

Update for Partnership colleagues From Professor Mike Thorne CBE, Independent Chair

Welcome and introduction

I am delighted to write you as the (fairly) new independent chair of the Mid and South Essex Health & Care Partnership, something I hope to do regularly to keep you updated on our work together.

I was appointed at the end of September and since that time I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you from across the health and care sector. I have been immensely impressed by the drive and enthusiasm of the many people I have met and feel extremely privileged to be part of delivering a future where we can, as a partnership, make bigger investments, promote more innovation and achieve greater improvements in health and wellbeing than each of our member organisations would be able to achieve separately.

What's in a name?

Those of you with a keen eye will have spotted a shiny new logo at the top of this page and a change to our name – Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership, rather than STP.

Our partnership includes our local GP practices, our hospitals, community care, social services, mental health services, commissioners and community and voluntary sector support – as such it spans health, local government and the community and voluntary sector – so our new name reflects this partnership and our desire to become a fully integrated care system (ICS) by April 2021.

This is, of course, about more than just a name. I believe that beneath the complexity is something simple – a partnership of organisations working together, whether locally or across our system, making a real difference to the lives of the people we serve. As a Partnership we recognise that working with residents at the local level is where we have the most impact. We have agreed that we will work together at system level to enable this local work to flourish and to add value to these local interactions. We have recently launched a new website at www.msehealthandcarepartnership.co.uk to explain our work in more detail.

Our five year plan

We all recognise that our population is growing, new technology is being developed and research into the things that affect our health and wellbeing is providing new answers.

We are living longer, but not all of those extra years are spent in good health and some of our communities experience significantly poorer health than others. Our health and care staff are also under a great deal of pressure coping with increased demand for our services. Which is why we must change the way we work together across the health and social care arena.

I am immensely proud of work we have done over the past few months in compiling our local plans and collective response to the national NHS Long Term Plan. Our five year plan sets out our goals, priorities and the actions we want to take to play our part in improving the health and wellbeing of people living in our cities, towns and villages right across mid and south Essex.

It also explains how locally we will deliver the commitments set out in the NHS Long Term Plan from cancer to cardiovascular disease, diabetes to mental health through to prevention and making the best use of technology.

Whilst this plan is for the next five years, we know that some of our ambitions and goals will take longer to realise, particularly how we tackle some of the wider causes of poor health and wellbeing such as poor education, employment and income opportunities.

Our plan will be published in January and I will share full details on where you can read more in my next brief.

Laying the foundations for becoming an integrated care system

Considerable effort and commitment from many partners has helped us to get to the point of having a shared plan and collective vision for the future. This is one of the five key pillars we need in place to achieve integrated care system status, alongside a collective workforce strategy, a system approach to finance, investment and risk, clarity on governance and decision making arrangements and a shared commitment to develop our population health work.

I am pleased to update at that our last Partnership Board meeting we agreed to support work in all of these areas. Through demonstrating this shared endeavour to our NHS regulators we can gain ICS status which brings with it greater autonomy, more targeted investment and control over our funds and more flexibility in the way we operate.

Areas of focus

Whilst collaborative approaches to meeting our challenges are continuing across our Partnership, the Board has agreed to fully embrace a whole system approach in two priority areas, cancer and the care of older people.

Our cancer outcomes are poor and more people die from cancer in our area than expected. Tackling this requires lifestyle changes through prevention, improving screening take-up, enhancing early detection and diagnosis, improving our waiting times for treatment and improving our survivorship offer, as well as end of life services. In the new year I will be hosting a Cancer Outcomes summit, involving key stakeholders, to ensure all current work is aligned and to identify what more could be achieved through partnership working and commitment.

Similarly there is significant opportunity to take a more proactive stance in supporting older people to live independent, healthy lives. The national Ageing Well programme brings resources to our system over the coming years to improve services for older people. So again we are planning a focused Ageing Well summit to take stock and to identify a specific programme of work, inclusive of all partners, that will enable us to improve the care and support offered to this section of our population.

And finally...

I would like to wish you all the best for 2020, and I look forward to updating you further on our work as the year progresses.

If you would like to get in touch please email us at btu-tr.midsouthessexstp@nhs.net