

Focusing resources on social care engagement and integration in South Yorkshire

Since it was established, South Yorkshire ICB have employed a dedicated Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HSCI) Lead. The HSCI lead works very closely with Skills for Care and a range of health and social care partners across the region to ensure that the work of the ICS is inclusive of social care.

This structure means a strong foundation is in place to allow a flow of information and activities at place level to be supported by the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership. The establishment of this actively facilitates understanding and appreciation of the issues which affect social care and the delivery of services. It has enabled the ICS to introduce a number of key objectives and plans for improved cross-system, integrated working – some of which are highlighted below.

Include social care partners in workforce planning

The HSCI lead for South Yorkshire ICS and Skills for Care's locality manager act as conduits across the system. They share strategic planning with provider networks and meetings (particularly registered managers networks), while at the same time gathering insights and feedback. This helps to ensure that ICS objectives are inclusive and relevant for all social care partners including learning disability, community, domiciliary care services as well as elderly residential care services. The HSCI lead also helps to identify where social care partners can have the greatest impact and where meaningful actions can be developed from their involvement and input, by supporting them to engage directly.

This engagement largely takes place at groups and meetings at a range of levels in the ICS – including the Future Workforce Meetings established by the Health and Social Care Lead. The quarterly meetings are a space for anyone who is involved or interested in the social care workforce to come together to discuss ideas and solutions. They are made up of a diverse range of groups, including from Higher Education Institutions, learning colleges, local authority representatives from each place, care providers, NHS colleagues, and ICB workforce group representatives. Work is ongoing to increase the involvement of care providers in these meetings, taking into account issues such as time constraints and understanding how their involvement can have an impact.

Three working groups have been established from the Future Workforce meetings: Schools Engagement (engaging children and students); Existing Workforce (which is retention focused); and Community Initiatives (which is focused on community partnerships). Each working group is responsible for a number of projects and initiatives, and the group is at the forefront of work to engage social care and health partners in workforce matters.

Support social care managers to understand how best to work with health partners

It became apparent from feedback that social care managers find it hard to know the best ways to work with their health partners, particularly when working together on hospital admissions or discharges.

An Integrated Workforce Development Programme for Social Care Managers is therefore being established for health and social care managers to establish a more consistent

approach to best practice. The programme will require health and care partners to work together to agree processes that need to be in place, and then for all parties across the system to sustain and embed these processes.

It is hoped that the Programme will enable providers to feel more able to contact the right people in health services and discharge teams, and to foster a greater sense of shared partnership working. It will be introduced across the whole of South Yorkshire, but with the understanding that each local authority area operates slightly differently and so will require some place-based adaptations.

Dedicate resource to coordinating integration

Following a successful bid for funding to the HSCI Programme from Health Education England, South Yorkshire ICB have recruited a Social Care Placement Expansion Lead. The role is dedicated to expanding social care placements for health students (including Nursing, Paramedics, Speech and Language Therapists and Allied Health Professionals). South Yorkshire ICS have funded a Coordinator role to facilitate health and nursing students to take up placements in social care settings as part of their training. The role will work across health and social care and is hosted by Sheffield City Council. This is perceived as a progressive step across South Yorkshire ICS as it is not an NHS-hosted role. The local authority is able to facilitate links across both health and social care, with a clear ambition to enable organic integrative working.

The role will have a particular focus on supporting adult social care settings to benefit from health student placements. It will help to ensure that social care is embedded as a core element of the focus on integration in education systems. This integrated working led by the ICB aims to promote and encourage younger generations to choose a career in health and social care, and to experience integration in their learning.

Invest in funding which reflects the real-time needs of the workforce

Across South Yorkshire, there has typically been greater engagement with joint training opportunities from health partners than social care. Feedback from providers, largely gathered by the HSCI Lead and Skills for Care, showed that there are barriers to provider engagement in these shared learning opportunities. Often the setting in which the training took place differs greatly from a person's home, being mainly delivered in a health environment – i.e. hospitals, which is not necessarily conducive to real life learning. The use of language also differs greatly between health and social care. For example, the use of the word 'patients' in health settings which does not translate to social care. This is an important consideration in demonstrating that joint care opportunities are relevant for social care partners and not just health focused.

South Yorkshire have now introduced ringfenced funding specifically for adult social care (in 2021/22 and 2022/23). A number of social care representatives are involved in the planning and delivery of the training. They include Learning and Development leads in the local authorities, care provider representatives, the ICB HSCI Lead and Skills for Care. Together they discuss how they want to invest the yearly fund. Last year they introduced health skills training in social care settings, and this year they are establishing the Integrated Workforce Development for Social Care Managers programme and bolstering their focus on dementia support training.

It is a positive step that South Yorkshire ICS have been open and able to adapt their training offer for the workforce to ensure that social care is meaningfully involved and able to access all opportunities.

“There is a wealth of experience in adult social care – which actually employs more people across South Yorkshire than the NHS – so it’s vital that everything we do, from planning stage, is really inclusive of both health and care services.”