



LIVE WELL NEWSLETTER

Live Well: 29 September 2023

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

In this edition, I am pleased to bring you a collection of stories that reflect the diversity and dedication within our integrated care system – and the meaningful impact this work is having on the lives of our residents.

This month saw a milestone we've eagerly anticipated in the publication of the Denny Review into health inequalities in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. This comprehensive review, led by Reverend Lloyd Denny, underscores the importance of addressing health disparities across BLMK and sets out a series of recommendations. We are currently considering the recommendations made and look forward to responding as a system.

During Health Coaching Awareness Week (18-24 September), we saw the official opening of a transformed, formerly derelict patch of land which is now a vibrant community garden in Dunstable. ICB funding has allowed Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity to create a space where individuals can enhance their mental and physical wellbeing through volunteering. Read more about this green oasis below.

I'm also pleased to be able to celebrate the outstanding contributions of our colleagues, two of whom have recently been shortlisted for national awards. Their accomplishments are a testament to the dedication of the health and care professionals working in our system.

Our community's spirit of giving shines brightly as MK Food Bank embarks on a World Record attempt to create the longest line of food cans. I encourage you to join this meaningful endeavour and be part of a remarkable milestone on World Food Day.

Finally, I am pleased to share with you a joint note from our Acute Hospitals and the ICB's Chief Transformation Officer, Anne Brierly. It talks about the preparations we're making for winter and how we're working together to support as many people as possible to stay well at home. My thanks to so many of you who are working hard on this endeavour.



Felicity

Felicity Cox

Chief Executive Officer

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board

Contents:

- [Working together this winter](#)
- [Prime Minister Rishi Sunak visits MKUH](#)
- [Denny Review into health inequalities published](#)
- [Colleagues shine bright with national award successes](#)
- [MK Food Bank World Record attempt](#)
- [Community garden in Dunstable provides a path to better mental health](#)
- [Share for Care providing residents with better, safer and quicker care](#)
- [New service in Milton Keynes helps residents access key medication](#)
- [Hundreds of residents share their views on digital strategy for health and care services](#)

- [Audit Chair appointed to integrated Care Board](#)

News and features



Working together this winter

As the winter season approaches, it's essential to ensure that our healthcare system is well prepared to meet the challenges that come with colder weather and increased risks. In BLMK, we are committed to providing the highest quality of care to our community all year round. To help keep people healthy and safe during the winter months we are collaborating with our primary care colleagues and community providers to keep our residents well at home and to minimise hospital attendance. Our efforts include promoting flu and COVID vaccinations for adults and children, winter safety and preparedness at home.

We are dedicated to improving flow through our acute hospitals and community provision to ensure the right capacity is available for our patients and to protect our elective services. We have a clear plan to reduce ambulance handover delays to ensure patients receive the best care as quickly as possible. Virtual wards have been established to avoid hospital admission and to provide care and support to patients in their own environment. Additionally, we have measures in place to support patients who require mental health assistance.

Thank you to all of our stakeholders for your continued support as we work hard to support the health and wellbeing of people across BLMK.

Anne Brierley, Chief Transformation Officer, BLMK ICB

Ian Reckless, Chief Medical Officer, MKUH

Tammy Angel, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, BHT

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak visits MKUH

Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (MKUH) played host to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak last month as they showcased some of the fantastic work going on across the hospital to deliver exceptional care to their patients.

The Prime Minister was taken to their new state-of-the-art Maple Centre, which opened in October 2022. The facility, one of the largest of its kind in the country, provides same day emergency care services, ensuring more patients are seen and treated in a timely manner. He also visited their neonatal department, speaking to both staff and parents and hearing more about how clinical teams are delivering expert care to premature babies at the hospital.

The visit provided an opportunity for MKUH to highlight their plans for [future expansion of the services as part of their new Women's and Children's Hospital \(MK View\)](#), which is proposed to open by 2030. [Read more.](#)



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at Milton Keynes University Hospital.

Denny Review into health inequalities published

The Denny Review into health inequalities in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes was published earlier this month. Led by respected Luton community leader, Reverend Lloyd Denny, the Review was commissioned by the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group in 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic unmasked startling inequalities in health outcomes for local people.



The Denny Review includes studies by Healthwatch Bedford Borough,

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, Healthwatch Luton and Healthwatch Milton Keynes, working in partnership with grassroots VCSE organisations.

The lived experiences section of the review ensured that the voices of more than 2,000 local people who experienced health inequalities were heard through a range of surveys, case studies and detailed discovery interviews.

The Review contains a series of recommendations to which BLMK's system leaders will respond. [Read the Denny Review online.](#)

Colleagues shine bright with national award successes

Kathy Nelson, head of the cancer network for BLMK ICS, has won the

“Groundbreaking Researcher” category at the National Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Health and Care Awards at a ceremony held in central London.

She was nominated for her role in setting up an innovative research programme into cancer outcomes in Luton. Knowing that 25% of deaths in Luton are caused by cancer, Kathy worked with other local NHS leaders to establish the Luton Cancer Outcomes study alongside representatives from a cancer patient forum, the East of England cancer patient participation group, Prostate Cancer UK, and other charity and voluntary sector partners. [Read more.](#)

Meanwhile, local nurse Blenda Correya has been shortlisted for an award at the Nursing Times Workforce Summit and Awards 2023 after colleagues nominated

her for her inspirational work. Blenda was shortlisted in the “Overseas Nurse of

the Year” category for her work as International Nurses Career Coach for the BLMK ICS Workforce Development Academy. She carries out the role part-time alongside her role as an Overseas Support Nurse at Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Since April 2022 Blenda has been supporting internationally educated nurses across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes with career coaching and other types of support. To date, she has supported the arrival and deployment of almost 500 internationally educated nurses. [Read more.](#)

MK Food Bank World Record attempt

MK Food Bank will be making a World Record attempt for the longest line of food cans on Monday 16 October. [‘MK Can’](#) will see businesses, community groups, schools and other groups coming together to beat the record on World Food Day in and around Campbell Park in Milton Keynes.



Established in 2004, MK Food Bank supports more than 5,000 families a year, distributing from 10 serving centres across Milton Keynes.

The charity has an ambitious target of collecting 132,000 cans to lay out over a 10km line and is rallying support from people across Milton Keynes to achieve this. The route will be divided into 25 metre-long sections, which organisations and community groups can sign up to “adopt” and fill with 350 cans.

Alternatively, people can donate smaller amounts. Find out more and get involved on the [MK Food Bank website](#).

Community garden in Dunstable provides a path to better mental health

A new community garden has opened in Dunstable to give local people the opportunity to improve their mental and physical wellbeing through volunteering in a natural setting.



The project, funded by BLMK ICB, has seen a previously derelict patch of land transform into a garden bursting with fresh fruits and vegetables, which volunteers are free to take away and enjoy at home.

Local charity Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BedsRCC) has been busy renovating the space with months of hard work by volunteers and local people who attend their centre on a regular basis. The garden features wheelchair-friendly and raised beds, a water feature, a wildlife feeding station, colourful seating, a striking mural and a mixture of flowers and vegetables.

Nicola Schofield, green social prescribing officer at Beds RCC, said: “Green social prescribing involves encouraging people to take up activities which promote our mental health and wellbeing through nature. We know that being in nature can be really good for us, bring us many benefits, reduce stress and can

help increase positive feelings that help with anxiety and depression.” [Read more](#).

Share for Care providing residents with better, safer and quicker care

Residents across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes are receiving better, safer and quicker care thanks to the confidential, electronic record sharing system called Share for Care.

Dr Joya Bhattacharyya, a Consultant Gastroenterologist and the Chief Clinical Information Officer for Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, has praised Share for Care, stating it allows health care professionals like herself to make safer decisions regarding patient care. [Read the case study](#) and [find out more about Share for Care](#).



Dr. Joya Bhattacharyya

**Consultant Gastroenterologist,
Luton and Dunstable Hospital**



New service in Milton Keynes helps residents access key medication

A new service that has already helped 373 residents to access and manage

their medication is being extended following a successful nine-month trial.

Milton Keynes City Council is working with Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust on the new medication management service for residents.

In a trial that started in October 2022, home care workers have been helping patients with low level medication support such as reminding people to take their medicines, helping them with opening bottles or packets, or administering medications directly. This reduces demand on local district nurses, who typically perform these services, so they can spend more time on patients with intensive needs. [Read more](#).

Hundreds of residents share their views on digital strategy for health and care services

NHS and local authority partners at Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes

Health and Care Partnership have designed [a digital strategy](#) – their plan for using digital tools and services to provide better care and make the best use of resources.

Websites and apps can make it easier to access care and advice, and devices like smartphones and new software or tools can give our staff more time to focus on caring for patients.

To ensure the strategy reflected the needs of the local population, residents were invited to share their experiences and suggestions. A survey and focus groups were organised to understand what works well, what doesn't work so well, and what local people wanted from digital health and care services.

The full engagement report has now been published, and insights will be used for future revisions of the Digital Strategy. You can also view [a new animation that explains the Digital Strategy and what it means to residents](#).

Audit Chair appointed to integrated Care Board

BLMK ICB has confirmed Vineeta Manchanda as its newly appointed Audit and

Risk Assurance Committee Chair. Vineeta brings strong financial management skills developed from 25 years' experience in the finance sector at blue-chip global firms as well as start-up emerging market investment banks.

She currently holds Non-Executive Director and Audit Chair/Advisor positions at a London Local Authority and a leading provider of adult social care. Previous NED and Audit Chair positions have been across a variety of public and voluntary sector organisations, including at Waltham Forest and East London CCG.

Speaking about her appointment, Vineeta said: "I am delighted to be joining the strong team at BLMK and supporting them to develop the role of the ICB to ensure improved population health outcomes are delivered for local residents.

"My Non-Executive experience has underlined the importance of systems work and I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to its implementation." [Read more.](#)



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

