



Bedfordshire, Luton
and Milton Keynes
Health and Care Partnership

LIVE WELL NEWSLETTER

Live Well: December 2023

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

As I look back on 2023 for our last edition of Live Well this year, I do so with immense pride. Whilst it's been a time of significant challenge in the NHS, social care and beyond, it's also been a year of strong delivery across our partnership which provides a solid foundation for 2024.

We've seen many of our colleagues in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes receive well-deserved external recognition for their work, through UK-wide awards schemes and invitations to speak about their achievements at major national – and even international – conferences. Our work is held in high esteem well beyond our own geography, and I look forward to this continuing next year.

Most importantly, we have continued our strong commitment to listening to local people: the publication of [the Denny Review](#) in September, and the ICB's response which we agreed at the Board this week, will shape our system's priorities for the year ahead.

In this issue of Live Well we share details of our continued investment in new

digital technologies, and we also look at the multi-agency Just Drop It campaign against knife crime, led by Bedfordshire Police, in which health voices are to the fore. Our growing partnerships with Healthwatch and the VCSE sector are also evident in several of the stories.

Winter is a challenging time for us all, and I want to say thank you for your role in making sure our health and care system responds to the challenges we will face over the coming months.

Thank you also to all those partners who submit stories for inclusion in Live Well. Each issue this year has been packed with powerful stories of us coming together to make a difference to our system, our places and our neighbourhoods. We're proud to promote so many examples of integration in action.



Felicity

Felicity Cox

Chief Executive Officer

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board

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News and features



Working Together programme expands

A trailblazing programme that wraps health and social care around the needs of individual residents has expanded in Central Bedfordshire.

Working Together, a partnership programme that coordinates care for individuals with complex or multiple needs, started in Leighton Buzzard and is now also supporting people in Dunstable.



Its aim is to put processes in place to identify what further help people need – whether it be from physical health, social care or mental health support - and then connect relevant services with each other and, most importantly, with people.

The programme helps people of all ages stay healthier by putting multi-agency support in place that can prevent the need for hospital admissions.

It also removes the need for people and carers to identify and contact different providers and services on their own, a process which can prove time-consuming, complicated and frustrating.

For more information on the Working Together programme, [visit the East London NHS Foundation Trust website](#).

Our Future Health opens new sites to help research the nation's health

People in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes have been urged to join the UK's largest health research programme, which has announced new sites in Milton Keynes and Bedford to go along with its existing location in Luton.



Our Future Health – which reported in November that it had signed up its one millionth volunteer – is now inviting residents to book appointments to take part and help people live healthier lives for longer.

The aim is to recruit five million people who truly reflect the UK population to build the most detailed picture ever created of the nation's health, to help researchers develop new ways to prevent, detect and treat disease.

Working in collaboration with the NHS, the programme is sending invitations to people who live near the new site. Anyone over the age of 18 can sign up online, before completing a brief health questionnaire, and booking a clinic appointment at a venue convenient to them.

For more information, visit [Our Future Health](#).

Board seminar: Early years

Over 50 senior decision-makers and children's workers have gathered to plan how to close gaps in provision for families in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.

The seminar brought together policymakers and front-line staff to hear from parents and carers, and to begin discussions on the creation of new pathways which better support early intervention and increase school readiness.



Sponsored by Matthew Winn (Chief Executive, Cambridgeshire Community Services) and Michael Bracey (Chief Executive, Milton Keynes City Council), the place-based discussions, which also featured elected councillors and school leaders, will be further developed through local place-based partnerships.

Digital strategy and care records

The Health and Care Partnership's digital strategy – a plan for using digital tools and services to provide better care and make best use of resources – is now available, having been designed with input from over 600 local residents.



For example, websites and apps can make it easier to access care and advice; and devices like smartphones and new software or tools can give staff more time to focus on caring for patients. Some GP practices are already using online systems for ordering repeat prescriptions, and different health and care organisations are aligning their digital records so that information can be shared more easily.

Mark Thomas, Chief Digital and Information Officer at BLMK Integrated Care System said: “Our digital strategy is all about making the best use of technology to enable everyone in our towns, villages and communities to live longer, healthier lives. We want to give people more choice when accessing health advice and appointments, and also make it easier for services to work together. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to complete the survey or attend one of the focus groups.”

Insights from the [engagement report](#) will be used to inform the development and revisions of the [digital strategy](#). [A new animation](#) also explains the digital strategy and what it means to residents.

Partners join police in Just Drop It knife campaign

NHS and local authority partners recently joined with Bedfordshire Police in the [Just Drop It campaign](#) against knife crime in their local area.



Mr David Kirby is a consultant in emergency medicine at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital, who appeared in [BBC Look East's special edition](#) on Knife Crime, broadcast in November 2023, speaking about the realities of working on gravely injured patients, almost always young people.

Mr Kirby also contributed to a [BBC Online article](#), which will remain available even after the broadcast has ceased to be accessible via the BBC's iPlayer service. He described the emotional impact of trying to provide care to people who have been stabbed:

“When you see someone die, despite all your best efforts, it's really difficult to take. You start to doubt your own abilities. Then you have to tell the family that their loved one isn't coming home and on top of that there'll be a post-mortem, an inquest, and probably a court case.

“You just know that their world has completely turned upside down and will never be the same again.

Yet more awards for brilliant BLMK workers

The awards just keep coming for NHS colleagues in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was [recently named the winner of the Ingrid Fuchs Cancer Nursing Award](#) at the Nursing Times Awards 2023. The award was given for the nurse-led initiative in improving the prostate cancer pathway. Jenny Arnold, Prostate Cancer Nurse Specialist at Luton and Dunstable University Hospital, spent two years collecting data on patients with prostate cancer who were being monitored on active surveillance, and found that many were not being followed up correctly.



Meanwhile, two local nurses [have received the prestigious Queen's Nurse \(QN\) title](#) for their contributions to healthcare. The Queen's Nurse title is a mark of their commitment to nursing excellence and patient care. Alex McGarvey, nurse partner at Lea Vale Medical Group and general practice nursing lead for Luton, and Janet Thornley, strategic primary care nurse lead at the Integrated Care Board, have demonstrated a commitment to healthcare innovation and quality improvement. The award enables them to access a supportive professional network, developmental programmes, bursaries and learning and leadership opportunities.

Alex began her journey with the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNi) in 2021 when she established a virtual coffee morning for homebound patients with complex care needs, whilst Janet has been recognised for her work in developing the CARE programme across England, which supports practice nurses to lead holistic change.

Appointment of Maria Wogan as Deputy Chief Executive of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board

I am pleased to announce that Maria Wogan has been appointed Deputy Chief Executive of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board.

Maria takes on this position alongside her current responsibility as Chief of System Assurance and Corporate Services. I know many of you will have worked closely with Maria, who will also continue to be our Place Link Director for Milton Keynes.



When, last year, we formally became an Integrated Care Board, we agreed that a Deputy Chief Executive appointment would follow after 12 months. Now is the right time to formally appoint to this role as we head into a new year which will see our partnership work ever more closely together to tackle the major challenges we face.

Maria has worked as a Director in the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes system for over 12 years, and her Integrated Care Board role includes performance, governance, communications, sustainability and working with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. She is also the Executive with responsibility for the ICB's Shared Transformation Resource, a key part of the ICB's new Target Operating Model. Maria was previously a Non-Executive Director of a Community and Mental Health NHS Trust in Northamptonshire.

I'm sure you will all join me on congratulating Maria on her appointment.

Felicity Cox, Chief Executive, Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board

First ELFT Annual Population Health Report is published

Programmes from tackling racism to financial advice and support for service users are included in a first population health report produced by East London NHS Foundation Trust.

It is the first report of its kind produced by a mental health, community health and primary care trust and in co-production with service users.



The report, [which is available online](#), shows the work taking place across communities supported by the Trust, including Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton.

Healthwatch MoU

The Integrated Care Board has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its Healthwatch partners in each of the four local authority areas, to enhance public engagement in areas such as commissioning, contracting and service redesign, to help reduce health inequalities.

[This short video](#) explains more about the purpose of the accord, which follows a similar arrangement reached earlier in the year with our colleagues in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.





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