

## Annex A

### Infectious Diseases

1. There was a peak of COVID-19 on 29 December 2022 - which coincided simultaneously with a peak of admissions for Influenza - and normal seasonal pressures seen over the Christmas and New Year holiday period. This was followed by a decline in admissions for both COVID-19 (and Influenza). The first COVID-19 wave of 2023 peaked on February 23rd with 8,107 beds occupied. Admissions have increased by just under 1,000 patients over the past two weeks (up to 16<sup>th</sup> March).
2. This winter saw an early wave of infections with 47,078 notifications of Scarlet fever, which is almost 5 times higher than the previous peak in the past decade. The more severe, invasive (iGAS) cases also had a far higher prevalence than normal with 2,180 notifications so far including 285 deaths (34 in children) giving a crude case fatality rate of 14%. The surge in cases plus extensive media coverage resulted in a significant increase in demand for NHS-111, Children's A&E (140%) and Primary Care with demand for antibiotics up to 8 fold higher than the seasonal norm. NHSE worked with UKHSA and DHSC to issue interim clinical guidance and maintain the antibiotic supply chain: a Serious Shortage Protocol was issued and updated on 23 Dec 2022 to allow pharmacists to substitute other effective antibiotics for Penicillin V. Case rates have now declined but remain above seasonal norms and this continues to be managed as an incident. In-action, multi-agency debriefs have already taken place so that planning for next winter can start immediately.

### Industrial Action

#### Agenda for Change unions

3. Since December, there has been a series of protracted industrial action by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), UNITE, GMB and UNISON ambulance workers, and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. On 13-16 March the BMA also took industrial action for 72 hours. The HCSA (Hospital Consultants and Specialist Association) and the British Dental Association (hospital dental trainees) also took industrial action at the same time. Each IA event has been unique due to different factors, including: the pressures/demand on the system at the time; staff taking action; type of derogations (national and local) agreed; the Trusts involved; and cumulative increase in preparedness.
4. The British Dietetic Association has now secured a mandate for strike action at 43 out of the 65 trusts balloted.
5. On 16 March, the government has made an offer to staff on the Agenda for Change contract. RCN strike action will be paused while members are consulted.

### Elective Care

6. The most recent data for January 2023 broadly shows a stabilisation of total waiting list size and median waiting time with a reduction in 52+,78+ and 104+ week waiters. The total elective waiting list for January 2023 stood at 7.21 million,

an increase of just over 13,000 since the previous month (including estimates for missing trusts). For patients waiting to start treatment at the end of January 2023, the median waiting time was 14.6 weeks.

7. Overall 78 week wait numbers are now down 80% since the peak. In the week ending 26 February 2023, there were 33,158 patients waiting over 78 weeks. This fell by over 13,000 to just 20,101 patients by the week ending 19 March.
8. NHS England continues to work actively with providers, particularly those that are most challenged, to ensure the focus of local interventions is to tackle the longest waiting patients. Providers are receiving different levels of support and oversight from national and regional teams; we will continue to review which providers receive this based on the performance progress that is being made.

## UEC

9. The NHS published a Delivery Plan for Recovering UEC Services on 30 January 2023. The two-year delivery plan sets out a number of ambitions including:
10. Patients being seen more quickly in emergency departments: with the ambition to improve to 76% of patients being admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours by March 2024, with further improvement in 2024/25.
11. Ambulances getting to patients quicker: with improved ambulance response times for Category 2 incidents to 30 minutes on average over 2023/24, with further improvement in 2024/25 towards pre-pandemic levels.
12. The proportion of patients spending less than four hours in A&E has seen an improvement in 2023 compared to the challenged period at the end of 2022; performance was 65.0% in December 2022, increasing to 72.4% in January, driven by an increase in General & Acute beds opened, as well as lower demand. Performance fell slightly in February to 71.5%, in part, due to an 8% increase in attendances per day and 3% increase in emergency admissions per day, though it has remained above the levels seen at the end of last year.
13. Category 2 ambulance response times have improved in early 2022 to just over 32 minutes in January and February and improved by over an hour compared to December 2022.
14. Whilst there has been some improvement on our headline recovery measures, challenges still persist with length of stay (LOS) which means that inpatient bed occupancy remains high. Bed occupancy has remained above 92%, and is currently above 95%.

## Discharge

15. Discharge delays remain a key issue, partly driven by capacity challenges outside of acute trusts. Over winter, additional funding has helped facilitate increased rates of discharge. In turn, this has improved patient flow.
16. Further improvements are planned through the UEC Recovery Plan.

#### 17. Key areas of focus are:

- Discharge Integration Frontrunners: ICS led integrated programmes to test discharge innovations across systems were announced in January 2023. Work is underway to support the six frontrunners with a plan to share learning and best practice.
- Integrated Care Transfer Hubs: Initial scoping work is taking place on the development for Integrated Care Transfer Hubs, which are local health and social care system-level coordinating centres linking all relevant services across sectors to aid discharge, recovery and admission avoidance.
- Planning for 23/24: Work continues through ICBs, who are liaising across their system, to ensure the Better Care Fund is used as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- Intensive support: Continued support to challenged Trusts and systems, in conjunction with DHSC's SRO for Social Care discharge, to cover all aspects of flow across all stakeholder organisations.

## Diagnostics

18. 2.17 million of the 15 key diagnostic tests were performed in January 2023, the highest monthly total on record, with the percentage of patients waiting for less than six weeks for a diagnostic improving from 68.7% in December to 69.2% in January. Systems are being supported to build on this improvement during a 'Focus on Diagnostics' month in March 2023, to drive action to consistently reduce 6 week wait backlogs for the major test types. Systems across the country have subsequently been implementing a wide range of initiatives to achieve this, whilst maintaining optimal activity levels per hour and reducing 'did not attends'. The June 2023 release of official Diagnostics statistics (for April 2023) will allow us to gauge the impact of the initiative and support systems across the rest of the year.

19. As of the third week of February 2023, CDCs have delivered nearly 3.25 million diagnostic tests since their establishment in July 2021.

## Cancer

20. First treatments saw an improved month in January 2023 with 1,328 treatments per working day which is 6% above January 2020 levels and 2% above January 2022 levels.

21. Referrals seen continue to be significantly above pre-pandemic levels, at 125% of pre-pandemic levels in January.

22. The increase in referrals has contributed to the NHS diagnosing more cancer at an early stage than ever before. Early diagnosis rates have risen for the first time in a decade. Survival is also at an all-time high. In 2023, the Annals of Oncology published findings showing that cancer deaths are around 10% lower in the UK compared to just five years ago.

23. The latest published data indicates the 62-day backlog stands at 19,027, down from 33,814 in September.

24. The Targeted Lung Health Check programme has seen 727,804 invites sent out and 1,625 lung cancers diagnosed to date of which 76% are at stage one or two.

### Primary care

25. NHS England has written to commissioners and GP practices outlining contractual arrangements for 2023/24, the final year of the five-year Investment and Evolution framework. This year the contract focuses on supporting teams and improving patient access and experience. Key changes are:

- Practices no longer being able to request patients contact the practice at a later time. Regardless of how a patient contacts their practice, they should be offered an assessment of need, or signposted to an appropriate service, at first contact.
- Building on the success of the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) through expanding its flexibility.
- A streamlined approach to the Impact and Investment Fund (IIF), reducing the number of indicators from 36 to 5 and releasing £246M to Primary Care Networks to improve patient experience of access
- A streamlined approach to QOF with £97M released to practices through income protection of some indicators, and a focus on staff wellbeing in the Quality Improvement (QI) module.

26. Between December 2021 and June 2023 724 practices will have completed the Accelerate Programme which has provided intensive improvement support to practices, through an initial 20-week period of hands-on structured support. 80% of practices have chosen to extend their participation in the programme (by 10-20 weeks) beyond the initial support. Data from the first three programme phases shows that 73% practices generated productivity gains, such as improved efficiency of key practice processes, releasing clinical and administration time. Practices report increased staff resilience and redirecting freed-up time to support wider practice workload, including more appointments and clinicians spending more time with patients with complex needs. Surveying at conclusion of the first phase of the programme has shown that 99% practice staff reported they felt better equipped to deal with their work challenges.

27. General Practice continues to demonstrate increased activity with 344.2 million appointments carried out in the 12 months up to and including January 2023, including 11.2 million COVID-19 vaccinations. This is 12% above the March 2019 baseline.

28. The latest primary care workforce data show that, as of 31 January 2023, there were 36,424 FTE doctors working in general practice in England. This is an additional 5.5% compared to the manifesto commitment baseline of 31 March 2019 and reflects the continued increase in GP training places. The number of fully qualified GPs has reduced by 4.2% over the same period.

29. As of 31 December 2022, there were 25,262 FTE direct patient care roles (clinical staff who are not GPs or nurses) in England. This is strong progress towards the target of 26,000 additional direct patient care staff by March 2024. In

February 2023, 90% of contracted dental activity was delivered. During the whole of 2022/23 we have also seen a slight increasing trend where 45% of contracts are now delivering 100% or more of their contracted activity.

## Mental Health

30. Pressure on services remains high with record levels of demand. Although progress continues to be made, a number of areas remain challenged. This includes the UEC mental health pathway, services for Children and Young People (CYP) with eating disorders, NHS Talking Therapies and perinatal access. This highlights the operational challenges services continue to experience, due to increased prevalence, greater acuity, and pressures on all parts of the NHS which interface with mental health services.
31. Despite the challenges mentioned above, there have been improvements across the programme. In the 12 months to end of November 2022, 708,939 CYP aged 0-17 received support from an NHS funded service. For CYP eating disorders, Q3 data shows that 77.5% of urgent cases were seen within 1 week and 80.7% of urgent cases were seen within 4 weeks.
32. In the 12 months to December 2023, 49,130 women accessed a specialist community perinatal or maternal mental health service. This is an 18.8% increase compared to the same period in the previous year. The national team and regions are providing targeted support for systems to recover towards the access ambition and encouraging ICSs to make the full investment in these services.
33. Current operational Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) cover 26% of the pupil population as of Spring 2022, reaching the original Long-Term Plan (LTP) commitment of 20 – 25% a year early.
34. For NHS Talking Therapies, the 6-weeks 75% and 18-weeks 95% referral to treatment waiting time standards are being met nationally and in all regions, however demand is lower than expected. The number of patients waiting over 90 days between the first and second treatment decreased from 24% in Q1 2022/23 to 23% in Q2 2022/23. Although there is a slight decrease from the previous quarter, the figure has remained high since the onset of the pandemic. In December 2022, Talking Therapies services delivered access for 81.5K people (55% of the target).
35. The NHS continues to meet the Early Intervention in Psychosis two-week waiting time standard, with latest data as of November 2022 showing 72.2% of referrals to treatment were successfully completed within two weeks, against a 60% target.
36. The UEC Mental Health pathway continues to be under pressure, experiencing high bed occupancy at 96.1% as of 7 March 2023 (above the recommended 'safe' levels of 85%). This is in part caused by challenges securing social care and housing support for patients and is resulting in patients being sent out of area to access hospital care. There has been an increase in Out of Area placements (OAP) during Q2 2022/23 at 54,865 days. Length of Stay has continued to rise to an average of 43.6 days nationally due to high acuity and

delayed discharges. The discharge challenge launched in December 2022 and the national team will continue to work with regions to embed the initiatives and maintain momentum on reducing delayed discharges and LOS.

37. In the 12 months to end of Q2 2022/23, the NHS provided a physical health check to 239k people with severe mental illness (SMI) which is 74% of the LTP rolling target for Q2 2022/23. Physical health checks for people with SMI is a key focus area to tackle health inequalities and premature mortality.
38. The draft 'Patient and Carers Race Equality Framework' (PCREF) has been published and is available to the healthcare sector, and will support mental health trusts to improve access, experience, and outcomes for ethnic minorities.
39. Workforce remains the biggest risk to service delivery, expansion and transformation, particularly for commitments such as Talking Therapies access where workforce expansion has not kept pace with the LTP. Vacancy rates, especially in mental health nursing, is a concern, with leaver rates higher than pre-pandemic.

### Communities & Personalisation

40. Community Health Services have attained full coverage of 2-hour Urgent Care Response 8am-8pm, 7 days a week at a minimum, across all 42 ICBs. In line with national guidance, systems continue to work towards providing a standard Urgent Community Referral offer that covers all agreed nine clinical conditions. The national expectation is for at least 70% of patients to be seen within 2-hours of referral to Urgent Community Referral and the latest data (January 23) shows that nationally 80% of patients were seen within the 2-hour standard.
41. All ICSs continue to deliver against trajectories agreed with the national programme towards an ambition of 40-50 Virtual Ward (VW) beds per 100,000 population, with an increase in capacity nationally over the last reporting period to some 7,520 VW beds. Local implementation is translating into increased capacity and improved data quality is being reflected in more robust sitrep submissions.
42. The Personalised Care programme has now doubled its LTP commitment for people benefitting from personalised care. The programme has also exceeded its LTP commitment of 900,000 people being referred to a social prescribing service - there are currently 2,561 social prescribing link workers employed by a PCN/GP practice and since Apr 2019, they have seen over 1.7m patients. We are also on track to meet the LTP commitment of 200,000 people having received a personal health budget by 23/34.

### Learning Disabilities and Autism

43. Between April 2022 to the end of January 2023, 990 adults had been discharged from an inpatient setting and of these people 358 (37%) had a LOS of over one year.
44. NHS England housing capital continues to support people with a learning disability and autistic people to leave hospital and move into homes of their own,

as well as enabling systems to invest in crash pads and crisis provision, including 86 people supported to live their own home in the community during 2022/23.

45. Since the launch of the Keyworkers Programme, the number of young people supported by key working services to remain or return to their community has risen to 1,500. The Autism in Schools project is being rolled out nationally to over 330 schools, helping them to support autistic young people by creating inclusive positive environments and supporting them to build positive relationships with families.
46. Between April 2022 and January 2023, 57% of people had received an Annual Health Check, an improvement of 12% on the equivalent period in the previous year. An increasing emphasis in championing health inequalities and raising awareness, particularly within regions, has made a significant impact.
47. Although the GP Learning Disability Register (GPLDR) levels fluctuate, the register increased by over 5,972 in January 2023 compared to January 2022. There has been an increase in the number of 'declined' annual health checks. NHS England are working with primary care to improve the recording of ethnicity of people within the GPLDR; this is particularly important to support the increased health needs and reduce the early mortality of people with a learning disability from an ethnic minority. Evidence from the 2021 annual LeDeR report reiterates that people from an ethnic minority with a learning disability die at a younger age compared to those who are white.
48. At the end of January 2023, the number of adults in a mental health inpatient setting was 1,825, a decrease of 31% since March 2015. In 22/23 (up to January), 37% of inpatients had an LOS of over one year. At the end of January 2023, the number of under 18s in an inpatient setting was 198; 29 away from the revised March 2023 operational plan target. Reducing reliance on mental health inpatient care for people with a learning disability and autistic people remains a key priority.

## Diabetes

49. Over 1.2 million referrals have been made into the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme to date. A recent independent evaluation looking at programme completers found that they reduce their risk of developing type-2 diabetes by 37%, and the programme in general resulted in a 7% reduction in population-level incidence in areas where the programme was delivered between 2016 - 2018. When looking at those referred to the programme, the latest independent research published in February demonstrated a 20% reduction in Type 2 diabetes incidence compared to those not referred.
50. The NHS Type 2 Diabetes Path to Remission Programme (previously NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme) is currently available in 50% of ICSs. To date, over 7,700 referrals have been made. Early data indicates participants each lose 7.2kg on average after one month, and 13.4kg after three months. This is in line with the outcomes seen in the trials where participants were able to improve their diabetes control, reduce diabetes-related medication and, in around 50% of cases put their type 2 diabetes into remission.

51. Between January 2022 and June 2022, 13.4% of people with type 1 diabetes and 19.5% of people with type 2 or other diabetes received all eight routine diabetes care processes in England. This is a 27.4% and 27.9% percentage increase respectively comparing to the time period January 2021 to June 2021.
52. People from the most deprived quintile were less likely to receive all eight care processes compared to people from the least deprived quintile with the gap standing at a percentage difference of -20.8% for type 1 diabetes and -15.0% for type 2 diabetes during January 2021 and March 2022.

## Screening and Immunisations

53. Most of the NHS breast screening services have now caught up with the pandemic backlog.
54. The NHS bowel cancer screening programme continues to exceed the 65% uptake target with extension to 58-year-olds having commenced from April 2022 in addition to the completed extension to 56-year-olds that was rolled out in 2021/22. NHS England launched a major bowel cancer screening campaign in February 2023. It aims to increase the number of people returning a completed bowel cancer screening test and will run for a month.
55. The NHS diabetic eye screening programme reported full recovery from the disruption caused by the pandemic in September 2022 and Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm screening programmes reported full recovery in December 2022.
56. The three NHS antenatal and three NHS new-born screening programmes continue to achieve continuous coverage levels close to 100%.
57. The NHS is working to increase uptake across all vaccination programmes with a specific focus on MMR and school-aged immunisations catch up. The MMR “call and recall” initiative rolled out as planned at the end of September 2022 for 1 to 6-year-olds. The programme has a digital-first approach, using text messaging to call around 790,000 children eligible across England, followed up with an invitation letter a week later. The second call took place in December 2022 and a further recall was completed in winter 2023.
58. Around 21.2m people were vaccinated by 7th March 2023 in the seasonal flu programme. The programme is delivering at pace and on target to at least equal last season's uptake levels. This is being facilitated by increased levels of co-promotion and co-administration of flu with COVID-19 vaccinations. This year, 50–64-year-olds (not clinically at risk) and some secondary school aged children were included as eligible cohorts for vaccination later this season; this was a change announced by DHSC in July 2022 as additional to those cohorts announced in the Annual Tripartite Flu letter (24 April 2022). There are targeted communication campaigns to ensure uptake in eligible cohorts in place.
59. Following the detection of polio virus in sewage samples in some London boroughs, NHS London has responded to this outbreak by delivering an immunisation catch up for the under 5s and a booster campaign inviting 1–9-year-olds who are not fully vaccinated for a booster. The NHS continues to

deliver an outbreak immunisation service to those at highest risk of contracting monkeypox offering targeted and opportunistic appointments across the country.

## COVID-19 Vaccinations

60. The Autumn Winter 2022/23 campaign ran from 5 September 2022 until 12 February 2023. The campaign exceeded operational plans with over 17m booster vaccinations being delivered.
61. Following a successful deployment of COVID-19 vaccination into older adult care homes in autumn/ winter, we will continue to make improvements to ensure continued high uptake in light of their heightened vulnerability to COVID-19. These include developing a care home outcomes-based incentive for Spring '23.
62. NHS England using an ever-evolving range of targeted initiatives at a national and regional level to encourage uptake e.g., revisiting early engagement and dialogues with communities through faith, clinical and community leaders and maximising uptake in those groups who are most at risk, our operational focus continues to be on maintaining equitable access to booking slots in NBS for all eligible cohorts and continuing to improve healthcare worker uptake.

## Long COVID-19

63. As of 2 January 2023, the Office of National Statistics estimates 2 million people in the UK (3.0% of the population) experienced self-reported long COVID-19 with 380,000 (19%) reporting that their ability to undertake their day-to-day activities had been "limited a lot".
64. There are currently 90 post COVID-19 services and 14 specialist paediatric post-COVID-19 hubs.
65. During the 4-week period 19 December 2022 – 15 January 2023 there were a total of 2,864 referrals to NHS post COVID-19 services, 654 (19%) fewer than in the previous 4 weeks. Of these referrals a total of 2,481 were accepted as clinically appropriate for assessment (87%). In total, since the data was first published in July 2021, 76,507 patients have received an initial specialist assessment. A further 211,149 follow-up appointments have taken place.
66. Of those who had their initial specialist assessment during the 4-week reporting period, 49% were seen within 6 weeks, and 61% within 8 weeks of referral. 16% of patients waited longer than 15 weeks.

## Children and Young People (CYP)

67. The CYP Transformation Programme continues to be on track to achieve its LTP commitments to improve care and outcomes for CYP with asthma, epilepsy and diabetes, and develop new ways of working to integrate care. Expected impacts include reduction in non-elective admissions, outpatient appointments and Emergency Department attendance.
68. The national UEC recovery plan published on 30 January 2023 included CYP-related commitments to expand support and paediatric advice through NHS.UK,

NHS111, and NHS111 online to support decision making and management of minor illness; increase access to paediatric expertise through NHS111 paediatric clinical assessment services (CAS); develop paediatric Virtual Wards and Acute Respiratory Infection Hubs; improve and standardise provision of paediatric Same Day Emergency Care services (SDEC); embed Family Support Workers across selected A&E sites; roll-out of the standardised Paediatric Early Warnings Score (PEWS) in inpatient settings and develop plans for the expansion into A&E, community, ambulance and primary care.

69. Paediatric NHS111 CAS is currently in progress and being expanded to onboard a cohort of Advanced Clinical Practitioners to expand its skill-mix and capacity.
70. National Elective Recovery and CYP Programme teams continue to work together to address backlogs in paediatric elective care. A CYP Elective Recovery toolkit has been developed to share positive practice and set out minimum expectations to accelerate the pace of CYP recovery. Planning is underway for a national elective recovery campaign focused on CYP, to commence in May 2023.

## Maternity

71. The NHS is due to publish the 3-year Delivery Plan for Maternity and Neonatal Services.
72. The 3-year Delivery Plan for Maternity and Neonatal Services includes learning from independent reports last year into maternity and neonatal services in Shrewsbury and Telford and East Kent.

## Genomics

73. The NHS continues to provide the NHS Genomics Medicine Service through a consolidated laboratory network made up of seven NHS Genomic Laboratory Hubs (GLHs) delivering cutting edge testing outlined in a single mandated National Genomic Test Directory, seven NHS GMS Alliances working together to support clinical leadership and embedding of genomic medicine in end-to-end pathways, and clinical genomic services that diagnose and manage complex rare and inherited disease.
74. In February we have continued to see an increase in access to genomic services. In line with the NHS LTP, there has been a growth in the number of patients accessing the Whole Genome Sequencing service, in addition to the rapid Whole Genome Sequencing service launched in October 2022 for acutely unwell babies and children. There has also been an increase in the number of extensive genomic testing offered to patients diagnosed with cancers.
75. To ensure that the national testing offer stays up to date with the latest scientific evidence, there are further planned updates to the National Genomic Test Directory in April 2023. This will include, for example, new indications for inherited prostate cancer, non-invasive prenatal diagnosis for monogenic diabetes and recurrent episodic apnoea.

## Recovery Support Programme

76. The Recovery Support Programme (RSP) provides national mandated intensive support to trusts and ICBs in NHS Oversight Framework segment 4 and have complex, deep-seated concerns around leadership, governance, finance, patient safety, quality and performance. Since the last update in February 2023 Board, there have been no new entries to the RSP. The programme has 18 trusts (7 legacy special measures) and 4 ICBs.
77. 18 RSP Review Meetings have been held between March 2021 and February 2023 to stress test the trusts improvement plans, progress against their exit criteria, acknowledge improvements made following exit and where there has been national or regional concern about lack of progress. There are a further six meetings planned in March 2023. The RSP Review Meetings for Q1 23/24 are currently being scheduled.