



Our Progress in 2024/25 in delivering our five Strategic Priorities

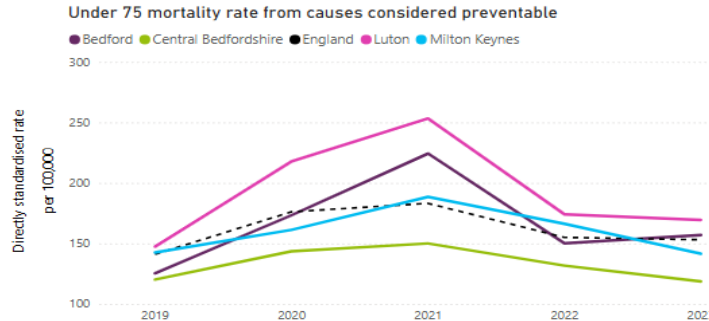
BLMK's [Health and Care Strategy \(January 2023\)](#), agreed by our Health and Care Partnership (HCP), established five strategic priorities for the BLMK system. These are set out in the table below, alongside the headline progress made against each in 2024/25. Also set out are the seven 'enablers' presented in the same Strategy, and the work done to advance each. This table, presented to the HCP on 14 February 2025, will be incorporated into the system's Joint Forward Plan when an updated version is published in March 2025.

We have selected three highlights per priority and enabler; the list is not exhaustive. We acknowledge that many more interventions across and beyond the BLMK system contribute to the performance changes identified than just those presented here.

Strategic Priority	Lead Outcome Measure and Performance	Headline initiatives in 2024/25																								
 <p>Start Well</p>	<p>Increasing the % of children who reach a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.</p> <p>The percentage of children achieving GLD has increased in all four Places since 2021/22. The percentage in Luton remains lower than the national average, though shows the greatest increase since 2021/22.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th> <th>Baseline (2021/22)</th> <th>2023/24</th> <th>% point change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bedford</td> <td>63.8</td> <td>66.2</td> <td>2.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Central Beds</td> <td>65.5</td> <td>68.9</td> <td>3.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Luton</td> <td>56.6</td> <td>62.0</td> <td>5.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Milton Keynes</td> <td>66.7</td> <td>68.4</td> <td>1.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>England</td> <td>65.2</td> <td>67.7</td> <td>2.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>School readiness: percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception.</i></p>	Area	Baseline (2021/22)	2023/24	% point change	Bedford	63.8	66.2	2.4	Central Beds	65.5	68.9	3.4	Luton	56.6	62.0	5.4	Milton Keynes	66.7	68.4	1.7	England	65.2	67.7	2.5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Each Place now has a robust multi-agency Local Area Partnership focussed on improving outcomes for Children & Young People with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. This means that more children have access to some health services more quickly. A good example is new self-referral pathway to Speech and Language Therapy advice for under 5s. We have launched a refreshed Transforming Care Pathway for children with Learning Disabilities & Autism at risk of admission to an inpatient CAMHS provision. The pathway was coproduced with young people and now includes easy to access self-referral, enabling more young people to manage their own long-term needs. Two new Mental Health Support Teams are in place in schools in Luton and MK, meaning that school-age children have more access to mental health support in their school.
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 <p>Live Well</p>	<p>Reducing preventable premature mortality.</p> <p>Change over time in preventable premature mortality for our four places and England is shown below, starting from the 2019 baseline. All areas saw a large rise over 2020 and 2021 due to</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Major MSK procurement launched with patient co-production embedded, contract expected to be awarded in April 2025 and go live in November 2025; everyone in BLMK can self-refer for MSK support. 																								

COVID-19 with rates then falling in 2022; however in Bedford and in Luton that fall has not continued into 2023 and these areas are still above their 2019 baseline.
Under 75 mortality rate from causes considered preventable: directly standardised rate per 100,000

2. Tobacco dependency treatment established across BLMK.
3. Diabetes pre-warning dashboard in primary care using latest to get ahead with preventative diabetes advice and support.



Age Well

Reducing emergency admissions for falls.

The rate of admissions for falls in people aged 65+ is significantly lower in 2022/23 than 2019/20 in all four Places.

Area	Baseline (2019/20)	2022/23	% Change
Bedford	2100	1725	-17.9
Central Beds	2339	1842	-21.3
Luton	2488	1639	-34.1
Milton Keynes	2520	1999	-20.7
England	2256	1933	-14.3

Emergency hospital admissions due to falls in people aged 65 and over. Directly standardised rate per 100,000 population.

1. BLMK has the highest dementia diagnosis rate in the East of England at 69.8% which is 3.1% above the national ambition and 4% above the England average
2. BLMK has exceeded the 80% target for Digital Social Care Record (DSCR) and met a further stretch target with 85% of care providers now having a DSCR
3. Nearly 2,000 vulnerable patients supported through the Warm Homes project in Bedford Borough. Rural Communities Charity (Bedfordshire) & Age UK (MK) commissioned to provide enhanced discharge and follow-up support to prevent readmission. Innovative work on frailty led by Bedfordshire Care Alliance.




Growth




Reducing economic inactivity due to long-term sickness.





The percentage of economically inactive people aged 16-64 who are inactive due to long-term sickness has increased in all Places except Bedford since 2019/20. The greatest increases were seen in Central Bedfordshire and Luton

Area	Baseline 2019/20	2023/24	% point change
Bedford	31.7	14.1	-17.6
Central Beds	21.9	31.8	9.9
Luton	17.5	28.9	11.4
Milton Keynes	20.8	22.4	1.6
England	23.3	26.3	3.0

1. Launched "Passport to NHSE Careers" across BLMK – a supported employment pathway for residents with lived experience of the care system, unpaid carers and those with neurodiversity.
2. Continued development of the BLMK ICS and University of Bedfordshire Research and Innovation hub. First BLMK ICS research and innovation awards created and funded by the hub in May 2024.
3. 21% reduction (since 2022) in emissions per inhaler prescribed, introduction of recycling and re-use schemes for walking aids,

	<i>Percentage of economically inactive people aged 16-64 who are inactive due to long-term sickness. Bedford estimates in 2023-24 are calculated from small group sample sizes and may be unreliable.</i>	and a reduction in food waste at hospital sites
 Reducing Inequalities	Reducing Inequality in average age of onset of first Long Term Condition – <i>Methodology subject to continued development from BLMK Population Health Intelligence Unit</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Launch of new Learning and Action Networks across BLMK, in Partnership with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, aimed at reducing cardiovascular disease in equal partnership with residents. 2. Review of existing Translation and Interpretation services underway across the system with a view to present an options appraisal in Q1 25/26. Wide-ranging response of all system partners to the Denny Review presented to ICB Board in December 2025. 3. Inaugural BLMK Inequalities Seminar as part of major BLMK inequalities week brought partners to together to listen to residents, share progress and agree next steps

Enabler		Headline Initiatives in 2024/25
 Data and digital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share for Care use increased, with over 110,000 individual records viewed per month 2. NHS App Launch days across BLMK have brought together primary care leaders, VCSE organisations and elective representatives to promote the app to residents. 3. Population Health Information Unit (PHIU) established and delivering system-level analytical outputs using healthcare activity and outcome data, outcome measures agreed for system strategic priorities 	
 Workforce	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BLMK is one of two ICSs piloting implementing people-digital transformation – the efficiency and automation of HR process to improve employee experience at work 2. BLMK is the highest performing system in the East of England for completion of the Oliver McGowan training. 3. Launched expanded Health and Care Academy across the full ICS to encourage 14-18yos to pursue careers in health & care. 	
 Ways of working	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our unscheduled care hub in Bedfordshire brings together ambulance, community and acute colleagues, meaning more people can get the most appropriate help more quickly, and reduce pressure on A&E. Over 1800 hospital admissions avoided Jan 2024 – Jan 2025. 2. Integrated Neighbourhood Working – we are taking an asset-based approach to the development of our 19 neighbourhoods in BLMK. The four places are facilitating organic development of neighbourhoods in the way that works for them, with several leading examples of progress, including the Bletchley Pathfinder in MK, and the Bedford Queens Park ‘Be Active’ programme supporting families at risk of diabetes. 	

	<p>3. Launched i) our new Mental Health Learning Disability and Autism Collaborative Committee, and ii) our Portfolio Report providing a transparent and holistic view of transformation activity across the BLMK system</p>
 Estates	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have delivered 15 out of the 23 primary care estates projects prioritised in 2023, and with further schemes making good progress. This included the new Enhanced Services Centre in Bedford – to provide new accommodation for the largest GP practice in BLMK, the De Parys Group. 2. Continued delivery of a variety of schemes on the Milton Keynes Hospital site as enablers for the New Hospitals Programme. Upgrades to the Bedford Hospital Emergency Department (ED), providing a secure Paediatric ED area, additional cubicles and contingency beds, and extra waiting room capacity 3. Completion of an expanded and refurbished ED at the Luton & Dunstable Hospital, with increased capacity, a new and fully segregated Paediatric Department. As per Luton 2040 Pledge, the ICB has continued to campaign to NHSE to secure funding for a Clinical Diagnostic Centre in Luton Town Centre and a business case is in development. New Community Diagnostic Centre opened at Lloyds Court in MK.
 Communications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have launched our new System Insights Network, bringing together a wide range of partners and residents to inform our system strategy. The first session, on the 10 Year Plan, was in January, with the next, in May, focused on our Community and Mental Health procurement. 2. Relationships with new partners, in particular faith leaders, are supporting the reach of crucial communications, including for vaccination and immunization. 3. Our Winter 2024/25 campaign was co-produced with system partners, supporting coordinated messaging to keep more people well at home.
 Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In an increasingly challenged financial environment, BLMK is expecting to deliver a break-even financial position at the end of 2024/25. 2. The system has established significant new infrastructure to oversee delivery of the Financial and Operational Plan for 2025/26. 3. BLMK is exceeding its 6% system efficiencies target- and due to breaking even last year received an additional £2.8M capital allocation for our residents.
 Operational and Clinical excellence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our new Health Services Strategy has laid the foundations for a more sustainable healthcare system delivering high quality care over the long term 2. Appointments in primary care in 2024 + 10.4% vs 2023 3. Luton Cancer Outcomes Project PCN prostate cancer case finding pilot is identifying Black men with prostate cancer earlier. This project identified 18 men to date with prostate cancer, all with few symptoms.

Where we would have liked to have done more in 2024/25.

Though as a system we are pleased with good progress presented above, there are areas where we would have liked to have gone further, and where, as a partnership, we will redouble our efforts in 2025/26. These include improving our vaccination and immunisation rates (including amongst NHS staff), and further advancing use of the NHS app across BLMK. In terms of transformation, we have agreed three headline transformation priorities for 2025/26. These are transforming our i) admission avoidance/discharge care pathways, ii) end of life care and ii) complex care for adults and children. These priority programmes have been endorsed by the full Integrated Care Board, and we look forward to setting out further detail in the year ahead.