non-executive member will be three years.

You will have considerable flexibility to decide how you manage the time needed to undertake this role. On average, it will require a minimum of two to three days a month, including preparation time, the occasional evening engagement and events designed to support your continuous development.

All NHS board members are required to comply with the [Nolan Principles of Public Life](#) and meet the [Fit and Proper Persons requirements](#).

9. More information

- [Support in preparing your application](#)
- [Onboarding support, sources of information, useful reading](#)
- [View all current chair and non-executive vacancies](#)
- [Sign up to receive email alerts on the latest vacancies](#)

The North East and North Cumbria ICB respects your privacy and is committed to protecting your personal data. We will only use personal data where we have your consent or where we need to comply with a legal or statutory obligation. It is important that you read [this information](#) together with our [privacy notice](#) so that you are fully aware of how and why we are using your data.

10. Making an application

For an initial informal discussion about the roles, please contact our appointed recruitment consultant, Scot McHarg at NRG Executive.

- **Email** - scotmcharg@nrgplc.com
- **Mobile** - 07711 111 278

Applications should be emailed to Scot McHarg at NRG Executive, at scotmcharg@nrgplc.com by the **closing date of 7th April, 2026**.

Please include the following to support your application:

- A CV that includes your address and preferred contact details, highlighting and explaining any gaps in your employment history.
- A supporting statement that highlights your skills, knowledge and experience and allows insights into your values and motivations for applying for the role. You should outline your personal responsibility and

achievement within previous roles that demonstrate you have the knowledge, skills and competencies to deliver this role, as outlined in the person specification.

- The names, positions, organisations and contact details for three referees. Your referees should be individuals in a line management capacity (or senior stakeholders), and cover your most recent roles and employer, any regulated health or social care activity, or where roles involved children or vulnerable adults. Your references will be taken before interview and may be shared with the selection panel.
- Complete a diversity monitoring form and answer some questions about criteria that may disqualify you from appointment.
- Any dates when you will not be available for the selection process.

Preliminary selection

Information provided by applicants will be relied on to assess whether sufficient personal responsibility and competence have been demonstrated in previous/other roles, to satisfy the experience, skills and values outlined in the person specification.

Long-listed applicants may be invited for a preliminary interview. Feedback from any preliminary assessment will be given to the selection panel, who will agree on the shortlist of applicants to be invited to interview.

Shortlisting

The selection panel will use the information provided by the applicants and feedback from any preliminary assessment to agree on applicants invited to interview. Assessment will be based on merit against the competencies, experience, skills and values outlined in the person specification.

Interviews

Applicants will be asked to make a presentation (maximum of 10 minutes) to help the selection panel draw out the competencies, experience, skills and values outlined in the person specification.

The formal interview will be 45 mins to an hour of open questions from the selection panel to showcase past experience and explore the applicant's values, motivations, creativity and ability.

Appointment

Selection panels will be asked to identify appointable candidates based on merit against the competencies, experience, skills and values outlined in the person specification.

March 2026

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