

Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24

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Walsall Health and Wellbeing Board

During 2023/4 the ICB have been an active partner in the Walsall Health and Wellbeing Board supporting delivery of the Walsall Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and working to deliver its vision to 'Together create a wellbeing-centred Borough'.

The ICB has continued to champion the development of Walsall Together, bringing health, mental health, social care, children's services, housing and the voluntary and community sector together into a single partnership to improve outcomes for Walsall residents.

The success of our partnership was formally recognised in November 2023 when Walsall Together was crowned winner of the Place Based Partnership and Integrated Care Award at the HSJ Partnership Awards. The award recognised the progress to minimise hospital admissions, discharge patients quickly, support care homes and promote community resilience.

During 2023/24 the Walsall Integrated Commissioning Committee was established with a dual accountability to the ICB and the Health and Wellbeing Board. In addition to overseeing investment of the Better Care Fund, work has commenced on a Joint Commissioning Programme which will be informed by JSNA data and support delivery of both the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Walsall 2024 Strategy.

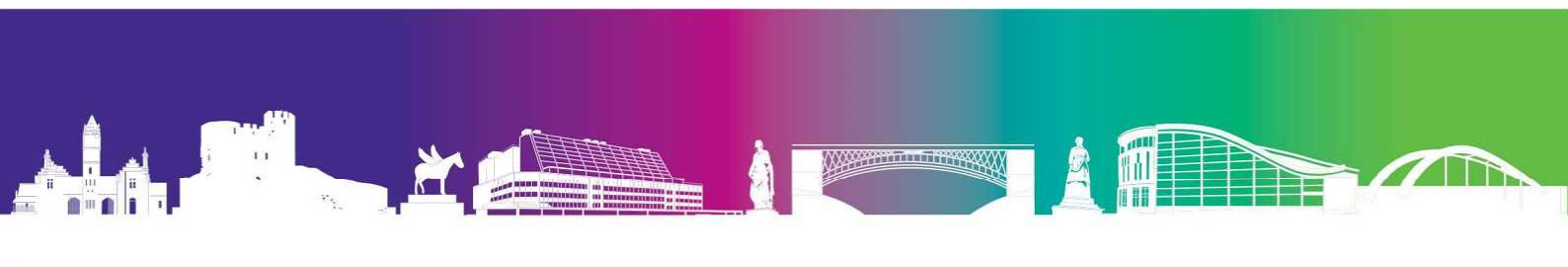
The ICB has worked alongside Public Health Teams and Walsall Together to create a Wellbeing Outcomes Framework to guide work, ensuring it is intelligence led and in line with citizen expectations.

Highlights of our work to deliver the Board specific priorities are provided below:

1. Mental wellbeing

In January 2024 the Walsall Wellbeing Directory was launched, providing local people with information on a range of support, advice, activities, and events to enhance their wellbeing. The directory was produced by the Walsall Together in collaboration with local citizens.

The ICB continues to support the development of a network of social prescribing link workers who work within primary care to connect those with social needs to resources and assets in their local communities. A successful Community Connectors Programme has also been delivered focusing on marginalised communities such as Roma families and asylum seekers.



The ICB have continued to invest in mental wellbeing services through our lead provider Black Country Healthcare who in turn invest in voluntary and community sector services in Walsall and are developing a Compact to underpin the local offer.

2. Children and Young People

Supporting the best start in life for children and young people across Walsall has been a particular focus for the ICB during 2023/24.

Working alongside Walsall Healthcare Trust improvements have been made to Maternity Services with the establishment of a midwifery led unit at the Manor Hospital.

Our 0 – 19 offer has continued to develop with 4 Locality Family HUBs and 10 community spokes being established within our Walsall Together Partnership. At the heart of communities, HUBs provide a welcoming space where children and young people aged 0 -19 and their families to access support when they need it. Midwives, Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists work alongside Early Help Teams, Childrens Social Care, DWP Housing and Police to provide a central access point for families to get help and support.

Children's asthma has also been a specific focus during 2023/24 with work being undertaken to promote the early and accurate diagnosis of asthma and the implementation of the CYP national asthma bundle, to children, young people, families, and carers to control and reduce the risk of asthma attacks.

3. The digital approach – infrastructure and inclusion

Digitalisation has been high on the ICBs agenda throughout 2023/4. Primary Care services across Walsall have been supported to implement a total triage approach to enable patients to access the right service at the right time to meet their needs. Telephony systems in primary care have also been upgraded to improve call handling. We have continued to promote the use of the NHS App to enable patients to request repeat prescriptions and access health information.

Digital inclusion initiatives have been undertaken to enable access to online services. Through this programme our local workforce and digital champions have been trained to provide advice to local people. Laptops have also been provided to improve access.

New technology continues to be rolled out and used to support Walsall residents to live more independently. Our virtual ward programme continues to go from strength to strength enabling people to receive consultant led care in their own homes. Working alongside Adult Social Care digital equipment has been provided to care homes to support them to monitor the wellbeing of their residents.

4. Tackling Health Inequalities

Throughout the year the ICB has retained its focus on tackling health inequalities though the continued implementation of Core20 Plus 5 initiatives, investment in community organisations a focus on groups with protected characteristics to include children and young people, disability and mental health problems and frail older people.

Finally, consideration has been given to the wider determinants of health through our work in 2023/4 with the ICB and other NHS Trusts acting as Anchor Organisations to co-ordinate



partnership action and facilitate the successful delivery of programmes focused on improving access to training and employment.



