CNTW Nursing Strategy

Delivering Compassion in Practice 2019-2024

Annual Report

CNTW Nursing Strategy Delivering Compassion in Practice 2019 – 2024 was launched at our sixth annual nursing conference. A “Call to Action” for the whole of our nursing workforce. The strategy is aligned to six strategic aims, each underpinned by key commitments which focus effort and energy in creating a positive impact on patient and service user care.

The 6Cs remain as our value base in all that we do, with strategic aims focused on the delivery of the 6Cs across the health arena. They are designed to enable us all to reach further both individually and collectively by focusing on what is important and through connecting with each other we can achieve more for service users, patients, and communities and for our profession.

Each strategic aim has several key commitments which are integrated into service strategy planning. It is aligned with the Trusts strategic ambitions and our workforce strategy and will enable us to make a significant contribution to the delivery of both.

**Supporting the Pandemic**

This report summarises the activity over the past two years. 2020 was designated as the Year of the Nurse. Our intention was to facilitate several celebratory events throughout 2020 commencing with our Annual Nursing Conference in March 2020.

However together, alongside our colleagues we have instead faced the challenge of the Covid 19 global pandemic. In meeting this challenge nurses in CNTW have been at the forefront in driving change, alongside other professionals we have adapted to new ways of working: in many cases taking on new roles and working in new environments to deliver our pandemic response

During the pandemic together with our colleagues we have:

* Seen nurses return to clinical practice to support front line services
* Continued to deliver student placements including employment of over 300 nursing students during the first national lockdown, boosting staffing levels and enabling students to complete training on time and enter our nursing workforce
* Created robust communication channels with particular emphasis on IPC, designed to keep both staff and patients informed and safe
* Implemented a PPE Team to source and manage supplies, implementing a rolling plan for FFP3 Risk assessment and fit testing
* Set up a Staff PCR Testing and Mobile Team with the aim of testing staff and households to enable them to return safely back to work - delivering over 24,000 PCR and Antibody tests
* Implemented Surveillance Patient testing and isolation for new admissions and transfers from care homes/hospital to reduce risk
* Created Covid Vaccination Hospital Hub delivering over 29,000 Covid and Flu vaccinations to both staff and patients
* Handled over 84,000 calls in our single point of access absence call line
* Set up a welfare call system delivered by absence line staff
* Undertaken over 8,000 covid risk assessments through our Senior Nurse test and trace team with the aim of reducing transmission, supporting return to work, and providing guidance and support to staff
* Learnt valuable lessons through outbreak management processes which has informed guidance and reinforced IPC practices to keep staff and patients safe

Throughout this period we have continued to deliver our nursing strategy objectives as outlined below.

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| **Strategic Aim 1** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Helping people to stay independent, maximising well-being and improving health outcomes | Promote a culture where improving the population’s health is a core component of the practice of all nursing, midwifery, and care staff.  Increase the visibility of nursing and midwifery leadership and input in prevention.  Work with individuals, families, and communities to equip them to make informed choices and manage their own health. | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

Physical health and wellbeing remain a key priority with focus on working collaboratively and building capacity and capability to ensure the best possible outcomes for service users.

We have

* Provided easy read leaflets in a variety of subjects including COVID and Covid vaccination
* Provided accessible information for clients in all pathways to help promote understanding in accessing primary care and encouraging uptake of national vaccination programmes
* Provision of accessible letters and information regarding national screening programmes
* Provided support to harder to reach/engage service users in relation to both Flu and Covid vaccinations – making every contact count
* Learning Disability teams have provided support to access appointments, vaccine clinics, and physical health clinics for those hard to reach in Health Action Plans through development of robust links with liaison nurses within city hospitals
* Our Practice Education Team working in partnership with Higher Education ensure undergraduate curriculum provides an educational and practice focus on physical health and wellbeing. During this period we have worked with partner HEI’s to ensure the curriculum reflects the requirements of safe practice during pandemic
* Physical Health Skills training was refreshed in April 2021 and has been delivered throughout the pandemic via Teams. During 2020 we have promoted a broader range of physical health skills in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.
* Continued to promote health and wellbeing initiatives promoting public health awareness and approach through all areas including cascade of activities, linked to public health campaigns
* Physical Health Link Nurses continue to facilitate service user physical health and well-being meetings.
* Supported the Recovery colleges to provide a prospectus that includes course in relation to emotional and physical well-being
* Carers champions identified in all clinical teams
* Continued to train staff in smoking cessation and brief alcohol awareness
* Provided information to clients identifying benefits of reduction in medication previously prescribed for behaviours that challenge and replace with more appropriate treatment options and adopting a more holistic approach
* Continued to promote and disseminate importance of WRAP within teams with a focus on newly recruited staff

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| **Strategic Aim 2** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Working with people to provide a positive experience of care | We will be centred on individuals experiencing high value care.  We will work in partnership with individuals, their families, carers, and others important to them. | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

As nurses we need to be strong advocates, working in partnership with service users, their families, and carers, developing unique and supportive caring relationships.

We have

* Developed innovative ways to maintain contact with family and carers when visiting was prevented due to covid restrictions
* Continued to utilise AAR, SUI outcomes as a means of promoting reflective practice in particular use of learning forums facilitated by Nurse Consultants to support lessons learnt, influence innovation and change
* Undertaken thematic reviews of SUIs and complaints at locality level, including sharing of best practice
* Utilised patient experience questionnaire’s: Friends and Family Test and Points of You to promote shared learning and positive experiences
* Embedded Triangle of Care across services
* Facilitated Service User Involvement and Engagement meetings across services to ensure we listen and learn
* Continued to promote Positive and Safe Strategy – Talk 1st across all services
* Implemented new ways of working that improve the way in which individuals experience and receive the care we give through clinical pathways i.e. physical health and wellbeing pathways
* Supported trust wide review of care planning and associated training package
* Utilised Covid 19 outbreak process and learning debriefs to reinforce IPC practice and maintain service user and staff safety

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| **Strategic Aim 3** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Delivering high quality care and measuring the impact of care | We will champion the use of technology and informatics to improve practice, address unwarranted variations and enhance outcomes. | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

Building our capacity and capability to use quality improvement techniques and tools is essential in promoting a sustainable culture of continuous improvement and in developing and implementing new and positive ideas that promote person centred care.

We have

* Continued to support delivery of Positive & Safe/Talk1st priority in reducing restrictive interventions and blanket restrictions
* Continued to build on initiatives designed to utilise skill mix effectively, including.
* Development of new roles and ways of working to support our response to the pandemic
* Continued development and recruitment to Nursing Associate and Advanced Clinical Practitioner programmes designed to effectively focus on activities that create ’high value’
* Daily review of staffing, utilising other disciplines to support activities
* Made best use of technology to maintain family and peer contact, provide education and most importantly where suitable for clinical appointments maximising impact for service users and staff
* Encouraged collaborative working across services through audit, action, and evaluation processes.
* Provided opportunities to maintain innovation through coaching, personal development, supervision, and appraisal.

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| **Strategic Aim 4** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Building and strengthening leadership | We will increase the visibility of nursing and midwifery leadership and input in prevention. | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

Everyone involved in the delivery of care needs to contribute to creating the right environment; strengthening clear compassionate leadership at every level ensures safe, high-quality care and a positive experience for patients and staff

We have

* Continued to provide access to the Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ACP) programme developing clinical and leadership skills
* Implemented access to Nurse Consultant clinical and academic supervision and support for students undertaking the ACP programme
* Increased the number of Consultant Nurses to over 30 across all services providing leadership and development support to clinical staff
* Developed Clinical Specialist Nurse and Specialist Nurse roles across the organisation
* Supported Managers/Clinical Managers to undertaking leadership training via the CNTW Academy and MBA Strategic Leadership programme

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| **Strategic Aim 5** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Ensuring we have the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place | We will lead and drive research to evidence the impact of what we do.  We will have the right education, training, and development to enhance our skills, knowledge and understanding  We will have the right staff in the right places and at the right time | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

Ensuring we have the right people with the right values and skills, in the right place at the right time is a key priority in delivering sustainable services.

During 2021, the Trust saw significant pressure on services due to a combination of increased Nursing vacancies and staff absence as a result of Covid19. Whilst R&R activity had continued during the pandemic there was an escalation of activity led by the Executive Directors to expedite initiatives to ensure Safe Staffing levels.

We have implemented the Recruitment and Retention Taskforce, which provides strategic direction for recruitment and oversees the work of the Values Based Recruitment steering group.

**Specific recruitment initiatives include**:

* Engagement in the national Health Care Support Worker Zero Vacancy Project, supported by an innovative online recruitment process.
* Recruitment marketing, including developing short films to support social media campaigns and attendance at recruitment events.
* Reviewing temporary staffing arrangements and deployment of temporary staff to promote continuity of care and infection prevention and control.
* Supporting training and education programmes for Trainee Nursing Associates and developing the Nursing Associate role across the Trust.

**International Recruitment**

* Continuing to undertake international recruitment of nurses, using an ethical approach and reviewing potential future agency partnerships and markets.
* Invested in professional support for relocation and pastoral support of international recruits and in professional and educational support with respect to undertaking the Objective, Structured, Clinical Examination (OSCE).

**Investing in our future workforce - ‘Grow Your Own’ approach**

Our aim is to ensure students (nursing, return to practice, trainee nursing associates and apprentices) are empowered, supported, and inspired to become resilient, caring, and reflective lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter professional and interagency teams.

We have

* Continued to deliver our grow your own strategy with sustained recruitment to the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship. CNTW Academy offers three pathways providing 2 to 4 year options for existing staff. In addition, in 2021, the Academy launched our first 5 year Registered Nurse Apprenticeship in Mental Health or Learning Disability Nursing designed to attract new NHS recruits.
* The original Business case in 2017 expected circa 20 support staff per year to pursue a nursing apprenticeship. We have substantially exceeded that expectation. At any one time, there are now circa 160 Degree Level Nursing Apprentices on programme across 2, 3, 4, and 5 year programmes.
* Seen our first cohort of Registered Nurse Apprentices qualify in 2022 who will commence the newly revised, Accredited Trust Preceptorship Programme
* Worked in partnership with local HEI increasing numbers of nursing students across both mental health and learning disability programmes
* Supported the national clinical placement expansion programme, through the development of innovative placements for mental health and learning disability nursing students across both our services and in partnership with primary and third sector partners
* Worked in partnership with clinical placements to provide continued access to clinical placements. Considering Covid restrictions this has included significant investment in laptops which enable both Nursing and AHP students to continue clinical education
* Delivered a pilot placement programme for children’s student nurses in mental health children’s services. This was very well received, and plans are underway to make this a permanent placement for children’s student nurses promoting understanding of mental health services and developing knowledge, skills, and awareness of mental health throughout the physical health pathway
* Expanded the Practice Education Team providing opportunity to build on their work in developing learning opportunities and working with clinical placements in developing learning environments
* Practice Education Team have developed a resilience training package which is currently being rolled out. The team have also provided drop-in sessions for students throughout the pandemic and converted Practice Assessor and Supervisor updates to online access to ensure staff could meet the professional bodies requirements

**Developing our nursing workforce to its full potential**

A key component of the nursing strategy is to create capacity, capability, and flexibility to work across traditional boundaries and take on new roles. Multi-faceted approaches are needed to develop a workforce which can be both responsive and adaptable to manage complex changes; ensuring our nursing workforce make the greatest possible difference in delivering excellent care.

We have

* CNTW Academy has developed an accredited preceptorship programme for new registrants at Level 6 and 7, the aim being to ensure that all newly qualified registered nurses achieve clinical competence and academic accreditation in their field of practice and support transition into a competent, qualified health professional role
* CNTW Academy is currently developing an In-Patient Post Graduate Certificate for existing Registrants The aim is to commence delivery late 2022
* CNTW Academy has supported development of service specific CPD programmes including the development of a suite of CYPS Accredited modules at academic levels 3 to 6, and stand-alone CPD modules at various levels which can be adapted to individual workplaces.
* CNTW Academy has continued to provide access to essential online training and has developed a range of digitalised approaches to online learning.

**Building research capacity and capability**

A good evidence base is central to nursing care. Encouraging critical dialogue, research and publicising the work that we do is central to this agenda. Through increasing capacity and capability, we will develop a culture where nurse led research becomes a normative part of clinical practice

We have

* Appointed an Associate Professor of Nursing in partnership with Northumbria University, to develop the nursing research culture within the Trust.
* Supported the secondment of an existing Northumbria University Professor of Nursing, commencing in 2022 The focus of the secondment is to work jointly with the Associate Professor for Nursing to help shape CNTW research priorities and create nursing pathways into research at all levels to meet the needs of the organisation at clinical, operational, and organisational level.
* Undertaken work to create an informal network of communications/practical experiences between the Trust and University of Sunderland. This includes small, funded internships and aim to join up interested parties with academic mentors (and vice versa) to ‘test out’ an area of work to see if it feels right for an individual. This will support CNTW staff who may be interested in research but who do not have the necessary qualifications to make a firm career move and/or those who do not wish to leave clinical practice.

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| **Strategic Aim 6** | **Linked to Leading Change, Adding Value’ – Chief Nursing Officer for England Strategy. Commitments** | **Link to NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates** |
| Supporting positive staff experience | We will actively respond to what matters most to our staff and colleagues. | Prioritise people  Practise effectively  Preserve safety  Promote professionalism  and trust |

Evidence shows that the experience of staff, particularly in the form of support received from supervisors and others; as well as staff engagement are associated with the care provided to patients. How staff feel when they are at work is key to the successful delivery of high-quality patient care.

Staff health and wellbeing has been a focus during pandemic ensuring support and opportunity to seek time to reflect

We have

* Provided access to resources dedicated to staff wellbeing, for example the staff well-being service, AWISH, yoga, Schwartz rounds, exercise, and leisure activities.
* Ensured individuals have access to clinical supervision providing opportunity for reflection and professional development aligned to NMC/Professional standards
* As identified above we have continued to recruit to Nursing Associate, Registered Nurse Apprenticeship and Advanced Clinical Practitioner programmes providing significant career development opportunity and supporting individual aspiration

**Next Steps**

After a particularly challenging two years the objectives of the Nursing Strategy have continued to be delivered, although it is fair to say that some of the delivery and pace have been directly affected by the pandemic. However as we move to a phase of Living with Covid there is a plan to review the strategy and its fitness for purpose. In particular actions will include:

* Support reflection on what we have learnt from our response to the pandemic with particular reference to what service users and carers are telling us Review with Group Nurse Directors structure for driving the Nursing Strategy in each locality
* Re introduce both Nurse Education and Leadership Forum both stood down during the pandemic and in response to staffing
* Facilitate Nursing Conference in June 2022
* Support implementation and coordination of the new Preceptorship Programme and In-Patient Post Graduate Certificate
* Continue to work with operational localities and partner agencies to develop and deliver clinical placement for Nursing and AHP students
* Continue to build on opportunities for access to career development opportunities to support skill mix and workforce plans
* Build research capacity in the nursing workforce