



Northamptonshire Sustainability Transformation Plan FAQs

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What is Northamptonshire's Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) and what does it hope to achieve?

“Northamptonshire’s Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) sets out how health and social care locally will develop over the next five years. This plan sits alongside the county’s Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Supporting Northamptonshire to Flourish, and builds upon previous work to shape services in a joined up way. It describes how health and social care can be improved to bring real benefits to individuals and communities.”

Every part of England is working on a local Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), setting out how health and social care will evolve over the next five years.

Our plan is about making the best possible use of what we have, to keep people well – and to give them the right care in ways that are right for them, when they need help.

It sets out how we will address at a local level the three top priorities facing the NHS across the country:

1. Health and wellbeing: By promoting healthier lifestyles, we can improve people’s quality of life and reduce the pressure on our health and social care services.
2. Care and quality: We want to ensure that needs are met by services of consistently high quality.
3. Funding and efficiency: Efficient use of our limited resources is essential if our services are to remain effective, affordable and able to provide up-to-date treatments.

This plan has been developed through an unprecedented level of commitment between local partners in health and social care. It includes:

- Commissioners of healthcare e.g. clinical commissioning groups
- Providers of healthcare e.g. local hospital and community trusts
- Medical practitioners i.e. GPs, Specialists and Consultants
- Local government departments e.g. adult social services and public health
- Voluntary organisations; and
- Members of the public.

The programme will also involve obtaining the views of the public, patients, carers and the voluntary sector and we are looking to them to help us develop a truly effective health system.

The programme has several broad projects:

- Our NHS health partners will continue to work together to improve services. By integrating care, the people of Northamptonshire will get a seamless system wherever treatment in hospital, community or at home becomes appropriate
- Commissioning healthcare closer to home; away from central settings in the county that are difficult to reach by public transport
- Collaborating resources appropriately between the partners which will drive efficiencies and reduce duplication
- Looking at integrating health with social care; by pooling resources we can ensure the most vulnerable in society are cared for in a more appropriate manner
- Partners working collaboratively to ensure that resources are used efficiently to benefit patients rather than duplicating effort.

These projects will result in transforming four key strands of care:

- Urgent care (such as emergency services)
- Complex care (for people with multiple needs)
- Scheduled care (such as planned operations and outpatient clinics)
- The prevention of ill health.

In developing our STP, we have considered how acute services (hospitals), community services such as district nurses and therapists, primary care (GPs) and social care work. Prevention and wellbeing are at the heart of the solution. Our challenge is to deliver this consistently through the county.

This programme aims to reduce pressures on our hospital services; join-up health and social care services around the needs of patients; provide care closer to the home and to help support and advise our population how to manage their own health themselves.

Ultimately, the STP will ensure services remain sustainable in the long term.

Why are you doing this?

“This plan is about ensuring that services can meet the needs of local people in the future. To achieve this, there needs to be change. Without change, we will not be able to deal with the significant challenges we are now facing”

We need to change the way we deliver health and care services across the county in order to continue to improve the health and wellbeing of our population within the resources available to us over the next five years. Northamptonshire’s population is growing and ageing more quickly than the national average. As we grow older, we are more likely to have one or more long term conditions e.g. diabetes, and these

conditions account for a large amount of the demand on our resources. This demand is set to increase over the coming years.

There are also big inequalities in health within the county, including how long people can expect to live. We need to support people to make choices that support healthy lifestyles, such as not smoking, having a good diet and exercising.

The high level of demand for our services is having an impact on our ability to deliver high quality, safe and effective care. We know that some people are in hospital longer than they need to be, which is not good for them or the service.

In Northamptonshire, if we don't make any changes to your health and social care systems, to address these challenges, we estimate the local NHS gap could rise to somewhere in the region of £230million by 2020/21.

What do these plans involve?

“Addressing the challenges we face creates big opportunities to improve. The aim of this plan is to shape health and social care for Northamptonshire which is fit for the 21st century, supports a healthier population, meets all the needs of local people – and is affordable”

We know that delivering services in the current way just isn't providing the health outcomes we want for our local population. Health inequalities throughout the county mean that people in some areas can expect to live almost 10 years less than others. This is unacceptable and needs to be corrected.

Therefore, health and social care providers across Northamptonshire are working together to develop plans that achieve good clinical outcomes as well as financial sustainability. We need to ensure that the health service is there when everyone needs it.

We are going to focus on transforming the following four key strands of care:

- Urgent care (such as emergency services)
- Complex care (for people with multiple needs)
- Scheduled care (such as planned operations and outpatient clinics)
- The prevention of ill health.

It will result in a very different way of providing care for our county:

- A focus on prevention first – supporting people to stay healthy and live independently
- A “whole person” approach – taking into account all care needs, both physical and mental, where services are focused on the individual, not the organisation providing them

- The right care, in the right place and at the right time – safe care in the most appropriate setting; fast access to services wherever people live
- Reduced reliance on hospitals – high quality specialist services available when needed, supported by a system which enables people to move back home quickly
- Integration – more joined-up services, delivered in the community by GPs and other professionals working in one system; stronger collaboration between specialists in our main hospitals in Northampton and Kettering
- Voluntary support – greater involvement of voluntary and community groups in helping people to stay well.

To make this plan a reality, there will be a big emphasis on supporting staff to be more flexible, working in mixed teams in one Northamptonshire system – rather than in separate groups. This means building on the successful joint working which is already happening.

Will this mean fewer services for patients?

“The aim is to create a healthier Northamptonshire population, improve the quality of people’s lives and ease the demand for care services.”

A key part of the vision for the programme is to provide high quality, responsive, accessible service which is centred on the individual.

This will mean services better tailored to meet people’s needs operating more proactively in the community, not fewer services. We know that people respond to care best and are more likely to thrive when they are at home. We also know that there is currently an overreliance on hospital-based care. We want to change the current healthcare pathways so that care is delivered in locations and ways that will benefit patients more and are financial sustainable.

There is already some great work going on in the county to support people to manage their wellbeing. The work being completed by First for Wellbeing includes their innovative online self-assessment tool, Octigo. Anyone can go online to fill it in and get an assessment of their most important wellbeing areas to focus on – and importantly get support with this.

Through our plan, there will be a growing focus on staying well – helping people to make positive lifestyle choices, giving them the confidence to manage their health, and plugging them into the many local community and voluntary support networks which already exist.

Will this put patients and vulnerable people at risk? How can people look after themselves?

“More joined-up community care...will involve greater use of technology to monitor people at home and access to community support groups.”

We are looking to develop a health and social care system that empowers people to manage their own health and wellbeing. We will not put patients and vulnerable people at risk, there will also be support for those who need it through joined up, community-based services from across health and social care and the voluntary sector.

Is self-management just an excuse to cut costs by leaving patients at home to look after themselves?

“The aim is to create a healthier Northamptonshire population, improve the quality of people’s lives and ease the demand for care services.”

By creating a system that supports patients to manage their wellbeing, we are empowering our patient population to make positive lifestyle choices, giving them the confidence to manage their health, and plugging them into the many local community and voluntary support networks which already exist.

Through this plan, there will be:

- Voluntary organisations with the right capacity to support care services, building resilient and engaged communities
- Social prescribing to improve population health and wellbeing through directed access to community support
- Individuals empowered to be proactive in managing their own wellbeing
- Prevention of ill health – both countywide through information campaigns and at a personal level, through direct intervention by health and social care professionals
- Effective prevention services, such as screening programmes and support to stop smoking.

Will a hospital close or be severely reduced?

“For more serious or life threatening emergency needs, people will be treated in centres with high expertise, delivering the best possible outcomes – enabling as many patients as possible to return safely to their own homes.”

There are no plans to close Northamptonshire’s acute hospitals or to severely reduce services. Our acute hospitals will continue to work in collaboration as they develop county-wide services, some of which may be delivered in a different setting or location. Plans - which are being developed with service users - are in the early stages of development and any proposed changes in the way a service is delivered will be subject to public/patient engagement and wider consultation where appropriate.

The aim is of this plan to ensure people get the right care, first time – based on services closer to home. Our intention is to reduce reliance on emergency care and help people use planned care services instead. In this way we anticipate a reduction in A&E attendance, the number of emergency admissions and the length of time people have to stay in hospital. This should also result in higher levels of patient satisfaction and a better quality of life.

For urgent but non-life threatening care needs, highly responsive services will be provided outside hospital or as close to home as possible.

What does this mean for health and social care staff? Does this mean job cuts?

“This is a long term plan for health and social care in Northamptonshire. It sets out key principles and the direction of travel, but much of the detail is still being finalised.”

Our focus must be on ensuring we have the right people providing the right care, where it’s needed. We already work together across organisational and team boundaries, but this will need to be enhanced and will evolve. Collaboration is our focus – with an emphasis on using the skills of local care providers in the most effective ways.

As an example, patients may see a physiotherapist expert in back care first, rather than their GP. This then frees up the GP to focus on patients with multiple, complex needs who need the skill of that particular GP. This will be a different way of working, how that is shaped will be part of our journey and collaborative planning.

We do know that we intend to transform four key strands of care:

1. Urgent care (such as emergency services)

2. Complex care (for people with multiple needs)
3. Scheduled care (such as planned operations and outpatient clinics)
4. The prevention of ill health.

We may need staff to work differently to provide better care for patients. More detail of what this may look like is provided in the document 'Northamptonshire's Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021: How we will Support Local People To Flourish.'

We want to change the way that health and social care organisations deliver care so that it provides a better service and access to our patient populations and is more efficient.

Most of the focus appears to be on health, how is social care involved?

“Re-designed care...to create single streamlined county-wide services operating across organisations, with less duplication.”

Transforming both health and social care is key for the STP to succeed. Not all care is given in response to an urgent need. While it may require input from a specialist, a lot of care is routine. The aim is to ensure that these services are consistently of high quality, operate efficiently and can be easily accessed by those who need them.

Previously the system has been fragmented between health and social care, but we want to promote a joined up, quality approach to caring for our population. We believe that the STP is our opportunity to challenge and change health and social care provision as we know it and make a lasting, financially sustainable legacy of care.

It's already difficult to get an appointment with my GP as the practice is so busy? Will there be even more demands on my practice?

Sustainability in general practice – GP practices joining together to provide a wider range of services for their population

Every part of our system has a role to play in delivering better, joined up care for people in Northamptonshire with a major emphasis on operating across organisational boundaries county-wide, to provide consistently high quality care. New community-based organisations will also be created, capable of delivering the full range of out of hospital services. General practice is very much part of this change.

Our plan includes promoting rapid access to community and primary care services such as general practice, promoting a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to managing same day demand for primary and community care through shared,

integrated resource and rapid access community based services for key patient groups e.g. frail older people, children and people with a learning disability.

When can we expect to see something happening?

“The plan is likely to evolve over time, but there is a clear determination to deliver real change during the next five years – starting now.”

The STP is a five-year plan for health and social care in Northamptonshire. It sets out key principles and the direction of travel, and much of the detail is still being finalised.

Work will continue with local people, doctors and other professionals to develop individual service changes in detail.

Plans will be shared as they develop. That could be in 2017 in some cases, or over a much longer time scale for other pieces of work.

This is truly a “one Northamptonshire plan”. As it moves forward, a wide range of partnerships will grow to make it a reality – with health and social care staff, local councils, communities and groups.

This is just about funding cuts, isn't it?

“There will...need to be a focus on value for money, to ensure that services are financially sustainable”

Health and social care partner organisations in Northamptonshire have been working together to review how best to reshape services for the future, as part of the STP. This work has been undertaken to respond positively to the challenges we face in relation to the quality of local services, the growing demand for services, and the finances to pay for services in the county. The proposed changes do mean that money may be switched from some services to others which are more effective.

We want to support people to live longer, healthier, happier lives; provide high quality, responsive, accessible services which are centred on the individual, as well as provide care in the most efficient way to ensure sustainability.

The health and social care organisations in Northamptonshire already face unprecedented levels of financial pressure and demand:

“If nothing is done to address the challenges, we estimate the local NHS gap could rise to somewhere in the region of £230million by 2020/21”

Future funding from the government for health and social care services is staying level. This means that the money we can invest for our future is not going to grow, despite our substantial future challenges driven by a growing and ageing population;

increases in long-term conditions, rising costs, more stringent care quality standards and increasing public expectations.

Without service change, by 2021 Northamptonshire will:

- Need 150 extra GPs to deal with half a million more patients contacts
- Need 283 extra hospital beds to take 22,000 more admissions
- Have 2,500 more requests for social care.

Our health and social care system simply cannot afford this.

Ultimately, what this means is that money is very tight for our region. We have to ensure that health and social care services are affordable and sustainable in the long term. But actually, this is mainly about providing care which is better at meeting people's needs, and will give people a better quality of life whilst making better use of our limited resources.

Are cost savings driving this change?

“To make this plan a reality, there will be a big emphasis on supporting staff to be more flexible, working in mixed teams in one Northamptonshire system – rather than in separate groups. This means building on joint working which is already happening.”

Put simply, the size of the funding gap means that to do nothing is not an option. In Northamptonshire, if we don't make any changes to the health and social care systems in the county we will have a projected shortfall of £230 million by 2020/21.

However, the financial situation is only one element of the programme. If decisive action is not taken soon, the health system will not be able to provide quality care when it is needed. We know that Northamptonshire has some particular health issues to address, such as:

- 19% of Northamptonshire adults smoke – this is higher than the national average
- Two in three people are overweight – this is higher than the national average
- Demand for urgent care (Accident & Emergency) is rising by four to five percent a year.

We want to support people to live longer, healthier, happier lives; provide high quality, responsive, accessible services which are centred on the individual; as well as provide care in the most efficient way to ensure sustainability.

All these issues will be considered as we develop our plans. We know that change is not easy and we are likely to face some difficult decisions along the way.

What will this plan cost? Is this just duplicating previous programmes?

The idea of service redesign is not a new one. In Northamptonshire, we have seen programmes such as 'Healthier Together', which focused on reshaping acute hospitals across a larger area and 'Healthier Northamptonshire' which focused on the challenges facing both health and social care (not just one element of healthcare in isolation). The STP is simply a natural evolution, or next step to what has gone before but on a more current, comprehensive and larger scale.

All across the country, health and social care leaders are working hard to determine what the financial status of their local area is and what that may look like in the next five years. In Northamptonshire we're using this new data with what we've learnt about our services and population in our previous programmes.

With what we know about predicted population growth, an ageing population, impact of long-term conditions, and so on in Northamptonshire; we can estimate how this will financially affect our region and what impact that will have on our ability to deliver services if health and social care remain in their current structures.

I've heard about the Health and wellbeing Strategy. Are they the same things and if not how do these two documents work together?

The vision of our county's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Supporting Northamptonshire to Flourish, is to "Improve the health and wellbeing of all people in Northamptonshire and reduce health inequalities by enabling people to help themselves." This plan sets out some of the ways we are going to do that.

Northamptonshire's Health and Wellbeing strategy sets out the priorities for health and wellbeing across the county.

These are:

1. Every child gets the best start
2. Taking responsibility and making informed choices
3. Promoting independence and quality of life for older adults
4. Creating an environment for all people to flourish.

It describes the challenges faced by the county and what we collectively need to do to address them.

The STP addresses some parts of the delivery, helping us to operationalise the Health and wellbeing Strategy, in particular those related to:

- Engaging with and supporting you to live well and stay healthy

- Using health and social services differently so that you can manage your own health where you can, and access the right care when you need to
- Supporting you to remain at home for as long as possible when you are ill
- Using and share information better to support your care.

It does this by focusing on urgent care services, best management of complex care for people with multiple needs, scheduled care such as planned operations and outpatient clinics and the prevention of ill health.

Is this a way of giving business to the private sector?

“Work will continue with local people, doctors and other professionals to develop individual service changes in detail.”

Our plan is about making the best possible use of what we have, to keep people well – and to give them the right care in ways that are right for them, when they need help.

In developing our STP, we have considered how acute services (hospitals), community services such as district nurses and therapists, primary care (GPs) and social care work. Prevention and wellbeing are at the heart of the solution. Our challenge is to deliver this consistently through the county.

This programme aims to reduce pressures on our hospital services; join-up health and social care services around the needs of patients; provide care closer to the home and to help support and advise our population how to manage their own health themselves.

The STP is a partnership between health and social care commissioners and key providers. We will not rule out partners from any sector being involved in providing services if that is the best option to improve care.

If you are looking at bringing more care into the community will you be looking at new buildings and equipment?

“A major review will assess how all health and social care buildings are used.”

The approach outlined in the STP will mean that more care will take place in a patient’s own home, using new technology where appropriate. We know that there is a great need to be smarter with current resources and this may mean that we maximise the use of our existing buildings, as opposed to looking at new buildings.

As a nation we're very attached to the buildings where we access care, rather than whether we're actually receiving the right care. Many people are better off receiving their care at home or in the community, so they can continue to live independently. This is why we need to re-think the idea that a hospital is always the best place to go when you are unwell. Care is about people, not buildings.

But we're not just thinking about buildings. In order to achieve value for money and to ensure that services are financially sustainable, we need new technology to create a more streamlined system. We need to make sure that all services in the future can access the information that they need promptly and as easily as possible, whilst ensuring that any patient information remains safe and secure.

Who is ultimately accountable for this piece of work – if it goes wrong who will be sacked?

“If we succeed in delivering our plan, we will see people staying in good health for longer, with better care and more of it provided closer to home. This is an exciting opportunity. We want the people of Northamptonshire to help us get it right.”

As health and social care partners in Northamptonshire, we are all responsible for ensuring that the STP is successful. And we are not alone. This process is happening around the country because the current and previous structures that delivered care are simply no longer viable or effective.

Everyone in Northamptonshire has a part to play. We need the people of Northamptonshire and our staff to take part in engagement and consultation activities so that we can make sure that the STP that is delivered is one that truly meets our needs and belongs to our community.

This really is our opportunity to challenge and change health and social care provision as we know it and make a lasting legacy of better quality, financially sustainable care for the people of Northamptonshire.

Has the public been able to contribute or consult on any of the proposals so far?

“Work will continue with local people, doctors and other professionals to develop individual service changes in detail.”

The STP partners include Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire and lay members on the STP Board (of which the Chair, Tansi Harper is one).

There have been a number of general STP engagement events to discuss what the STP may mean for the future of Northamptonshire. We intend to hold more of these events in the future as plans progress, and will continue to engage with people,

communities, elected representatives and organisations as plans evolve and develop.

How can I give feedback or raise concerns about the proposed changes?

“There will be opportunities for people to contribute and comment as this work progresses.”

This is a long term high level plan for health and social care in Northamptonshire. It sets out key principles and the direction of travel, but much of the detail is still being finalised. The plan will evolve over time, but there is a clear determination to deliver real change during the next five years – starting now. Work will continue with local people, communities and professionals to develop individual service changes in detail.

This is truly a “one Northamptonshire plan”. As it moves forward, a wide range of partnerships will grow to make it a reality – with health and social care staff, local councils, the voluntary sector, communities and groups. We will continue to keep you informed about the opportunities there will be to engage with and shape the plan and the way it is delivered

It is important to stress that any major changes to services would have to go through formal consultation before they could happen.

The full Sustainability and Transformation Plan is available via the websites of the following organisations:

- NHS Nene Clinical Commissioning Group - www.neneccg.nhs.uk
- NHS Corby Clinical Commissioning Group - www.corbyccg.nhs.uk
- Northamptonshire County Council - www.northamptonshire.gov.uk
- Northampton General Hospital - www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk
- Kettering General Hospital - www.kgh.nhs.uk
- Northamptonshire Healthcare - www.nht.nhs.uk

Future opportunities for involvement will be updated via these websites and the STP partner organisations.