

## Delegation amidst transition: *Navigating the course*

***ICBs to commission  
70 specialised services***



As the new NHS financial year begins, we acknowledge the significant discussions and indeed, challenges, shaping the landscape. However, amidst this, it's crucial to recognise the tangible steps forward towards greater integration.

A significant milestone on 1 April marked the delegation of commissioning responsibility for 70 specialised services from NHS England to ICBs – a move that underscores the evolving role of ICBs as strategic commissioners, a point reinforced in Sir Jim Mackey's recent communication.

Aligned to this shift, the South London Office of Specialised Services (SLOSS) continues working alongside our trust and ICB partners to navigate this challenging environment and identify opportunities for enhanced care delivery. We are committed to supporting a sustainable future, as demonstrated by the progress of our ongoing sustainability review (page X) and our transformation initiatives (pages X thru Y).

## INSIDE

### Delegation

- London delegation
- 2025/26 NHS reform
- South London delegation journey

### Sustainability

- South London sustainability review

### Transformation

- Sickle cell
- Renal
- Paediatric asthma
- South London Transformation Group

### South London networks

- South London Cardiac ODN
- South Thames Paediatrics Network
- SEL / Kent Spinal Network

### Want to know more?

[Get in touch](#) and we can share with you and your teams.

# NHS England updates

## Empowering local leadership: Specialised delegation

**From 1 April, a significant step has been taken to integrate specialist healthcare more closely with local needs. Commissioning responsibility for 70 of 154 specialised services has now been formally delegated to integrated care boards (ICBs).**

This strategic move empowers ICBs to leverage their expertise, resources, and local understanding to commission and integrate these specialised services even more effectively within the broader healthcare system. This enhanced local ownership unlocks valuable opportunities to transform patient pathways, improve population health outcomes, reduce health inequalities, and ensure optimal use of resources.

For South London, this involves approximately £1.2 billion in funding now allocated to our ICBs across six key programmes of care. This more localised approach is intended to ensure that specialised services are more responsive to the specific needs of our communities.

ICBs and NHSE will build on collaborative experiences of working together in such areas as renal, sickle cell disease, and mental health to maximise the benefits of joined up commissioning working collaboratively with London specialised providers and our populations.

This shift in delegation aligns with national objectives to create a healthcare system that prioritises three key areas:

- **Closer to home** – This enables ICBs to tailor services to local needs, improving health outcomes, for greater care continuity closer to home.
- **Digital** – Better digital infrastructure can support better patient outcomes, as we look to digital innovations to enhance data sharing and patient access.
- **Prevention** – Integrated care teams help to focus on early intervention and prevention strategies with a patient centred view, empowering people to take control of their health.

## London Specialised Services Partnership Board

The London Specialised Services Partnership Board aims to provide strategic leadership and decision-making. It acts as an escalation point for unresolved issues from the North London / South London boards, which typically handle multi ICB decisions. Escalations from this board can be referred to the London Regional Executive Team (LRET) for broader consideration and potential national escalation.



# NHS England updates

## Laying the foundations for reform in 2025/26

**Sir James Mackey recently outlined the strategic direction and key priorities as the health system moves towards 2025/26 and beyond.**

In his 1 April letter, NHS Chief Executive Sir James Mackey highlights several points for leaders and stakeholders across integrated care systems and provider organisations:

- **Central role of ICBs** – The document strongly reiterates the critical and expanding role of integrated care boards (ICBs) as strategic commissioners. This is highlighted as central to achieving the ambitions set out in the forthcoming 10 Year Health Plan.
- **Financial realities** – While acknowledging progress in financial recovery, the document notes that a significant underlying deficit remains within the system, underscoring the ongoing need for financial discipline and efficiency.
- **Focus on efficiency** – A key expectation is the drive for efficiency across the system, with a stated aim of a 50% reduction in corporate costs within NHS provider organisations and a 50% reduction in the running costs of ICBs. The letter also emphasises significant reductions in management costs within NHS England.
- **System integration** – The ongoing integration of NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care into a more aligned central function is presented as a move towards a more streamlined and coordinated national approach.
- **Building on progress** – There is an emphasised need to build upon the foundations laid in the current year to ensure the system is well placed to deliver on future strategic objectives.

[Read the full letter online.](#)

## NHSE leadership team for transition

Last month, NHS England announced the incoming team who will lead the organisation's transition into the Department of Health and Social Care with a target date of October 2026.

Led by Sir James Mackey, Chief Executive, the team – called the NHS Transformation Executive Team – will replace the current NHS England Executive Group and will support ongoing business priorities, statutory functions and day to day delivery.

Sir Jim Mackey and Penny Dash formally took up their roles as the new Chief Executive and Chair of NHS England from 1 April.

View the [NHSE leadership team arrangements](#).



# The journey to delegation in South London

2025

NHSE delegates  
specialised services  
commissioning to ICBs  
in London



2024

NHSE (London region)  
postpones delegation for  
one year (to 2025/26)



2023

South London Pathfinder  
programme established  
as national pilot to test  
delegation processes



2023

NHS London establishes  
London Joint Committee  
for a joint working  
approach with ICBs



2021

South London  
Specialised Services  
programme formally  
established (SLOSS)



2021

NHS England (NHSE)  
establishes London  
Specialised Services  
Transition Board



2020

Develop a plan for cardiac  
surgery as a test model of  
care for a new specialist  
collaborative



2019

South London programme  
commences based on a  
tertiary provider  
collaborative



# South London updates

## Continuing our focus: South London specialised services sustainability review

Building on our commitment to a sustainable and high quality future for specialised services across South London, SLOSS continues to progress its comprehensive sustainability review. This vital work is designed to identify opportunities for enhanced efficiency, improved pathways, and potential service transformation, ensuring the long term viability of these services for our population.

The delegation of specialised commissioning responsibilities to ICBs on 1 April provides a timely opportunity to take a holistic view of service delivery across the South London footprint. Our ongoing work includes a detailed and holistic data review, incorporating a range of key metrics to assess financial sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness, performance, equity of access, and patient outcomes.

The data review currently encompasses information from national datasets, including specialised allocations, SUS, and workforce systems. These data sources are being analysed to understand activity and patient flows, demand and waiting lists, potential efficiencies (such as length of stay and day case rates), inequalities in access and outcomes, and financial performance.

Initial findings and detail of the comprehensive data review will be shared with the South London Executive Management Board (EMB). The SLOSS team will outline the progress made in collating insights from various sources, including the compendium of opportunities, the data review itself, initial provider intelligence, and potential areas to investigate.

The South London Sustainability Review remains a key priority for SLOSS, and we look forward to sharing further updates as our analysis progresses and potential opportunities for positive change are identified.

## Elements of the South London specialised services sustainability review



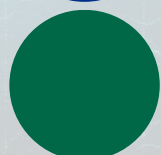
### **Compendium of opportunities**

Drawing together existing known opportunities by programme of care and speciality to understand projects in the pipeline or to be developed.



### **Data review and analysis**

A holistic data review, looking at trends in activity, patient flows, efficiency metrics, patient demographics, finance, and inequalities.



### **Outputs and project proposals**

Prioritisation of validated outcomes and data review and development of change proposals.



# Transformation

## South London updates

### Sickle cell

#### Improving emergency care: ED bypass units

Exciting progress is underway to transform emergency care for individuals experiencing sickle cell pain crises in South London.

An emergency department (ED) bypass unit is getting ready to launch at St George's Hospital for patients in sickle cell crisis, following a phased approach to implementation.

The ED bypass is designed to ensure patients receive timely assessment and analgesia within 30 minutes of arrival, directly addressing the critical need for swift pain management in a sickle cell crisis – and avoiding potentially long waits in the ED.

Lewisham and St George's hospitals have been running specialist hot clinics for patients with sickle cell (Mon-Fri).

St George's is working towards providing a 24/7 service, and is actively collaborating with London Ambulance Service to ensure a direct pathway onto the specialist ward for patient admissions. Lewisham aims to extend hot clinics to 7-day from this month.

#### Significant funding boost for London sickle cell services

We are delighted to share news regarding the investment in haemoglobinopathy services across London. Following the submission of robust business cases, NHS England has received confirmation that all MedTech Funded Apheresis proposals for haemoglobinopathies submitted on behalf of the London region have been approved.

This successful outcome will see a total of £5.145 million in recurrent funding allocated to NHS trusts across London in 2025/26. Crucially, this funding is ring fenced for frontline services in sickle cell care, ensuring it directly benefits patients. For South London, this translates to more than £2.8 million across several of our provider organisations.

This substantial funding represents a fantastic opportunity to enhance the quality, accessibility, and capacity of sickle cell services across the region.



# Transformation

## South London updates

### Renal

#### Bexley PLT event: Embracing integrated care

A 3 April Protected Learning Time (PLT) event in Bexley offered a fantastic opportunity to delve into the evolving landscape of integrated care and multi-morbidity management. The South East London ICB team presented on their local integrated neighbourhood teams (INTs) and the crucial role they play in delivering patient centred care.

The session explored the practical applications of INT working, highlighting how INTs are breaking down silos and fostering collaboration across clinical and non clinical disciplines. It was particularly inspiring to focus on the local examples of integrated working to tailor solutions to the specific needs of Bexley's communities.

The event reiterated the importance of:

- **Patient centred care:** Meeting patients where they are, and understanding their unique needs from a holistic perspective
- **Data driven population health:** Using data to inform proactive, preventative care strategies.
- **Integrated pathways:** Developing seamless care pathways, like the multi-morbidity model of care programme for people with multiple long term conditions, to improve patient outcomes.

Great progress has been made in Bexley, as other SEL teams, as they move towards integrated neighbourhood working. We look forward to continued collaboration in building a more integrated and responsive healthcare system.

#### Coming soon: Insights into the SEL integrated care model

Keep an eye out for the upcoming release of the Phase 1 evaluation of South East London's multimorbidity model of care (MMMoC) project. This report will offer a first look at the impact of integrated neighbourhood teams (INTs) in supporting patients with multiple long term conditions, particularly those with renal cardiometabolic needs.



# Transformation

## South London updates

### Renal

#### Enhancing supportive care across SWL

A new Supportive Care Pilot is being rolled out at St George's, Epsom, and St Helier hospitals to improve care pathways for patients experiencing frailty and those requiring symptom control or dialysis withdrawal. Key elements include new clinical pathways, early identification tools, and dedicated supportive care clinics. Currently, clinics operate twice a month (St Helier, Farnborough), with a third clinic set to open at Kingston Hospital this spring. A dedicated team of nurses, consultants, and administrative support is in place to manage referrals through these new pathways.

#### Specialist cardio-kidney-metabolic clinics established

The integrated cardio-kidney-metabolic clinic and multidisciplinary team (MDT) at St George's and St Helier hospitals is now fully operational. An initial cohort of 1,700 South West London patients has been identified for triage and referral to this specialist service. Weekly MDTs, comprising a range of experts, are providing comprehensive management for patients with complex needs, including multi-morbidities and frailty. To facilitate referrals, an electronic proforma will be available on ERS for GPs.



#### Expanding *Be kind to your kidneys* campaign

Following a successful pilot in Wandsworth, the "Be Kind to Your Kidneys" patient awareness campaign for chronic kidney disease (CKD) is being expanded across South West London. Plans are underway in Sutton and Merton to develop a CKD awareness video in multiple languages for online and community use. Kingston and Richmond will host targeted health talks, run social media campaigns, and distribute resources at community events, aligning with wider borough health initiatives to promote healthier lifestyles.

#### CKD toolkit now available across SWL

A comprehensive chronic kidney disease (CKD) toolkit and supporting resources have been developed and distributed throughout South West London. This toolkit aims to empower GPs, hospitals, community organisations, and voluntary groups to raise awareness about CKD and support targeted community engagement efforts.



# Transformation

## South London updates

### Paediatric asthma

#### Improving paediatric asthma care in South London

SLOSS hosted a recent South London Paediatric Asthma Summit, chaired by Miriam Fine-Goulden, Paediatric Intensive Care Consultant at the Evelina London and SLOSS clinical lead. This session united clinical and commissioning colleagues from across the patch to delve into best practice case studies, including asthma friendly schools, pharmacy led clinics, community nursing teams, and innovative dashboards, amongst others. The many questions to our expert panel demonstrated the strong interest in making a difference for children and young people with asthma care.

We also discussed the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) report findings and the National Bundle of Care standards.

In groups, colleagues discussed potential changes, prioritising areas for improvement, inspiring solutions, and organising a way forward through a South London action plan.



#### Collaborating across London in paediatric asthma

At the recent March meeting of the London Asthma Leadership and Implementation Group (LALIG), Giacomo Esposito, SLOSS Project Manager, presented the key outcomes and confirmed actions from the South London Paediatric Asthma Summit.

LALIG serves as a coordinated London-wide network, bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people with asthma. This includes clinicians, commissioners, patients and the public, representatives from social care and public health, and other frontline professionals.

At the LALIG meeting, Giacomo highlighted the specific actions agreed upon at the South London Summit. Importantly, he shared that these initiatives will be led collaboratively by the South London ICBs (South East London and South West London) and their paediatric asthma networks.

This presentation provided a valuable opportunity to share South London's proactive approach and foster potential collaboration across the wider London asthma community.

Questions may be directed to [Giacomo Esposito](#).

# South London programme updates

## South London Clinical Networks

### South London Transformation Group

The South London Transformation Group and the Systems Analytics and Finance Group (SAFG) met on 26 March for a joint meeting chaired by Miriam Fine Goulden, consultant in children's intensive care at the Evelina and SLOSS Clinical Lead. The session focused on key strategic priorities for the region.

Updates on ICB allocations and progress on the South London Sustainability Review were provided by Dan Kyle and Jessie McCulloch, highlighting ongoing efforts to ensure financial stability and identify opportunities for service improvement.

The meeting also featured presentations on significant transformation initiatives. Jason Tong from the South Thames CTYA Cancer Operational Delivery Network (ODN) outlined the collaborative Pan-Thames approach to transforming Paediatric Oncology Shared Care Units (POSCUs). Additionally, Freya Parker Copeland and Charlotte Gallagher from the South London Cardiovascular Networks discussed the joint procurement strategy for PCI and CRM consumables, aiming for greater efficiency and value.

The joint session facilitated valuable discussion and alignment across transformation and finance functions, underscoring the collaborative approach to addressing key challenges and advancing healthcare in South London.

### SL clinical network manager meeting

16 May 2025

The next meeting for South London clinical network managers and colleagues will be on Friday, 16 May, 11:00-12:00.

Please contact [Andrea Marlow](#) for details and agenda items.

### London networks: Tackling the three shifts with innovation

A recent webinar hosted by the London Network Commissioning Group offered a valuable look into the national "three shifts", showcasing case studies demonstrating how clinical networks are creatively addressing these priorities:

- London and South East Burns Network (LSEBN): Shared their adaptable and responsive approach to managing fluctuating burns workload.
- North and South London Cardiac Networks: Highlighted the expanding role of remote monitoring in enhancing cardiac care across the capital.
- South and North Thames CYP Cancer Network Teams: Presented their collaborative Pan-Thames strategy for transforming Paediatric Oncology Shared Care Units (POSCUs).

The recording and slides are available on [FutureNHS](#) (login required).

Following this insightful webinar, SLOSS convened South London network managers for a focussed discussion. Key topics included strengthening links with ICBs and providers, identifying opportunities for cross network collaboration, refining reporting mechanisms, and ensuring network work plans effectively reflect ICB and national strategic aims. The meeting fostered a collaborative environment aimed at maximising the collective impact of our South London networks.

# South London network updates

## Rare disease notebook webinar series

Join the South London Cardiac Operational Delivery Network and the NHS South East Genomic Medicine Service for the interactive Rare disease notebook webinar series, where attendees will learn about genomics, rare disease, and projects in these areas.

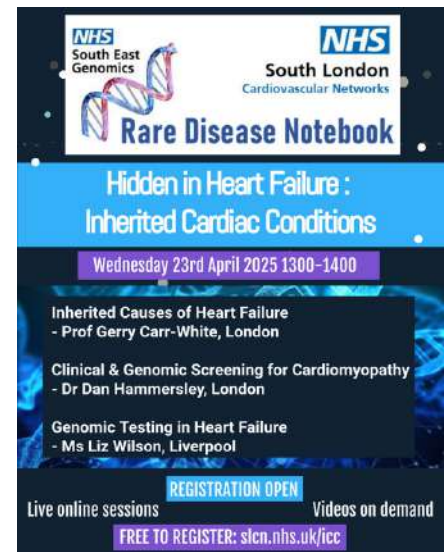
### *Intended audience*

- For anyone interested in rare disease – inherited cardiac conditions and beyond
- All welcome! Colleagues in community services, primary, secondary or tertiary care are invited to join us and learn how to help your patients with rare disease.
- No prior knowledge required

### Register online

- Wed, 23 April 2025, 13:00-14:00 – Hidden in heart failure: Inherited cardiac conditions
- Wed, 21 May 2025, 13:00-14:00 – Inherited aortic conditions

Questions may be directed to [Andrea Marlow](#).



## Individualised perioperative pathway (IPP)

The South Thames Paediatric Network announce the launch of the **STPN individualised perioperative pathway**. This pathway acknowledges that the paediatric population who utilise elective surgical services are becoming more complex, with up to 1 in 5 children or young people having a neurodevelopmental, learning, or behavioural need. Anxiety is a prominent issue in children and young people facing an anaesthetic.

With the right support and input, these children can cope with the unfamiliar environment of hospital, even the fast-paced nature of elective day surgery hubs, and this in turn will enhance safety and improve the child or young person's experience of care. This is a bundle of documents that provides a reference for what is considered best practice across the South Thames region.

### **Pathway launch webinar**

To support the launch of this pathway, the STPN will be holding a webinar on Thursday, 22 May, 12:30-13:30pm.

### **Register online.**

Questions may be directed to [Magdalena Rocko](#).



# South London network updates

## Spinal CNS team present at national conference

The King's College Hospital Spinal Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) team has taken their impactful work to the national stage, showcasing their dedication to improving patient care.

Irene dela Cruz, Raquel Calado, and Maria Depante (*pictured below*) recently presented their compelling research at the prestigious National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Insight Discover Research event at Kingston University – a key gathering for healthcare innovators and NHS researchers.

Their poster highlighted the tangible benefits of the enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS) approach on reducing hospital stays for elective neurosurgery spinal patients. The team's findings powerfully demonstrate how ERAS protocols, with their focus on optimising patients before surgery, effective pain management, and encouraging early movement, are making a real difference in getting patients home sooner.

This vital work directly supports the South East London and Kent Spinal Network's ongoing efforts to enhance patient outcomes and improve hospital efficiency – a portion of the ERAS role is proudly funded by the Network.

The invitation to present at this national event underscores the growing recognition of the King's College Hospital Spinal CNS team's commitment to evidence based practice and their significant contributions to advancing patient care. Previously they presented their research at the ERAS Society World Congress in 2024.

"It's fantastic to see our work recognised," commented the ERAS spine team. "This platform allows us to share insights that directly translate into better surgical outcomes for our patients and contribute to a more efficient NHS."



## The landscape is changing.

*South London ICBs and specialist providers have taken the opportunity to work collaboratively to integrate specialised services and deliver an end to end pathway approach for patients.*

---

Integrated care systems (ICSs) in England are taking on delegation of specialised services from NHS England. The South London programme ensures the necessary infrastructure and operating models are in place to achieve success for our patient populations.

### South London partners

- [Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [South East London Integrated Care System](#)
- [South West London Integrated Care System](#)
- [The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust](#)



## Want to know more?

Connect and follow us:  
[Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Web](#)