



University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

# Our Strategy

2025 - 2035

The best joined-up care for *all*



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# Welcome

Welcome to our strategy, which we will be using to guide our priorities and decisions over the next ten years.

At University Hospitals of North Midlands (UHNM), we have a lot to be proud of. We are one of the largest teaching trusts in the UK, with a huge team of over 13,000 people providing high quality, compassionate care in modern facilities.

We provide a range of acute and specialist services for a population of approximately three million people and have around 1,450 beds across our two sites at Royal Stoke and County Hospital.

## Our strategic context

Whilst the ambitions for clinical care and academic achievement described within our previous strategy, '2025 Vision' remain, the NHS landscape has changed. There is a much greater emphasis on partnership and collaboration and our response to challenges facing the NHS has shifted our focus and required us to work differently.

These changes have given us opportunity to reconsider our strategic direction and the future for our staff, and the services we provide for our patients and our population. However, we could not have done that without hearing their views and so our future plans have been shaped by the feedback we have received.

Our ambition is to be a leader in health by harnessing innovation to drive transformational change.

We are dedicated to investing in our people, improving the health and wellbeing of our community, delivering safe and patient-centred care, and advancing services through research, innovation and education.

Every day we will work together to make a positive difference to the lives that we serve.

We play a key role within the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System (ICS), which has partnership at its very core, as we work closely together to transform the way healthcare is delivered for the benefit of our population.

# Our priorities

We will work together with our teams, partners and the system to embed this strategy and use it to help us shape our services and the way we work.

## Our People



We will create an **inclusive** workplace where **everyone** learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference

## Our Patients



We will provide **timely, innovative** and effective services to our **patients**

## Our Population



We will tackle **inequality** and improve the health of our population

# About UHNM

We are one of the largest teaching trusts in the country, primarily serving patients in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent and acting as a tertiary centre to many more. We are proud to have a growing international reputation for the innovative treatments we provide and pioneer through our research, education and university partnerships.

We provide our services across two main sites in Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent at our County Hospital and Royal Stoke University Hospital. We also have our dedicated Staffordshire Children's Hospital at Royal Stoke.

## Our Partnerships

### Universities

We partner with Keele University and the University of Staffordshire to deliver world leading scientific research and pioneering teaching and technologies, providing our clinicians and our leaders with the skills and experiences they need to work in our increasingly complex health and social care environment. We have onsite teaching facilities, and our medical school is one of the best in the country.

### Commercial

We work with many partners beyond Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent through a range of well-established partnerships that span several decades, this includes our PFI partners, where strong relationships are in place.

### Our Networks

We play a leadership role, hosting and contributing to multiple regional and national clinical networks to deliver and improve specialist clinical services.

### Our Integrated Care System

We work closely with health, social care and voluntary sector partners across and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to deliver joined up and integrated care for our population.

We also collaborate with many partners beyond the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent system through a range of well-established relationships that span over a decade or more.

# Our strategic framework

The core components of Our Strategy and plans to deliver it.

## Our Vision

The best joined-up care for *all*

## Our Values

Kind | Excellent | Together

## Priorities and Metrics

### Our People



We will create an **inclusive** workplace where **everyone** learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference

Staff Engagement Score

### Our Patients



We will provide **timely, innovative** and effective services to our **patients**

Combined Hospital Score

### Our Population



We will tackle **inequality** and improve the health of our population

Number of Years in Good Health

## Our Programmes

Brilliant Basics: Standards and Performance | Digitally Enabled Care Transformation | Our Future Hospital Services | Collaborations & Networks

## Our Strategic Plans

Quality, Access and Performance | People | Population Health | Digital | Research | Innovation | Estates and Facilities

# Our changing environment

Across all our services and our wider health and care system, it is clear that things are changing.

Public expectations from healthcare services, patient experience and quality of care are changing. With a growing awareness of the need for care to be provided in the right place at the right time.

Demographic changes mean we have an ageing population. We have seen life expectancies increase but people are not always living longer in good health and people in our most deprived areas live with poor health for 12 years or more than those living in less deprived communities.

The opportunity exists to engage with our communities through health and wellbeing discussions, healthcare prevention and lifestyle choices, both in the delivery of existing care pathways as well as community outreach.

Demand for our services has grown and we have continued to see pressure on our emergency and elective pathways. Our patients are waiting longer than we want them to and it was made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attracting, training, supporting and retaining the right workforce is one of our biggest challenges and is a key challenge across the NHS, but one where we have had some success. The wellbeing, inclusion and development of our people is fundamental to the sustainability of our services.

Finances are a challenge, and we have a significant financial deficit within our system that must be balanced in future years without impacting on the quality of our services. Our infrastructure requires ongoing investment to continue to meet the needs of our services.

Digital technology, innovation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are creating opportunities to radically transform how we deliver our services and in doing so make them more effective and efficient.

We have growing opportunities to collaborate with our health and social care partners within our system, our networks and beyond, to join up care, share learning and improve outcomes for patients our population.

Recognising the value of clinical research and innovation is crucial to us as we navigate the challenging and changing times we face within the NHS. Harnessing and translating the benefits of research and innovation is imperative in transforming service delivery to keep pace with medical, technological and social advancements.

The environmental impact of our service delivery, such as energy sources and consumption, waste management and sustainable procurement practices. We will continue to develop new approaches which recognise our responsibility to supporting the NHS to achieve net carbon zero targets'.

# Our culture and values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do.

Our Values matter to us. They represent the beliefs and guiding principles that shape our behaviour, culture and processes. They provide us with a sense of purpose, direction, and alignment with our vision and promote a positive working environment where our people are recognised and feel valued.

We have listened to our people about what matters the most to them. We have refreshed, and simplified our values, recognising that the safety of our patients and our people is our number one priority and is integral in everything we do.

## Our culture – the way we do things

We take pride in what we do and strive for a culture that is outward-looking, aspirational and collaborative. We believe in the power of partnerships, both within our teams and across the broader healthcare community, to bring out the best in each of us. We are dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve, guided by our core values of Kind, Excellent and Together.





## Kind

We believe in treating every individual with compassion and respect. Our actions are guided by empathy, ensuring that our patients, their families and our colleagues feel valued and supported at all times. We prioritise safety by creating a caring environment where everyone feels secure and protected.



## Excellent

We strive for excellence in everything we do. Our dedication to continuous improvement and innovation ensures that we provide the best possible care and outcomes for our patients. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and integrity. Patient safety is at the forefront of our pursuit of excellence, with rigorous standards and proactive measures to prevent harm.



## Together

We recognise the strength in unity. By working collaboratively, we harness the diverse skills and perspectives of our team to deliver the highest standards of care. Together, we create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. We are answerable for our actions, behaviour and performance. We are transparent, responsible and we take pride in our work.

# What matters to us

**Our strategy is a collective endeavour – it binds us together by setting out what is important to us and what we want to achieve together.**

We need to change. The NHS is facing the biggest challenge in its history. Our services experience sustained pressure and demand is predicted to grow whilst supply will remain constrained.

Partnership working is crucial to our continued success. We are committed to being a strong and supportive partner to those we work with in the delivery of our healthcare services. In an integrated care world, we are bound to work collaboratively as part of a health and care eco-system, focussed on improving population health and delivering exceptional care to our patients.

## Our strategic ambitions

Our long-term success is inextricably tied to the wellbeing of our populations. Through this strategy we will make an enduring commitment to positively influence the social, economic and environmental conditions to support healthy and prosperous communities.

Digital technology gives us the opportunity to accelerate transformation of our services during the lifetime of this strategy. We expect to see exponential growth in Artificial Intelligence (AI), which together with other advances, will deliver a health and bio-tech revolution in the future of healthcare.

The impact of global warming and climate change are increasingly evident. There is a growing evidence base to show the link between a climate crisis and a health crisis. We have a major role to play in the drive to net zero and we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and impact on the environment – thereby improving population health.

Other factors, such as climate change, the cost of living and inequality also demand attention. It is a time of multiple threats but also one of great opportunity.

Our role is to meet these challenges and provide hope for the future. We must be bold and aspirational, by adopting a more proactive position in how we lead, shape and influence our local healthcare economy.

We will do this through a series of long-term commitments which will both advance health and wellbeing as well as establish us as a leader in system working, education, research and innovation.

We want these commitments to guide our inspiration for how we face the present and re-imagine the future.

## Translating our commitments into guiding actions

Our strategic ambitions are mechanisms through which we will improve our connection to our communities, focus on prevention and the wellbeing of our population and enhance current service delivery. Here we explore how our ambitions can be translated into meaningful actions.

### Shaping the health of our population

Work towards achieving a fairer society through focussing on prevention, early intervention and wider determinants.

Engage with local communities and partners to improve service delivery through tackling socio-economic issues.

Deliver the NHS commitment on 10 per cent social value weighting to improve procurement opportunities for local businesses.

### Striving for excellence

Encourage the adoption of clinical best practice and the development of new models of care through evidence and research.

Improve our reputation for clinical excellence by promoting opportunities for learning within the organisation and across partners.

Promote a culture of continuously generating or adopting new ideas through an innovation framework.

### High performing service delivery

Develop innovative approaches to sustainable models of care and patient pathways including transport, medicines and estates.

Reduce the environmental impact we have on local communities by working to decarbonise our infrastructure.

Harness the benefit of digital technology to enhance and improve healthcare delivery and patient experience.

### Working in partnership

Strengthen collaborations with key partners across academia, business and industry to share best practice and adopt the latest innovations.

Harness the expertise and experience of subject matter specialists in partner organisations.

Work with system partners to achieve integrated models of care built around the patient.

### Being outward focussed

Exploit opportunities for investment outside of traditional funding routes for reinvestment into supporting healthcare for patients.

Grow the discovery and development of new services that keep pace with advances in healthcare.

Develop both national and international personal and professional development beyond what is available within the organisation.

# Our strategic objectives

## Our People



We will create an **inclusive** workplace where **everyone** learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference

We will improve our work environments and wellbeing offers, actively champion diversity and support the health and wellbeing of our people.

We will offer exceptional learning and development opportunities, and establish clear, inclusive career pathways for our current and future workforce.

We will be a place where our offers and practices continue to improve the flexibility, adaptability and sustainability of our workforce.

## Our Patients



We will provide **timely, innovative** and effective services to our **patients**

We will transform services to deliver seamless, person-centred care pathways that are closer to, or in a person's home, where possible.

We will embed a culture of continual improvement and innovation to deliver top quartile performance across national standards.

We will excel in delivering excellent patient outcomes; learning from best practice, feedback, incidents and lived experience.

## Our Population



We will tackle **inequality** and improve the health of our population

We will tackle inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.

We will empower staff and patients to improve their health and wellbeing.

As a major employer we will use our resources to improve overall health of our local population.



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# Our People

**We will create an inclusive workplace where everyone learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference.**

We are proud of and inspired by our people.

'Our people' are our current directly engaged workforce and our future workforce. We strive to continually improve the sustainability of our workforce and our organisational culture.

We employ more than 13,000 people (of more than 100 nationalities, of whom 56 per cent are full-time, 90 per cent are on permanent contracts, 76 per cent are women, 69 per cent are white, and 70 per cent have less than 10 years' service at UHNM).

- Also, our active temporary / bank workers, trainees and apprentices are an essential part of our whole workforce
- Additionally, our engagement and partnership working with our indirect workforce is essential, e.g. our volunteers, contractors and agency workers.

We are a lead employing organisation in our Integrated Care System. At system level, we work collaboratively on people, culture and inclusion strategic priorities across the organisations. We do so in the context of the financial, operational and transformational challenges and opportunities experienced.

There are many generational and external factors which will impact our people over the next ten years such as;

- Government policy and changes, 10-year Health Plan, NHS long-term workforce plan, healthcare system transformation
- Financial challenges, including the cost-of living
- Career expectations and work-life balance, social media and public perceptions
- Digital transformation and digital skills gap
- Employment legislative changes
- Concerns about local and global health and wellbeing, and engagement in environmental sustainability

We recognise that our people, our organisation, the NHS system we work within, and the world around us all experience constant change.

## Our ambition

We aim to be the employer of choice by prioritising the health and wellbeing of our people, ensuring equity of opportunity and experiences, fostering effective leadership, understanding and advancing diversity, and offering flexible, tailored support. We will focus on life-long learning, efficient practices and a strong, adaptable workforce, playing a key role as an anchor institution in the community.

Our teams and individuals will work together to foster a culture where inclusive and values-led leadership is exemplified at all levels. They will embrace learning and development, collaborate with a shared purpose and innovate together, directly enhancing our ability to provide excellent patient care.

We aspire to create a workplace where everyone feels included, supported and has a strong sense of belonging. Flexible working, career mobility and a respectful, safe environment will be the norm. Our people will feel valued, rewarded, and recognised for their efforts, experiencing high levels of engagement and job satisfaction. Ultimately, we want our teams to thrive, to be proud to work with their colleagues and for the organisation, knowing that their contributions make a significant impact on patient care and the community.

### Our People



We will create an **inclusive** workplace where **everyone** learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference

We will improve our work environments and wellbeing offers, actively champion diversity and support the health and wellbeing of our people

We will offer exceptional learning and development opportunities, and establish clear, inclusive career pathways for our current and future workforce

We will be a place where our offers, and practices continue to improve the flexibility, adaptability and sustainability of our workforce

# Our People plan

We will create an inclusive workplace where everyone learns, thrives, and makes a positive difference

## What we will do:

**We will improve our work environments and wellbeing offers, actively champion diversity and support the health and wellbeing of our people**

**We will offer exceptional learning and development opportunities, and establish clear, inclusive career pathways for our current and future workforce**

**We will be a place where our offers and practices continue to improve the flexibility, adaptability and sustainability of our workforce**

## How we will do it:

We will support mental health, underpinned by social and psychological wellbeing. We will support physical and financial health and wellbeing.

We will provide safe environments and workplaces with appropriate facilities to support everyone in performing their roles effectively.

We will increase engagement and the sense of belonging; by continuing to improve our focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and hearing the voice of our people.

We will provide excellent learning, education and professional development opportunities to meet our people's diverse needs, including functional and digital skills.

We will develop the capability and competency of our managers and leaders.

We will establish and define career pathways, with fair pay, and ensure career equity and inclusion in career progression opportunities for our current and future workforce.

We will develop more flexible offers and targeted creative strategies to attract and recruit talent and support proactive succession planning.

We will support teams to be flexible and agile, by improving how they work together to manage service demands, navigate change, adapt their mindset and behaviours.

We will improve our people systems and processes to help colleagues identify, respond to and resolve problems early, fairly, consistently and compassionately.



Man in blue uniform with pins: "Pride", "Nurses Day", "Great Family", "New Staff Welcome", "Nurses Day"

Woman in blue uniform with name tag: "hello my name is... Aazia"

# Our Patients

**We will provide timely, innovative and effective care to our patients.**

The challenges facing the NHS are well documented. A number of high-profile reports highlight that despite NHS teams continuing to be passionate about delivering high quality care and working incredibly hard trying to deliver this, we have much work still to do in order to consistently deliver timely and effective care for those who need our services.

- We will continue our focus to ensure we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time to ensure our patients are able to receive the high standards of care they need
- We will reduce long waits to access care, both from an emergency and planned care perspective. We are very mindful of the subsequent impact delays in receiving care has on our population, UHNM, partner services and our local economy
- We will strive to reduce unwanted variation and deliver upper quartile performance, outcomes and experience for our population and colleagues.

## **Our ambition**

We aim to be amongst the best performing organisations in the NHS.

This means:

- Developing and supporting our workforce to meet the future needs of our population
- Driving continual improvement across delivery, access, quality, safety, and patient experience metrics
- Transforming how and where healthcare is delivered
- Working closely with our patients and populations so we learn and improve from their experiences
- Learning from best practice nationally and internationally
- Increasing partnerships across our system, local authorities, healthcare organisations and support services to co-ordinate and deliver person centred care to our population
- Changing how we communicate and exchange information with our teams and the population, utilising digital technologies to increase safety, reduce variation and improve productivity
- Creating greater opportunities for our teams and our population to be involved in pioneering research.

## Our Patients



We will provide **timely, innovative** and effective services to our patients

We will transform services to deliver seamless, person centred care pathways that are closer to, or delivered in a person's home, where possible.

We will embed a culture of continual improvement and innovation to deliver top quartile performance across national standards.

We will excel in delivering excellent patient outcomes; learning from best practice, feedback, incidents and lived experience.

# Our Patients plan

We will provide timely, innovative and effective care to our patients

## What we will do:

**We will transform services to deliver seamless, person care pathways that are closer to, or in a person's home, where possible**

**We will embed a culture of continual improvement and innovation to deliver top quartile performance across national standards**

**We will excel in delivering excellent patient outcomes; learning from best practice, feedback, incidents and lived experience**

## How we will do it:

In collaboration with system partners, we will transform end to end emergency care pathways to ensure patients get the right care, in the right place, as quickly as possible.

We will develop timely, efficient, digitally enabled elective care pathways.

We will deliver nationally recognised best practice discharge planning.

We will equip our staff with the knowledge and skills to adapt and improve, to create a person centred environment where staff feel confident to problem-solve and apply best practice approaches to improve patient outcomes, patient experience and staff experience.

We will work collaboratively with patients, their families, carers, and our population to ensure we plan and deliver person centred services that deliver top quartile performance.

We will develop outstanding leaders who use data to drive and inform continuous quality improvement, and who lead high performing and engaged teams.

We will maximise innovation, research and technology opportunities to inform transformation, reduce variation, and deliver consistently high standards of care.

We will empower staff and patients to improve safety, encouraging open conversations where staff and patients can highlight successes, identify potential risks early, and contribute to continuous improvement.

We will support our staff to learn, share ideas, and implement the most effective, productive and sustainable ways to care for patients.



# Our Population

**We will improve the health of our population and reduce inequality.**

As a university teaching hospital, we provide care to our local Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire population as well as specialised services to our much wider footprint of over a million people. Improving access and experience for all those we serve is important to us.

Our population is growing and demand for health and care services is increasing. Many illnesses we are seeing are preventable. Physical inactivity and excess weight, smoking and excess alcohol consumption are significant contributors to poor health. This results in increasing numbers of people living with cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, musculoskeletal conditions and cancer. Groups who are marginalised, live in deprived communities, and have other protected characteristics are at increased risk of preventable disease and premature death.

Our local population has a shorter life expectancy compared to other areas in England and spend between 16 and 22 years living in poor health. This is stark in Stoke-on-Trent where 53 per cent of the local population lives in the 20 per cent of the most deprived communities in England.

## **Our ambition**

Our ambition is to focus on preventing sickness, so that people live as much of their life as possible in good health and that, when care is needed, the best outcomes are experienced by all.

This means:

- Understanding the needs and inequalities in our population to inform targeted interventions. In addition to the national CORE20PLUS5 framework, local priorities are to reduce infant mortality, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cancer, liver disease and improve vaccination uptake
- Collaborating more closely across geographical borders to tackle inequalities in specialist services
- For patient voice. Listening and learning to improve access, experience and outcomes for those who need it most, i.e. seldom heard communities, those experiencing poverty

- Developing our hospitals as smoke-free & healthy lifestyle campuses; promoting health & wellbeing at every opportunity, for patients, families, carers & our people
- Forming new relationships to personalise care to prevent complications from illness and emergency admissions in patients with frailty and long-term conditions
- Strengthening local communities through creating pathways into employment, making best use of our estate, resources and procurement to improve the economy and environment.

## Our Population



We will **tackle inequality** and improve the health of our population

We will tackle inequalities in access, experience and outcomes.

We will empower staff and patients to improve their health and wellbeing.

As a major employer we will use our influence to improve the overall health of our population.

# Our Population plan

We will improve the health of our population and reduce inequality.

## What we will do:

**We will tackle inequalities in access, experience and outcomes**

**We will empower staff and patients to improve their health and wellbeing**

**As a major employer we will use our resource to improve the overall health of our population**

## How we will do it:

Consistently collect the data needed to identify and understand health inequalities.

Implementing the national CORE20PLUS5 framework to reduce health inequalities

Using population health data to reduce infant mortality, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cancer, liver disease and improve vaccination uptake.

Use our 'making every contact count' approach to introduce prevention as core business. Targeted programmes for tobacco, alcohol and obesity.

Establish our hospitals as Smoke Free healthy campuses.

Develop personalised care to prevent complications for those living with major conditions.

Develop our pathways into employment for local people.

Listening to involve communities in decisions and learning from those exposed to social and health inequality.

Make best use of our estate and resources to improve local communities.





# Our programmes

## Responding to the 10 year health plan

There are some major programmes of work that we know we need all parts of the Trust and our system to focus on. These describe fundamental changes in the way we provide care as well as recognising there are some immediate areas for focus.

### Our Programmes

Brilliant Basics: Standards and Performance | Digitally Enabled Care Transformation | Our Future Hospital Services | Collaborations and Networks

#### 1. Brilliant Basics: standards and performance

We recognise that we need to continually improve the fundamentals – the quality of care we provide, our productivity and respond to the performance expectations of the NHS. This programme provides the focus on the immediate concerns facing our patients, including urgent and emergency care pathways, long wait times, personal experience and a lack of joined up care.

#### 2. Digitally enabled care transformation

The transformation of care provided to our patients through the redesign and standardisation of care pathways and care processes, enabled by an Electronic Patient Record System, clinical decision support tools and patient self-serve functionality.

### **3. Our future hospital services**

We recognise that healthcare services will continue to evolve rapidly over the lifetime of this strategy. This programme will help us drive research, innovation and technology to shape how and where we deliver our services in the future.

### **4. Collaborations and networks**

Working in partnership across the whole patient pathway through both formal and informal relationships to ensure sustainable service delivery and effective interfaces between providers of care.



# Developing our strategy

## Listening to Our People, Our Patients and Our Population

To develop our strategy, we listened. We asked Our People, Our Patients and Our Population about what matters to them. We considered the wider local and national context and have aligned our ambitions with those of our partners including our Integrated Care Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Place-based Partnerships and Provider Collaborative. We did this to ensure that our services are high quality, responsive, person-centred and planned to meet the needs of our population.

### What we heard

Using an online survey, conversations, focus groups and workshops we were able to gather a wide variety of views about our future. We have translated these into broad themes which have formed the basis of our strategy and plans.

- A unified, respectful and efficient environment that prioritises both exceptional patient care and a supportive workplace for our staff
- A leading example and excellent reputation in both patient care and staff satisfaction, where staff are valued, developed and recognised for their contributions
- Enhanced digital capabilities, integrated and consolidated systems, improved infrastructure and better training and support to our staff, all while keeping patient needs and operational efficiency at the forefront
- A holistic approach to healthcare that combines prevention, staff support, community engagement and improved system efficiency
- A robust approach to research and innovation, improved support and development for staff and a focus on evidence-based practices.

# Delivering our strategy

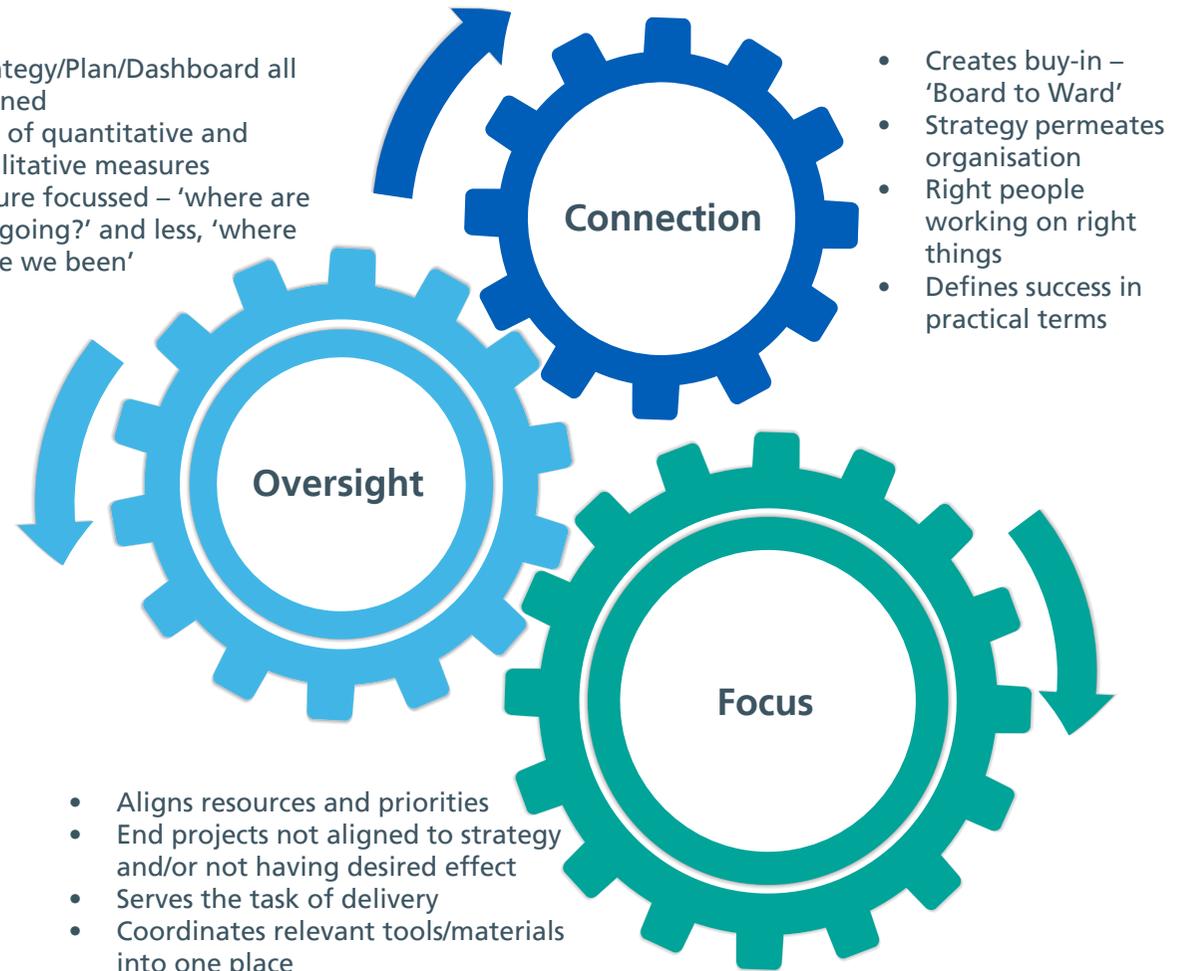
## Strategy Delivery Unit (SDU)

Delivering our ambitions will require a combination of capacity, capability and resource, which we recognise is limited. We will align our resources to ensure that they are co-ordinated around delivery of our strategy, working together to seamlessly achieve our goals. We cannot do this alone and will be working closely with our partners across our Integrated Care System and beyond to optimise available resource, ensuring that we achieve the best possible outcomes for Our People, Patients and Population.

The SDU core purpose generally covers three main aspects:

- Coordinating vehicle for the range of change management methodologies available across the Trust to deliver programmes that directly align to the Trust's strategic ambitions
- Brings together governance and oversight with the capability to deliver organisational change in a cohesive, compassionate and consistent way
- To be a centre of best practice for change management culture, approaches and tools across the Trust – the balance between 'art' of design and 'science' of delivery.

- Strategy/Plan/Dashboard all aligned
- Mix of quantitative and qualitative measures
- Future focussed – 'where are we going?' and less, 'where have we been'





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