

To:
Lancashire and South
Cumbria partner organisations

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By email

Re: Board approval of the ICB operating model and organisational structures

Dear colleagues and partners,

Last Thursday (30 July), our Board approved NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB's future operating model and organisational structures, marking an important milestone in our journey to become a more focused, sustainable and effective strategic commissioning organisation.

The approved proposals reflect the extensive feedback received from staff, unions and partners throughout the consultation process. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to contribute. The feedback received has helped strengthen both the operating model and the final organisational structures.

Attached to this email you will find:

- The approved organisational structures
- The approved operating model narrative

The structure has been designed to support our future role as a strategic commissioner. The functions, skills and leadership responsibilities we need for that role are different from those of the organisation we have today. While the structure is smaller overall, it is designed to ensure we have the right capacity and expertise to improve population health, reduce inequalities, strengthen partnerships and make the best use of public resources across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

During the consultation, many partners highlighted the importance of strong place-based leadership and closer alignment with local authorities. We listened carefully to that feedback. The final structure strengthens our place arrangements by moving from two place teams to four place teams aligned to the new local authority boundaries. This reflects the importance of place as the foundation of our operating model and will help strengthen partnership working, support local decision-making and ensure we are better able to respond to the needs of local communities across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

We also heard questions from colleagues and partners about the size and shape of the organisation, including concerns that it remained too focused on senior leadership roles. The final structure reduces the proportion of senior leadership posts while increasing the proportion of roles at Bands 2 to 7 compared to the position at 31 March 2026. We believe this provides a stronger balance between strategic leadership, commissioning capability and delivery capacity, while ensuring we have the expertise required to fulfil our future role.

The final structure remains broadly in line with what was proposed during consultation and reflects the feedback received from colleagues and partners. While we have not yet achieved the national target funding level of £19.60 per weighted head of population, the approved structure provides a clear route towards that position which we will want to discuss further with partners.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, we will continue to review capacity, ways of working and opportunities for shared roles and do-once commissioning through the Office of Pan-ICB Commissioning. This work will be important in helping us move closer to the national target while retaining the capabilities needed to deliver our statutory responsibilities and support the wider system.

The structures are only one part of our future organisation. The operating model narrative sets out the next phase of development, including how we will work with partners, how teams will collaborate across organisational boundaries, and the culture, behaviours and capabilities we need to succeed. There is still significant work to do with partners to further develop and refine the operating model and translate it into practical ways of working. This work will help ensure our structure, ways of working and culture are aligned with our ambition to improve population health, reduce inequalities and strengthen partnership working across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

We are also conscious of the ongoing discussions regarding potential future ICB boundary changes. At this stage, we have not received any formal confirmation or further detail regarding future boundary arrangements however, we have sought to design an operating model that is flexible, sustainable and capable of adapting to different future scenarios. We will continue to engage openly with partners and keep you updated as soon as we are aware of any updates from national discussions.

We are now moving into the implementation phase and will continue to engage closely with partners as this work progresses. We remain committed to working collaboratively across our Lancashire and South Cumbria and maintaining strong relationships with NHS organisations, local authorities, primary care, the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector, wider partners and our population.

When we began this work in March, we anticipated that developing a new operating model and organisational structure would take between three and six months. Receiving Board approval marks a significant milestone and demonstrates the progress we have made during that period. However, there remains important work ahead as we move into implementation and continue to develop the operating model with partners.

This also remains a period of uncertainty for many of our colleagues. I am grateful for the support, understanding and constructive challenge shown by partners throughout this process, and I would ask for your continued support as we work through the next phase of change together.

Thank you for your continued support, challenge and collaboration throughout this process and for your ongoing commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Best wishes,



Aaron Cummins
Chief executive
NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB