

A year of success for trailblazing care programmes

PIONEERING health and social programmes that are transforming care across the North East – and that could soon be rolled out nationally – are celebrating success, one year in.

Health and care professionals across the North East have spent the last 12 months successfully putting in place brand new models of care, that are expected to be adopted the length and breadth of the country. The programmes – known by NHS England as ‘vanguards’ – are currently running in Gateshead, Northumberland and Sunderland, in addition to a region-wide urgent and emergency care model, all aimed at improving patient care, while making efficiencies and helping to ensure the NHS’s long-term sustainability.

Each vanguard aims to test out different ways of working, addressing each of the areas’ challenges. The programme in Sunderland is known as All Together Better. It aims to bring health and social care together, alongside local support groups, to deliver patient-centred care to the most vulnerable and unwell people in the city, who currently use more than half of NHS resources in Sunderland. The project has seen the formation of a Recovery at Home service, designed to provide short term care to those with spikes in their health and social care needs, allowing them to remain at home and independent; Community Integrated Teams, with multi-disciplinary health, social and support teams working in partnership to wrap care around people in the comfort of their home; and Enhanced Primary Care, which sees GPs use new, innovative technology to allow them to provide more holistic, effective support to their patients.

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is delivering two vanguards – the first, working in partnership with NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Northumberland County Council and other health and social care partners across the county, is designed to integrate care in the area by creating a ‘primary and acute care system’. The successful opening of the Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital last year marked the first important steps and means consultant specialists now available seven days a week to care for those who are seriously ill or injured, greatly improving patient outcomes.

The second is delivering ‘acute care collaboration’. This vanguard is one of only three of its kind nationally and spearheading a new way of working known as a ‘multi-hospital chain’, through which Northumbria Healthcare will share its clinical knowledge and expertise, spreading innovation and best practice across the NHS, as well as providing corporate services to other NHS organisations to help improve efficiency and drive improvement.

Gateshead's Vanguard Care Home Programme is a joint approach by NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Gateshead Council, and aims to deliver enhanced health and social care in care homes.

It is working with GPs, nurses, hospitals and social workers to improve the care that is provided to around 1500 people who live in local care homes. The programme, which sees GP practices each allocated to an individual care home to ensure better continuity of care, has helped to reduce emergency admissions to hospital by 14%. While the initial focus is on people in residential and nursing care homes, it will expand its work to benefit other older people in the next two to three years.

Trish Hamilton, Strategic Account Manager of New Care Models for North East, said that the early success seen by the region's vanguards meant that the North East was growing a reputation as a leading light nationally for its work.

She said: "The North East areas really have embraced this new way of working, and as a result the outcomes for patients have been fantastic.

"The vanguards programme has provided a unique opportunity for areas of the region to take a step back and reimagine the way they deliver care and intervention, and it's hugely encouraging to see that the approach is having such a positive impact. Our work will blaze a trail nationally, and the things we have learned along the way will help to inform how other areas adapt their approach."

As well as localised vanguards, there is a region-wide one, the North East Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguard, which – among other things – has developed an app to support parents and carers of under fives to manage common illnesses and injuries; as well as telehealth, which uses technology to make it easy for those with long-term conditions to measure things like their blood pressure, and automatically share their results with medical professionals for monitoring.

The North East Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguard is working to transform the urgent and emergency care system across the region, reducing variation and helping patients to access the right care in the right place, first time.

This includes plans to improve the use of information across the region, sharing of healthcare records, a smartphone app to help parents and carers of under fives to manage common illnesses and injuries, support for staff in care homes, a simulation training programme, developing the clinical response the NHS is able to provide over the phone and a 'flight deck' which monitors and predicts pressures on emergency services.

All the projects within the Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguard are supported by organisations across the region, working working together to improve the quality and consistency of patient care.

There were 29 vanguard sites selected in 2015, with a further 21 having been added since. The pilots form part of a national New Care Models Programme which is playing a key role in the delivery of the Five Year Forward View – the vision for the future of the NHS.

Additional funding from NHS England has been given to support the work of the region's vanguard sites, and is being drawn from a national £200 million NHS transformation fund. In addition, the vanguards are also able to call on specially tailored practical assistance from NHS England and its partners. This includes support to better harness new technology and to develop a modern, flexible workforce which is organised around patients and their local populations.

Samantha Jones, director of the New Care Models Programme, said: "Our programme is about radical redesign to sustain the NHS – that's locally led by frontline NHS and social care staff in partnership with patients, carers and the local community, including organisations outside the NHS such as councils and voluntary groups.

"One year on from the launch of the programme there is a real sense of moving from the planning stage to delivery. Significant change is happening on the ground and the vanguards are starting to make a great difference to the lives of thousands of people. The progress we are making wouldn't have been possible without the fantastic support and hard work and dedication of every partner, organisation and member of staff involved."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The NHS Five Year Forward View is a partnership between NHS England, Monitor, the Care Quality Commission, The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), Health Educational England, Public Health England and the NHS Trust Development Authority.

Twitter – #future NHS and #vanguards365

For more information about the new care models programme, including a full list of the 50 vanguards, visit: www.england.nhs.uk/vanguards.