



Communications and engagement
strategy

July 2019

Background

All Together Better has been in place since 2015 when Sunderland was awarded 'vanguard status' and became a national pilot site, funded by NHS England, to test new ways of working to help improve care for patients.

Since then, health and care partners across the City have been working together to think about how services can be better joined up in the community and how, as one health and care system, we can tailor services to meet the needs of our communities and support people to stay healthy and well.

Efforts have been focussed on improving the co-ordination of services for people who have complex care needs or multiple long-term conditions and who already receive lots of support from different parts of the health and care system.

The innovative work which has already taken place in Sunderland is centred around three key buildings blocks:

- Establishing '**community integrated teams**' across five localities which involve nurses, social workers and therapy staff working together alongside GPs to provide proactive, preventative care to populations of around 30,000 – 50,000 people. The community integrated teams help support people to stay out of hospital and live as independently as possible by providing enhanced support in the community.
- Establishing a '**recovery at home**' service which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and involves multiple professionals working together to respond quickly and provide support when there is an unexpected change in a person's condition that could develop into a crisis. This includes supporting people in their recovery after leaving hospital by providing the right care and support in the community and preventing the need for emergency readmission to hospital.
- GPs working together with other health and care professionals to think about improvements in how we deliver **primary care** across the city to support more people and, in particular, those in the poorest health. This includes how the latest technology can be used to deliver the best care possible for people in their homes; how to provide even more services directly in the community and outside hospitals and how community services can work more closely with other support organisations to make sure people can stay as well as possible and independent as possible longer into life.

Building on these successes, work took place during 2018 to agree continued joint working arrangements across health and care partners in Sunderland who are now formally working together as part of an alliancing arrangement known as 'All Together Better'.

Strategic aims

Working together to strategically plan and deliver care across the City of Sunderland in a much more co-ordinated and joined up way for the future, the collective vision of All Together Better is to:

- deliver more personalised, pro-active and joined up care
- improve peoples' experiences of using health and care services and their health outcomes
- support people to live longer with a better quality of life.

Principles, values and ways of working:

Working together as an alliance means that all partners are equal in standing and focussed on working across organisations to do what is best for the person and for the whole health and care system. The following principles underpin these new ways of working:

- **Patients first**
 - We work together as one system and one team with a common purpose to improve care, outcomes and experiences
- **Respect and encouragement**
 - We value the skill and contribution of others and respect and embrace differences by taking a solutions focused approach to problem solving
- **Collaboration**
 - We work in partnership to pro-actively manage resources, improve quality and increase value across the whole healthcare system
- **Act with integrity**
 - We are open and honest in everything we do and share our skills, knowledge and resources for the wider benefit of the system
- **Empowerment**
 - We empower our staff to make positive changes happen through active participation in testing, considering and implementing new models

Communications aims and objectives

This communications and engagement strategy is designed to build on what has historically been delivered in the early stages of All Together Better through the vanguard work.

Whilst recognising that all partners will still have individual communications and engagement requirements, this strategy outlines a number of principles for joined up efforts across all partners and reflects a new way of working that will evolve and develop as work progresses.

It outlines a recommended approach to communicate and engage with key stakeholders, in particular internal NHS audiences, with a collective voice around the collaborative work taking place through ATB and the vision for the health and care system in Sunderland.

The ultimate aim is to increase awareness and understanding of the strategic priorities and shared future vision of All Together Better partners. This will be achieved through a number of strategic objectives to:

- clearly articulate the strengths of working together across organisational boundaries for the benefit of patient care
- reinforce the achievements and successes so far through All Together Better and give a clear and consistent message about ambitions for the future
- actively engage with patients, carers and members of the public to influence strategic direction of the four programme work streams
- ensure all stakeholders receive consistent and timely information from All Together Better in a co-ordinated way
- involve and empower stakeholders in the development of the health and care system and allow views to challenge thinking and influence decision-making
- encourage ideas for innovation, improvement and efficiencies amongst staff and create clear channels for feedback

Communications and engagement activity will be aligned to the four key strategic work streams as follows and the emphasis and focus of all activity will be on sharing the positive impact for patients and staff of the collaborative work taking place in:

- General practice
- Mental health, learning disabilities and autism
- Enhanced primary and community care
- Intermediate and urgent care

Core strategic narrative

Local, regional, and national context

Sunderland has been at the forefront of developing new models of care and is now leading the development of local, place-based health and care systems built around the needs of specific communities. The progress made through the vanguard work puts the City in a great position to deliver on the ambitions outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan.

Through the development of All Together Better there is a shared commitment to developing new collaborative relationships and away from the traditional methods of 'transacting' business between commissioners and providers. To do this, there is collective recognition across all partners in Sunderland that we need to think differently and move away from historical ways of working in order to truly address some of the major pressures and challenges facing the health and care system.

At a regional level, all NHS providers across the North East and North Cumbria are now working much more closely together towards an 'integrated care system' (ICS) model which will take overall collective responsibility for managing resources, delivering NHS standards, improving the health of the population and addressing key strategic challenges.

There is already very strong collaborative working between Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), South Tyneside CCG and South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust which has been driven through the Path to Excellence hospital transformation programme.

As Phase Two progresses it is vital that the narrative increasingly focusses on work across the wider local health economy to think about improvements in primary care how we can increase focus on prevention and population health.

As part of the region's move towards an integrated care system (ICS), South Tyneside, Sunderland and Durham are now aligned into a central 'integrated care partnership' (ICP) which is one of four across the region.

It is important that All Together Better partners are cognisant of these national policy drivers and overall direction of travel for the NHS in the region as we move to a much more open, transparent and collaborative approach in the years ahead. This will also be critical in the way we communicate and engage with our local population to ensure messages and activities are co-ordinated and fully aligned.

Key messages

- To meet the challenges facing health and care services we need to think differently, work differently and not to be afraid to be different.
- This starts with how health and care services, our leaders, managers and staff at all levels work together to get things done in new and different ways, setting aside organisational barriers, developing stronger, trusting and new relationships with each other.
- Many of our services already work well together, with dedicated staff providing great care and support to lots of people, but we could be much better.
- We want to build on what we do well, continue to support thriving community services and care closer to home while making sure people have access to specialist support when they need it.
- Staff in all parts of our health and care system have a key role to play in supporting local people to live healthier lives.
- Despite having some of the best performing services in the NHS, the health outcomes we achieve in Sunderland are not good enough.
- We want to ensure that all Sunderland residents have equal access to the best possible services which offer the best health outcomes.

What will our health and care system look like in the future?

More personalised, pro-active and joined-up care

- We want to make community-based care the main focus of our health and care system, bringing as much as possible into local communities and out of hospital.
- We want to organise and co-ordinate care around people's needs in a way that understands and responds to their physical health, mental health and social needs.
- We want to develop support for people that prevents, reduces and delays the need for expensive health and care services, helping people to be more independent and so they can be as well as they can be.

Improve peoples' experiences of using health and care services and their health outcomes

- We want to arrange things in new and better ways to help different professionals to work together across boundaries and empower people to take control of their own health and care.
- We will create new, clear ways for accessing specialist advice and support in the community and focus on improving population health.
- We will do this by involving families, carers and local communities in how we plan and deliver care.

Support people to live longer with a better quality of life.

- We want more people to be able to stay well in their own homes and communities and take greater responsibility for their own health.
- We want people to take part in saying what health results are important to them and how they can reach them by working with health and care staff.
- We want to support people to build their knowledge, skills and confidence to live full and meaningful lives.
- We want to help people access the support they need to better manage their own health and wellbeing on an ongoing basis.
- We know that health and care staff are best placed to have conversations with people about ways to improve their health and we will support our colleagues to take the opportunity to have proactive conversations, as we also know that people welcome the advice they give.

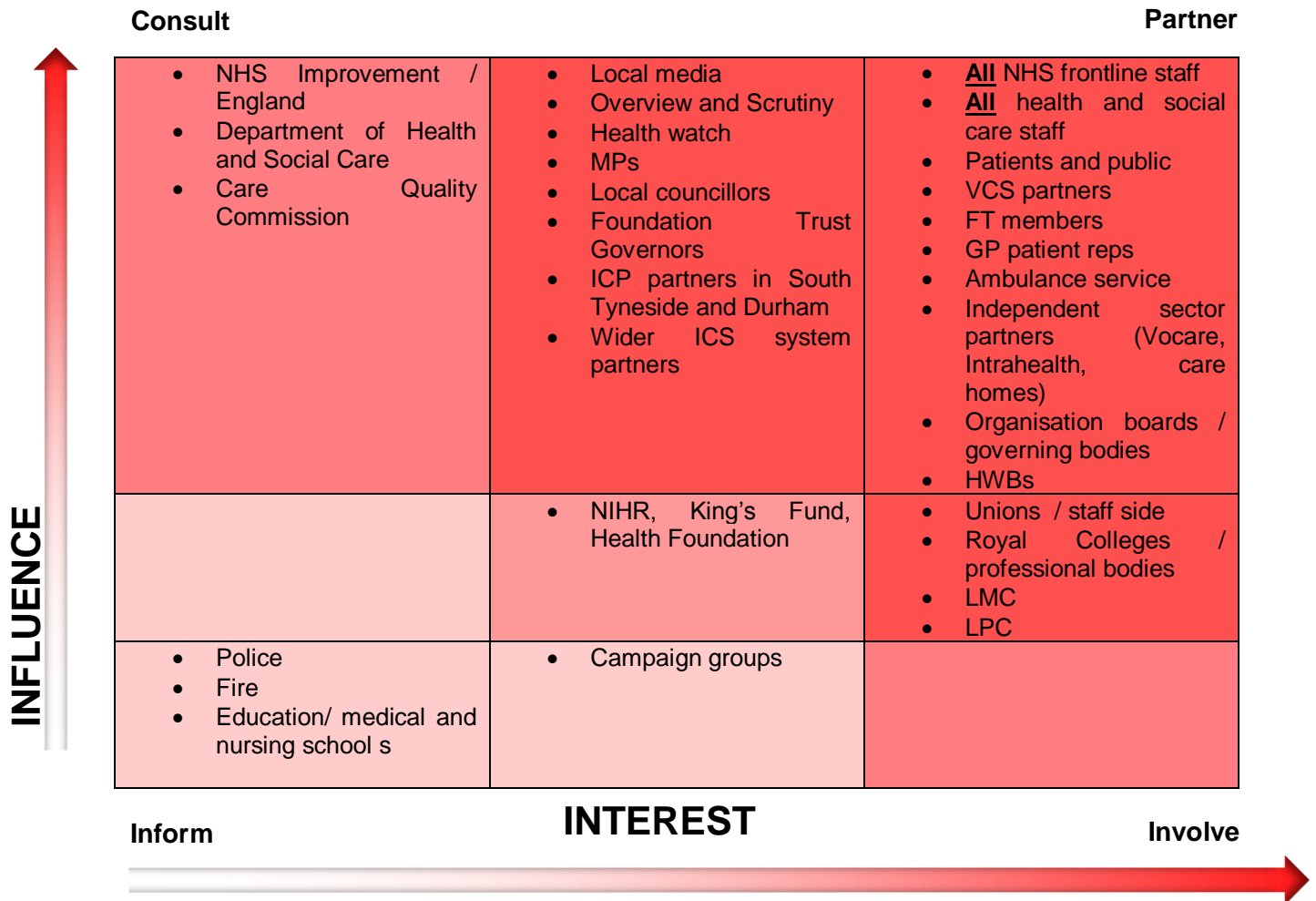
Key stakeholders

Good communications and engagement planning must identify the various stakeholders linked to All Together Better and the powers of influence associated with each. The core partners involved in All Together Better are:

- NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- Sunderland Care and Support
- Sunderland GP Alliance
- Sunderland City Council
- Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Voluntary and community sector organisations including Age UK Sunderland, Sunderland MIND and Sunderland Carers Centre

- Other providers of NHS contracted services

The power/interest matrix below identifies the range of core stakeholders ATB and shows where efforts must be focussed:



Key deliverables

Communications and engagement activity will be focussed on supporting the strategic needs of each of the four programme workstreams and in line with priorities for 2019/20:

1. **Programme One – General Practice**
 - Social prescribing and prevention
 - Primary care strategy
 - Primary care networks and community locality teams
 - Medicines optimisation and developing pharmacy services
2. **Programme Two – Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism**

- Delivery of mental health strategy
- Aftercare and support for people detained under the Mental Health Act
- Mental health care for older people
- Improving access to local mental health services
- Promoting employment, education and training

3. Programme Three – Enhanced Community Care Services

- Transforming the community equipment service
- Developing locality community teams model
- Improving Continuing Health Care pathways
- Developing a new frailty model
- Improving care for people with respiratory disease
- Improving podiatry care
- Developing community support into care homes
- Improving the Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS)

4. Programme Four – Urgent Care and Intermediate Care

- Improving the Recovery at Home Service
- Improving care for high users of A&E and reducing unscheduled attendances
- Urgent care strategy implementation

Individual tactical plans for each programme will be developed following initial meetings with workstreams in September to understand the requirements for 2019/20.

Refreshed brand identity

Work has been undertaken to develop a refreshed brand identity for All Together Better which is in line with the NHS Branding Guidelines for partnerships involving a range of health and care services.

Given the multiple NHS organisations involved, the single NHS lozenge should be used (top right) and a list of partner organisations is recommended using a neutral visual style.

Since being introduced in 1999, the NHS lozenge is now instantly recognised by 98% of the public and research shows a clear preference for visual NHS identity that is easily identifiable and consistently presented – it reassures patients that they can rely on the quality of service being provided. Where organisations deviate from the NHS lozenge, it creates confusion, mistrust and concern. It is therefore strongly recommended that the use of the NHS lozenge is continued in this context.

Immediate recommended tactical delivery:

- Convert the programme priorities and operational plan into an easy to understand public facing document which is professionally designed, using clear visuals and graphics to explain the ambition for health and care services in Sunderland.

- Redevelop the ATB website with key information to include details of each programme, who's who, business model, ways of working etc. and update social media feeds.
- Establish bi-monthly e-bulletin to keep all partners up to date with latest developments.
- Internal comms and engagement across all partner organisations (using established methods of each partner) to relaunch ATB website and information about the programme to frontline staff.
- Formal letter from MD and GP chair to all key stakeholders to share a copy of the new operational plan document and key priorities for Sunderland.
- Attendance at key meetings to discuss the shared ambition for Sunderland (i.e. JHOSC, HWBs, CCG local engagement groups, GP forums)
- Attendance at programme meetings to prepare forward communications and engagement plan for each workstream.
- Regular proactive updates on ATB work for staff, public and stakeholders.

Patient, service user and community engagement

In partnership with Sunderland City Council and NHS Sunderland CCG, work is underway to develop a joint engagement strategy between the local authority and the NHS which will report into the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB).

It is recommended that public engagement activities for All Together Better are fully embedded as part of this shared engagement strategy to ensure that we are talking collectively and cohesively as one health and care system across the City. This will ensure that activities are co-ordinated and better aligned to what all partners are striving to achieve - improving the health and wellbeing of our local population.

The first strategic communications and engagement meeting for all partners to discuss the shared engagement strategy takes place in September. Following this it is anticipated that a forward plan of engagement activity and plans for engaging patients and the public will be developed and agreed from April 2020 onwards.

Work is also taking place across the region as part of the Integrated Care System development to plan public engagement activities in all localities. A strategic comms network exists across the region to plan and co-ordinate this activity with representation from the ATB strategic communications lead to ensure that ATB engagement activities are fully aligned to other local and regional work.

Working arrangements for comms and engagement

Effective communications and engagement will be a key enabler to success for All Together Better and, as such, dedicated resource has been identified to facilitate a

more proactive and strategic approach for year one. Moving forward, it is anticipated that work within this overarching strategy will be driven forward by communications and engagement professionals across all partners.

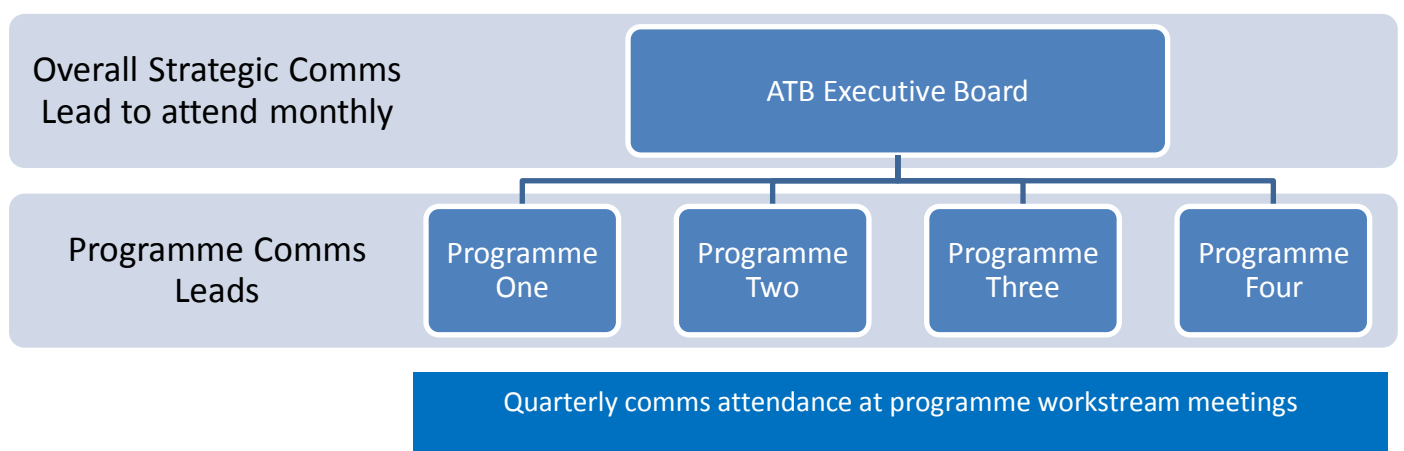
It is vital from the outset that all partners adopt the principles outlined in this strategy, recognising that the strategic priorities of each workstream will also cut across the organisational objectives of individual partners.

Effective communications and engagement will be central to the success of All Together Better and it is highly recommended that all proactive communications and engagement activity is strategically driven as outlined below:

- Quarterly communications and engagement plans for each programme agreed by workstream leads and ATB Executive Group.
- Any materials produced (in line with agreed plans) will be shared with relevant partners and their respective comms leads for approval prior to being issued.
- Programme workstream leads will have ultimate sign off of materials in accordance with the agreed programme plans.
- All major public campaigns to be agreed with all partners via the ATB Executive Group prior to implementation.

The strategic comms lead will attend the monthly ATB Executive Board meeting to ensure the overall strategic direction and alignment of comms outputs across all workstreams and it is recommended this becomes a regular standing item for discussion.

Programme workstream meetings will be attended on a quarterly basis by communications representatives to agree priorities and develop a forward plan and be the operational link for day to day delivery of activity.



Measurement and evaluation

From April 2020, a quarterly report on communications and engagement activity will be shared with programme leads and ATB Executive Board. Activity will be measured in a number of ways, for example:

Outputs:

- Number of formal stakeholder meetings attended
- Number of engagement events held
- Traffic to new website and online engagement
- Tone of media coverage

It will also be important to measure against the three strategic objectives for ATB and measure whether the local population understand what is happening to improve local services and whether they are reporting any differences in their experiences of using local health and care services.

This will be further discussed with communications and engagement partners to consider, as part of the shared engagement strategy, a focussed piece of work to understand the sentiment and perceptions of the local community at the outset. This could then be used to track performance alongside other 'system' analytical data, to demonstrate progress in changing and improving the way care is delivered across Sunderland.