



# LIVE WELL NEWSLETTER

Live Well: 26 July 2023

## Welcome to Live Well, our newsletter for our Integrated Care System.

This month in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes, we've marked several significant anniversaries. The 75th anniversary of Windrush saw great engagement from our local communities, from flag-raising ceremonies and exhibitions to vibrant community celebrations. I'm sure you will have seen the celebrations marking the NHS 75th birthday, too. Read more about that below.

We also celebrated the first anniversary of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Health and Care Partnership. I invite you to watch the video below in which Dr Rima Makarem reflects on the partnership's key achievements and the major challenges that lie ahead.

In another first, we were proud to host our Integrated Care Partnership Health and Work Seminar last Friday. It was a superb day, with almost 80 partners coming together to design action plans for how we tackle some of our most significant cross-cutting challenges. Do read the write up and watch the videos below -- more insights are available [on my Twitter](#). As BLMK, I know we all look forward to driving those plans forward together, and throughout maintaining our focus on [listening to our residents](#).



*Felicity*

**Felicity Cox**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board

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### News and features



## Luton “highly commended” for approach to tackling health inequalities

Luton Council was ‘highly commended’ for its approach to tackling health inequalities at the MJ Achievement Awards 2023 last month – the biggest awards ceremony in the country for teams and individuals in local government.

Luton’s town-wide vision is that no-one should live in poverty by 2040. This vision puts health and wellbeing, and tackling inequalities, at the heart of the council’s strategic direction.

As part of this commitment, Luton is working to become the first ‘Marmot Town’, building on the recommendations of Professor Sir Michael Marmot and The Institute of Health Equity (IHE) to reduce avoidable health inequalities.

The implementation of these recommendations is being led by the council’s public health team in collaboration with partners across the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise and private sectors, healthcare and other public services.

Sally Cartwright, Director of Public Health at Luton Council, said: “Our 2040 vision is to make Luton a fairer, healthier and more sustainable place where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

“In Luton we have high levels of deprivation and poverty and life expectancy is lower than other towns across the country. Our vision shared by partners across the town puts health and wellbeing, and tackling health inequalities, at the heart of what we do.

“Working with The Institute of Health Equity, the Marmot Town concept has provided additional clarity and focus on how we together with our partners can tackle unfair and avoidable health differences across Luton’s population. We were therefore delighted to receive recognition at the MJ Achievement Awards for the work we are all doing so that ultimately everyone can enjoy a good quality of life.”

Read more on the [Luton Council website](#)



Left to right: Chimeme Egbutah; Sally Cartwright; Claire Astbury; Nina Pearson; Nicky Poulain; Cllr Khtija Malik; Cllr Zanib Raja; Sofia Aziz; Lisa ???; Mark Fowler.

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### **Health and care partners commit to tackling major employment and health challenges**

Around 80 people from local authorities, the NHS and other public services, including

HM Prison Service and the Department for Work and Pensions, were joined by representatives of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors for a day of action planning on tackling poor health and employment outcomes. Attendees also included residents with relevant lived experience, several of whom shared powerful stories of the positive health impact of finding employment.

Dr Rima Makarem, Chair of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board, said: “Poor health and unemployment are inextricably linked. Ill-health, and chronic illness in particular, is a blight on people’s lives; it prevents them from living long, fulfilling lives, makes them less likely to secure and stay in work, and it adds pressure to health services and the local economy alike.

“As an integrated care system, we will rally partners to listen to residents, and develop action plans which we can pursue together.”

The event’s keynote speaker, Professor Donna Hall CBE, is an advisor on Integrated Care Boards to NHS England and formerly chief executive at Wigan Council. Professor Hall discussed the nature of the relationship between citizens and the services they receive from the state, a subject on which she has written extensively.

Themes running through the locality action plans developed at the seminar include closer working with employers to increase the number of workplaces which support people into jobs after a period outside employment, enhancing the level and relevance of young people’s skills for the modern workplace, and investigating whether people can be directed more efficiently to volunteering opportunities when they receive treatment for their mental health or substance misuse. [Read more.](#)



*Dr Rima Makarem, chair of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (right, standing), introduces the panel of lived-experience speakers at the start of the day.*

### **Dedicated healthcare professionals in award wins**

A digital midwife at Bedford Hospital has received a prestigious Chief Midwifery Officer's Silver Award from the then Chief Midwifery Officer, Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent OBE.

Sarah Lumley was recognised for her contribution to digital midwifery alongside six other Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems (LMNS) lead midwives in the East of England.

A year ago, the East of England Digital Midwives Expert Reference Group brought together digital midwives from across the region – the first of its kind. The group meets monthly to share best practice. [Read more about their work.](#)

Meanwhile, a group of caring and diligent NHS volunteers in Bedfordshire have also been recognised for their vital contribution to breastfeeding support.

The Breastfeeding Buddies from Bedfordshire Community Health Services (part of Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust) are regional winners for the Volunteer Award category in [the NHS Parliamentary Awards](#) for the support they give in Baby Brasseries, which are groups based in children’s centres in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. They were nominated by Mohammed Yasin MP and Richard Fuller MP.

[Read more about the programme.](#)



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### **Marking the Health and Care Partnership’s first birthday**

The new chair of the East of England Ambulance Service On 1 July 2023, Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Health and Care Partnership celebrated its first birthday. The partnership has been driving collaboration and innovation to address the complex health and social care challenges faced by our population, helping them to

live longer, healthier lives.

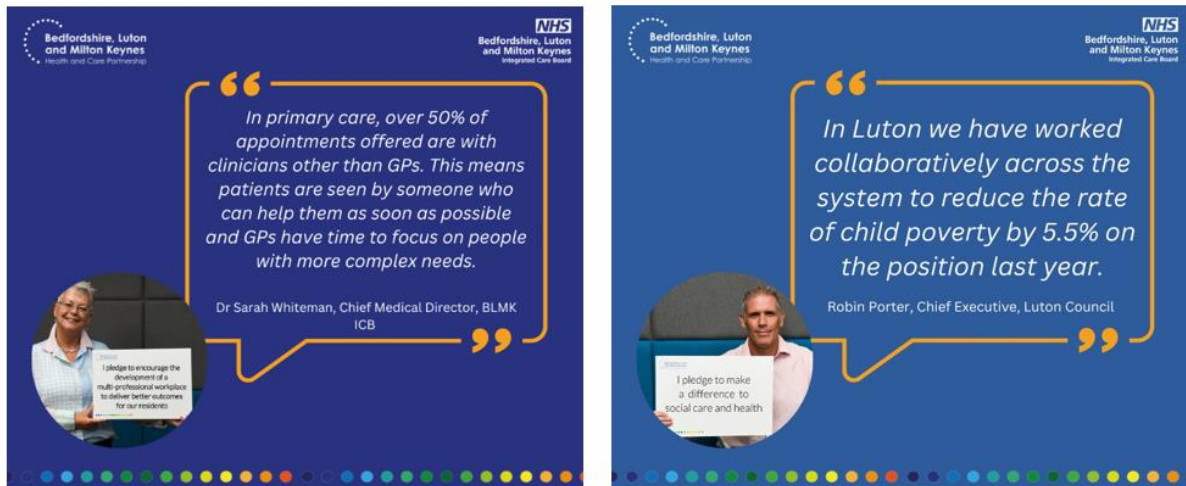
Watch Dr Rima Makarem, Chair of the Integrated Care Board, set out some of the key achievements in its first year and reflect on the major challenges in the year ahead in the video below, and read more [on our website](#).



### **#PlayBackPledges**

To mark one year of the BLMK Health and Care Partnership, leaders have been reflecting on the pledges they made upon its inception as part of the #PlayBackPledges campaign. That includes a pledge from Robin Porter, Chief Executive of Luton Council, to make a difference to social care and health, and a pledge from Dr Sarah Whiteman, Chief Medical Director for BLMK ICB, to encourage the development of a multi-professional workplace to deliver better outcomes for our residents.

You can view a playlist of video reflections on the [BLMK Health and Care Partnership YouTube channel](#).



## BLMK marks Windrush 75 and the NHS's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday

People and organisations across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes [celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of the NHS](#) this month and joined the nation in [honouring the enduring contributions of the Windrush generation](#) on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their arrival in Britain.

The launch of the NHS on 5 July 1948 and the arrival of the Windrush 13 days earlier are inextricably linked. The Windrush pioneers filled crucial healthcare roles, including in nursing, midwifery, and support services, making significant contributions to the provision of high quality care to patients across the country. Here are some of the highlights from the celebrations.

Healthcare professionals, service users, carers and other members of the community gathered for [The Great Bedfordshire NHS Show](#) at The Forest Centre in Marston Moretaine. The packed event was organised by Bedfordshire Community Health Services (BCHS), part of East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT), and the Governor and Members office of ELFT. Guests spent the afternoon talking with friendly



healthcare professionals and partners and touring a bustling marketplace of stalls and activities, with everything from art and craft activities to health and wellbeing information.



From a [Windrush flag-raising ceremony](#) to [The Legacy Weekend celebration of Caribbean culture](#) in Harpur Square, Bedford, and from [an open exhibition in Milton Keynes](#) to a [programme of events in Luton](#), people across the area came together to mark 75 years since the Windrush passengers arrived in Essex from Caribbean countries following World War Two.

Public buildings and landmarks across the area were lit up in blue as part of the NHS 75th birthday celebrations. That included Luton Town Hall, the civic offices at Milton Keynes City Council, and river bridges in Bedford (right).

Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust hosted an afternoon tea for colleagues, with a number of stands where staff could learn about current and future plans for the Trust. Their Catering Manager Francesco marked the occasion by baking an impressive 7.5-foot-long cake for colleagues to enjoy.

A number of colleagues across BLMK attended [a special service at Westminster Abbey](#) to celebrate the birthday. That includes, Kathy Nelson, Cancer Lead for BLMK, who managed to score a selfie with NHS Chief Executive Amanda Pritchard. Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh also attended the service, joined by around 1,500 NHS staff, senior government and political leaders, health leaders and celebrities.







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### Partnership event explores being active and ageing well

Partners from across BLMK came together last month to consider challenges and opportunities for healthy ageing and how they can work together to tackle inequalities in later life at the “Live Longer Better – Being Active and Ageing Well” event.

Live Longer Better is a programme which aims to get older people more active. The event, held at University of Bedfordshire, aimed to inspire, inform, and explore options for how to get people moving more and increase the healthy lifespan of our population.

It featured a keynote speech from renowned public health practitioner Professor Sir Muir Gray, Director of the Optimal Ageing Programme and Programme Lead for Live Longer Better. Craig Lister, Associate Director for Primary Care Transformation and Prevention Lead at BLMK ICB, also gave a keynote speech on prevention priorities and the role of physical activity.

**Craig said:** “Supporting regular physical activity among older people is an essential step to keep them in good health, especially when coupled with social connectedness. Regular mobility is a key indicator in overall good health, including mental health, for older people, and this was a fantastic opportunity to bring together key partners in the NHS, local authorities and the voluntary, community and social

enterprise sector to focus on this important topic.”



### **Bedford Borough Connected**

More than 140 people from across the community, voluntary and public sector came together at Bedford Borough's most recent evening of discussion and networking. Community Network: Bedford Borough Connect, hosted by the local authority in partnership with CVS Bedfordshire, took place at the Harpur Suite in Bedford town centre.

Guests from 65 different organisations participated in topical networking relevant to their organisation and sector on a range of subjects including education, skills and employment, health, homelessness, arts and sport. The event facilitated important conversations and the building of relationships across different organisations.

The Community Network takes place three times a year. The next event is on

Thursday 5 October, from 6pm to 8.30pm, at Bedford Borough Hall. Email



communities@bedford.gov.uk for more information.

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## **Patients to get the help they need more quickly with launch of Unscheduled Care Hub**

A brand new Unscheduled Care Hub has been unveiled in Luton to support patients to get the help they need more quickly.

Paramedics will be able to transfer suitable patients directly from the Ambulance Service to a community healthcare provider, potentially eliminating the need for patients to go to emergency departments for further treatment and meaning more people can stay safe and well at home.

The paramedics leading this work are stationed at the Hub in Luton and sit alongside their community partner colleagues to enable instant clinical conversations and appropriate decision making. A frailty consultant attached to the Luton and Dunstable Hospital also supports the Unscheduled Care Hub Team to determine the right clinical response in a timely way.

This means that, where appropriate, people are seen sooner by the right healthcare practitioner rather than going to hospital, and are likely to receive a more tailored approach to their care. The NHS Community Services' Teams provide rapid response services that can help people at home -- without the need for an ambulance -- so that more patients can maintain their independence for longer. [Read more.](#)

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### **Event to support local care providers with digital innovation hailed success**

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Health and Care Partnership hosted its second annual care conference this month, promoting the wide range of digital innovations available to the care sector through the [Digitising Social Care \(DiSC\) programme](#).

The 'BLMK Future Digitisation of Social Care' event saw around 80 care sector providers taking the opportunity to learn about how digital can address some of the challenges facing the care sector.

That includes things like remote health monitoring – an increasingly important way of keeping people well. Measuring patients' vital signs using technological innovations means health professionals can manage people's health conditions while enabling them to stay in their own living environment. [Read more.](#)



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### **Listening to residents via The Big Conversation**

BLMK ICB's communications and engagement team have been busy talking to residents across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes over the past few weeks as part of 'The Big Conversation'. The programme of engagement aims to understand what is important to residents, helping the ICB to adapt to meet their needs. So far, they've attended India Day Milton Keynes, African Diaspora Day, Luton Health Fest, refugee community events, and many more. See where they'll be next [on the BLMK](#)

[HCP website](#). If you have any events coming up that the team can attend, email [blmkicb.communications@nhs.net](mailto:blmkicb.communications@nhs.net)



### **New Board appointments**

Vineeta Manchanda has been appointed as a Non-Executive Member on the ICB's Board, and new Chair of the Audit Committee. Vineeta brings strong financial management and commercial skills developed over 25 years in blue chip global firms, as well as at niche start-up emerging market investment banks. She has held Non-Executive Director and Audit Chair positions across a variety of public and voluntary sector organisations, including at Waltham Forest and East London CCG and at a leading provider of adult social care.

Vineeta said: "xxxxxx"

Dr Sahadev Swain has been appointed as GP Partner Member for the ICB. Dr Swain, who lives in Hertfordshire, has worked as a GP in Luton for the last 16 years, and brings with him experience from a diverse range of influential posts.

Dr Swain said: "Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System has unique potential to achieve the ambitious objectives of delivering better homes, better education, better jobs and better health.

"I am passionate about holistic care, reducing health inequalities, and promotion population health through prioritisation and innovation, and I'm looking forward to



being part of the system that makes such important decisions about the health and wellbeing of our local population.” [Read more](#).



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### **BLMK Joint Forward Plan published**

A bold new plan that brings together the ambitions of partners was published earlier this month, outlining a comprehensive roadmap for health and care transformation. The BLMK [Joint Forward Plan](#) sets out how the NHS, councils, the wider public sector, and voluntary organisations across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes plan to provide services to meet local people’s physical and mental health needs.

It sets out the most complex, important, and stubborn challenges in health and care locally, and shows how partnership working across BLMK will make a real difference to local communities.

The Plan focuses on the needs of all residents and extends in outlook to 2040. The content of the plan reflects in depth engagement with residents and wider partners with a clear focus throughout on working together to tackle health inequalities. [Read it now](#).

# Living a longer, healthier life

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes  
Joint Forward Plan



## We want to hear from you

We'd love to hear about and share your news, initiatives and innovations in our newsletter. If you have any stories to share, please email: [blmkicb.communications@nhs.net](mailto:blmkicb.communications@nhs.net)