

South East London Prevention Framework

Supporting healthier
communities



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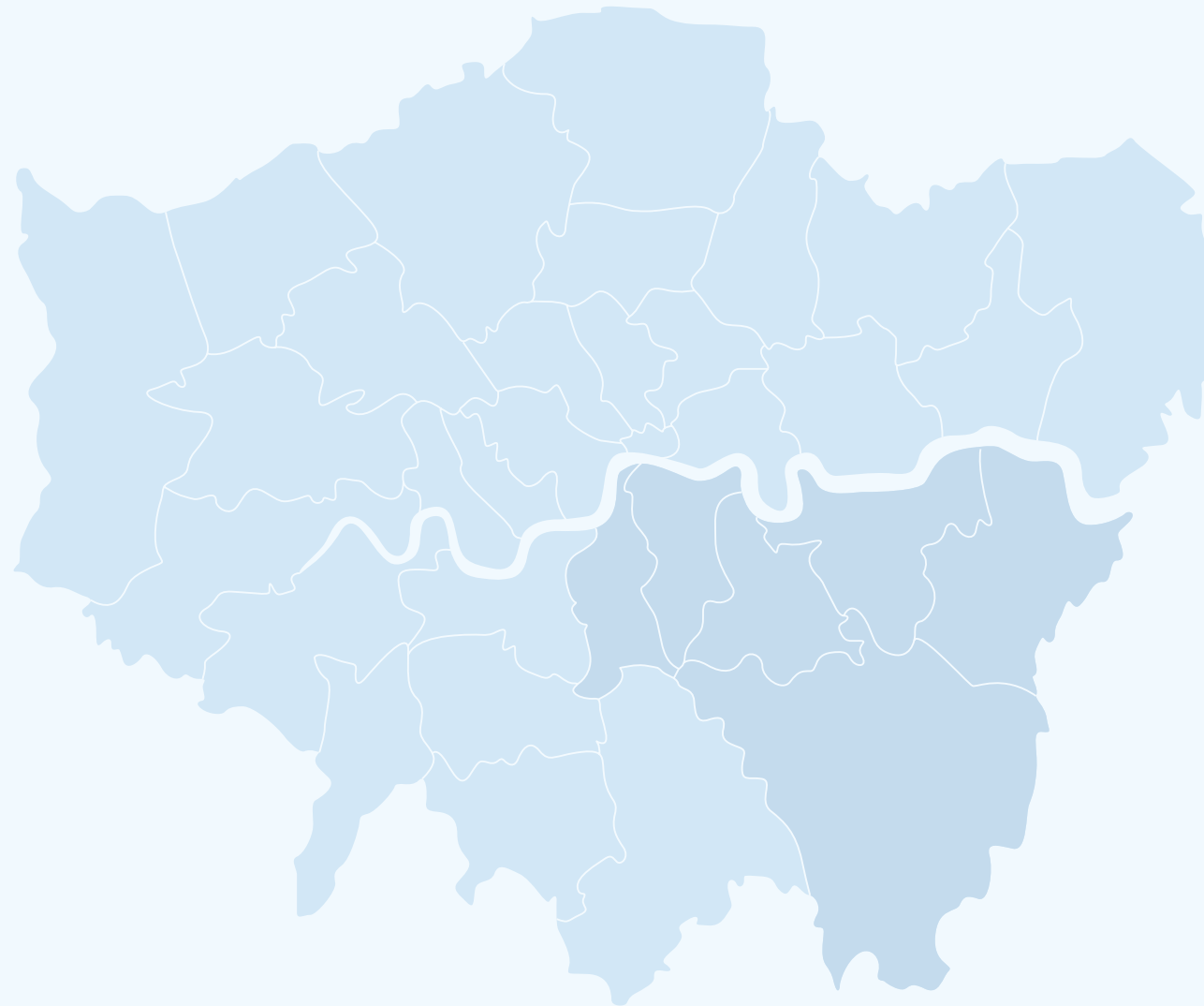
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Executive summary



South East London (SEL) faces a growing health crisis. Life expectancy gaps of up to nine years separate the most and least deprived areas ⁽¹⁾. Residents are falling ill earlier with preventable long-term conditions and dying younger from avoidable causes. These challenges are compounded by an ageing population and rising complexity of health needs among children and young people (CYP).

Currently, prevention accounts for only about 5% of NHS spending, yet evidence shows that early intervention could reduce ill health by up to 33% ⁽²⁾. Investing in prevention isn't just good policy, it's essential for building a healthier population and easing pressure on the health and care system. This in turn ensures we are making best use of our resources - not just financial but people and the planet. Yet progress is hindered by a lack of clarity around the definition of prevention, misalignment with routine government priorities, and limited capacity to reallocate resources.

To address this, integrated care system partners must shift resources from acute care towards effective interventions for all ages, delivered closer to home in the community. Prevention is about enabling people to be healthy and thrive for as long as possible. It focuses on addressing

issues before they arise, prioritising wellbeing rather than simply treating illness. It ensures timely and effective care, equipping individuals with the knowledge and confidence to make informed choices about their health.

Existing efforts are not doing enough to benefit those most at risk of health inequity, deliver population-level health improvements or support system sustainability in the longer-term.

The **Prevention Framework** has been developed to enable SEL ICS to shift to being a prevention focused system that: supports and embeds prevention as business as usual; takes an evidence, data and insights informed approach to invest in interventions that have the greatest potential for population impact and return on investment; and optimises resources around prevention in support of future system sustainability.

The SEL Prevention Framework aligns with the ambitions set out in the NHS 10 Year Health Plan and London-wide commitments to improve the cardiovascular health of one million Londoners through London Million Hearts and Minds.

South East London



Highest rates
of extreme
pre-term births
in London



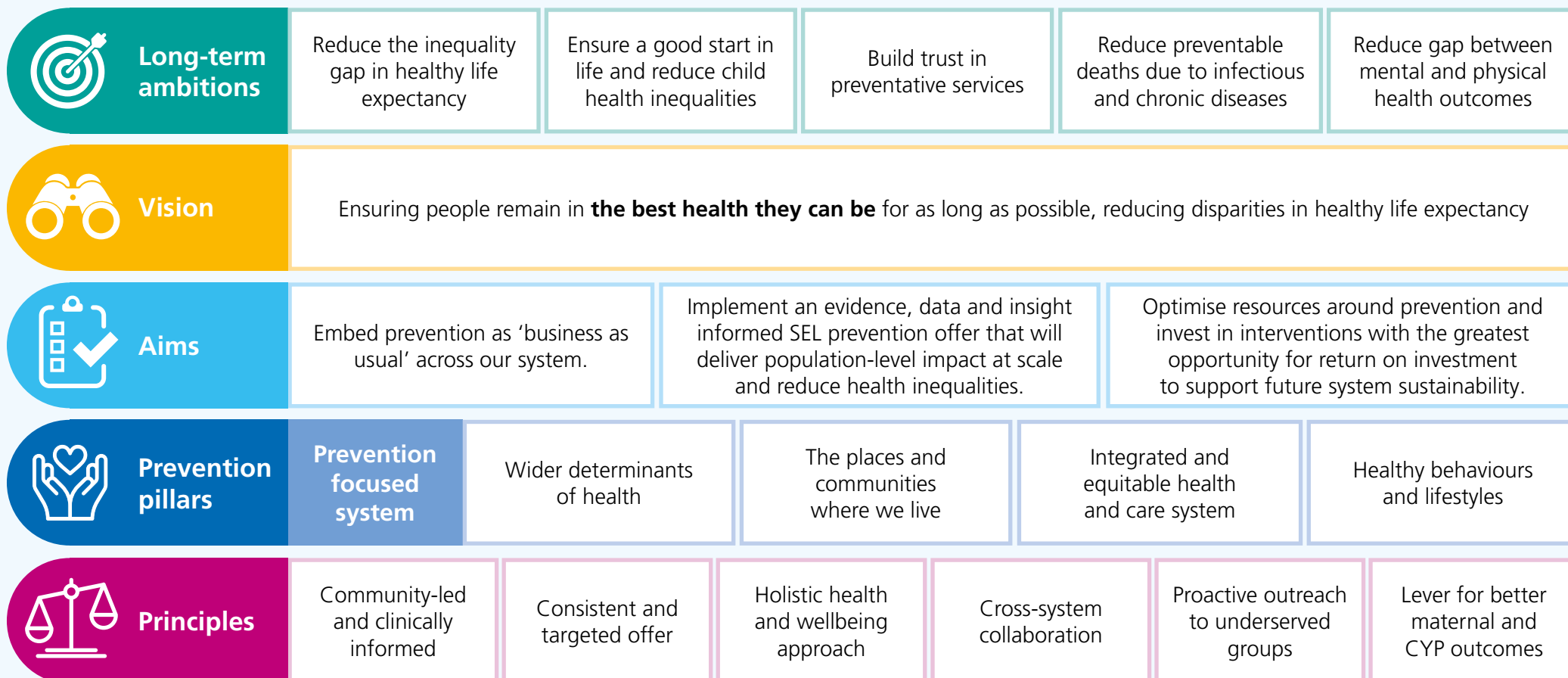
Significant
levels of
childhood
unhealthy
weight



150,000
residents living
with three or
more long-
term conditions

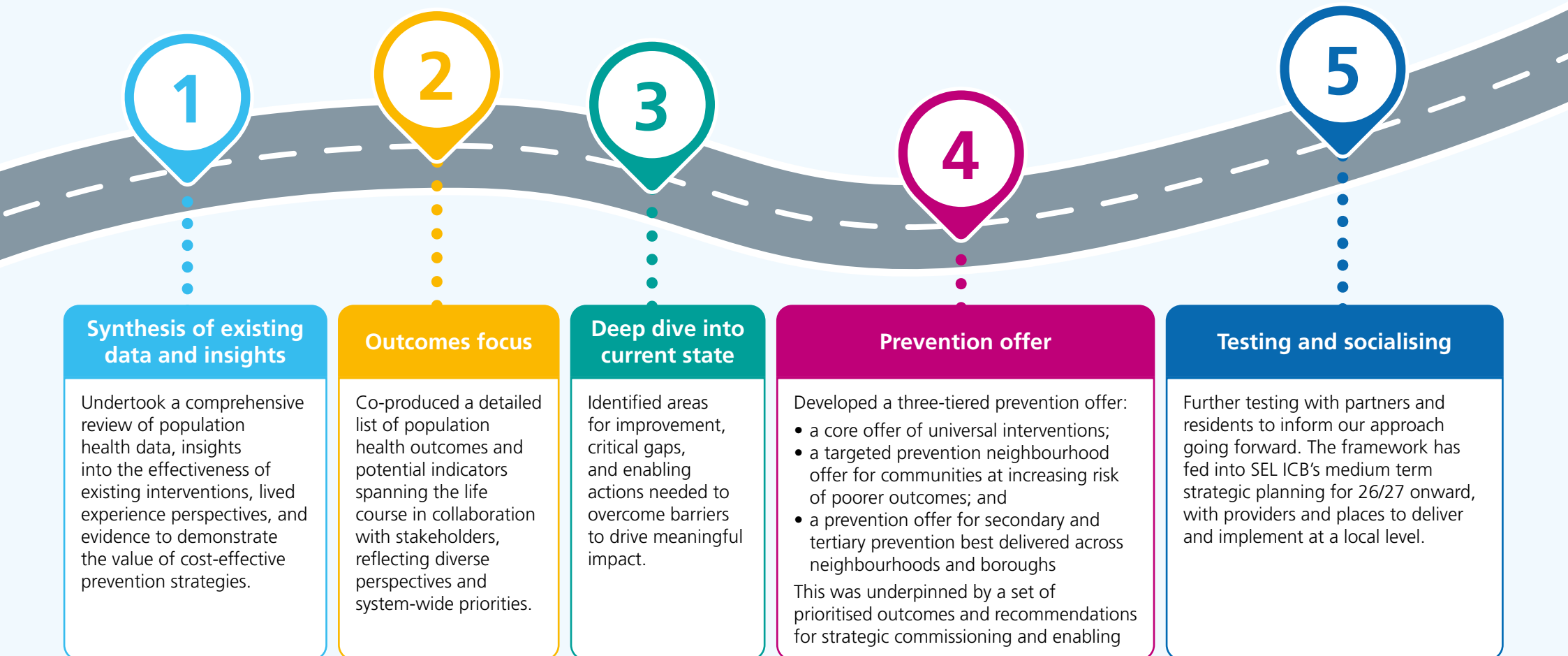
SEL Prevention Framework

Our Prevention Framework is grounded by SEL ICS's long-term ambitions, and vision for prevention, wellbeing and equity. It has three aims and will be delivered through a prevention focused system across key prevention drivers, reflecting principles for high-value care.



Our roadmap

Throughout 2025 SEL ICS brought together stakeholders from the NHS, local authorities, VCSE, and academic institutions for a series of workshops. These workshops fostered consensus on prevention priorities guided by data, lived experience insights, academic evidence, and the strategic direction of the SEL ICS Prevention, Wellbeing and Equity Board.



Prevention Framework Aims



Embed prevention as 'business as usual' across the system



Implement an evidence, data and insight informed SEL prevention offer that will deliver population-level impact at scale and reduce health inequalities



Optimise resources around prevention and invest in interventions with the greatest opportunity for return on investment to support future system sustainability

Pillars of a Prevention Focused System



Our health behaviours and lifestyles



The places and communities we live and work in



An integrated and equitable health and care system



Wider determinants of health

The Prevention Framework will embed a coordinated approach across SEL to enable earlier support, reduce health inequalities, and ensure system sustainability. Our ambition is to help people remain in the best health possible, for as long as possible, reducing disparities in healthy life expectancy.

Four key pillars underpin the framework's aims:

- Our health behaviours and lifestyles
- The places and communities we live and work in
- An integrated and equitable health and care system
- Wider determinants of health

The framework aligns national policy with local priorities, fostering collaboration across our partners and recognising that prevention is a long-term effort, requiring evidence-based approaches to deliver measurable benefits for our community.

To deliver our ambitions, the framework sets out **three key outputs** to inform NHS and local authority planning, and influence aligned commissioning opportunities for 2026/27 onwards, including:

1

A **prevention offer** which has been included in the SEL ICS 5-year strategic commissioning and place-based neighbourhood health plans, underpinned by a set of minimum expectations around delivery, outcomes tracking and reporting, and shared learning for year one.



2

A high-level set of **population health outcomes for SEL** to measure impact. These have been incorporated into the development of a SEL strategic outcomes and evaluation framework, and will be translated into action through appropriate delivery vehicles, e.g. place-based partnerships, care pathway programmes, provider collaboratives.



3

A set of system-level **enabling actions** for high-value prevention activities, required to ensure impactful delivery for population health, equity and sustainability.



These outputs have been created with input from staff working across public health, commissioning, clinical and academic practice and resident insights to ensure they are grounded in evidence and focused on interventions proven to improve population health and tackle inequalities. A Prevention Toolkit has been developed to provide practical resources for decision-making, prioritisation and evaluation of interventions.

Over the next three to five years, we will continue to review and update priorities, identifying further preventative actions to improve population health. Achieving our vision to empower and enable people to live longer, healthier lives requires shared responsibility and commitment across all partners including NHS, local government, businesses and the VCSE sector.

Our thinking



In SEL, a wide range of evidence-based prevention activity is already commissioned across the NHS, local authorities and VCSE partners. However, services are often commissioned and delivered in silos, with inconsistent approaches to monitoring, evaluation and measuring value for money and return on investment – financial, social and environmental. This makes it difficult to compare interventions, demonstrate financial and social return on investment, and make the case for sustained funding.

Although we collect a lot of data, insights and lived experience, it is rarely triangulated across the system. Information often sits at intervention or organisational level, rather than being joined up to give a population-level view, particularly for communities who face the greatest barriers and inequalities.

Recent SEL population health work has underlined the need for a stronger focus on prevention, early detection and timely intervention for both adults and children and young people, ensuring we take a whole families approach where appropriate.

This approach prioritises reducing health inequalities by targeting those most at risk, including people from minoritised or marginalised communities and those living in areas facing socioeconomic disadvantage. It also drives wider population health impact through universal offers available to everyone regardless of postcode or risk factor.



The Prevention Framework provides a clear blueprint for coordinated, evidence-led prevention that improves equity of access, experience and outcomes and supports long-term system sustainability

What do we mean by prevention in SEL?

Prevention is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible. It focuses on stopping problems before they arise, not just treating illness when it occurs. It's one of the most cost-effective strategies for improving population health and reducing inequalities.



Wider determinants of health

Interventions aimed at addressing broader social, economic and environmental factors that influence population health

1

Primary prevention (prevent)

Stopping health problems from happening in the first place

2

Secondary prevention (reduce)

Reducing the escalation of health issues

3

Tertiary prevention (delay)

Supporting people to remain independent and minimising the impact of health issues



← Higher impact

Population health impact

Lower impact →



Supporting people and our workforce **to live as healthily as possible**, both mentally and physically. For example:

Housing, substance abuse, education, food insecurity, unemployment, travel

Early detection of risk factors, promoting healthy lifestyles, vaccinations and immunisations

Health visitor checks, screening services, weight management services, alcohol care teams

NHS health checks to detect and monitor risk factors, social prescribing and health coaching

Rehabilitation and reablement, addressing needs of those with long-term conditions or cancer

Driving more proactive and preventative care

The NHS care model has traditionally focused on high-risk residents that use highest resources. These residents typically present with the most complex, severe, or acute conditions or risk factors in their population group. Proactive and preventative targeted support through earlier, tailored neighbourhood-based interventions will help reduce unnecessary escalation and keep people 'as well as they can be' for longer.

Team of teams approach for patients with highest need integrating proactive care via Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs), multi-speciality input, physical and mental urgent and reactive care services and end of life

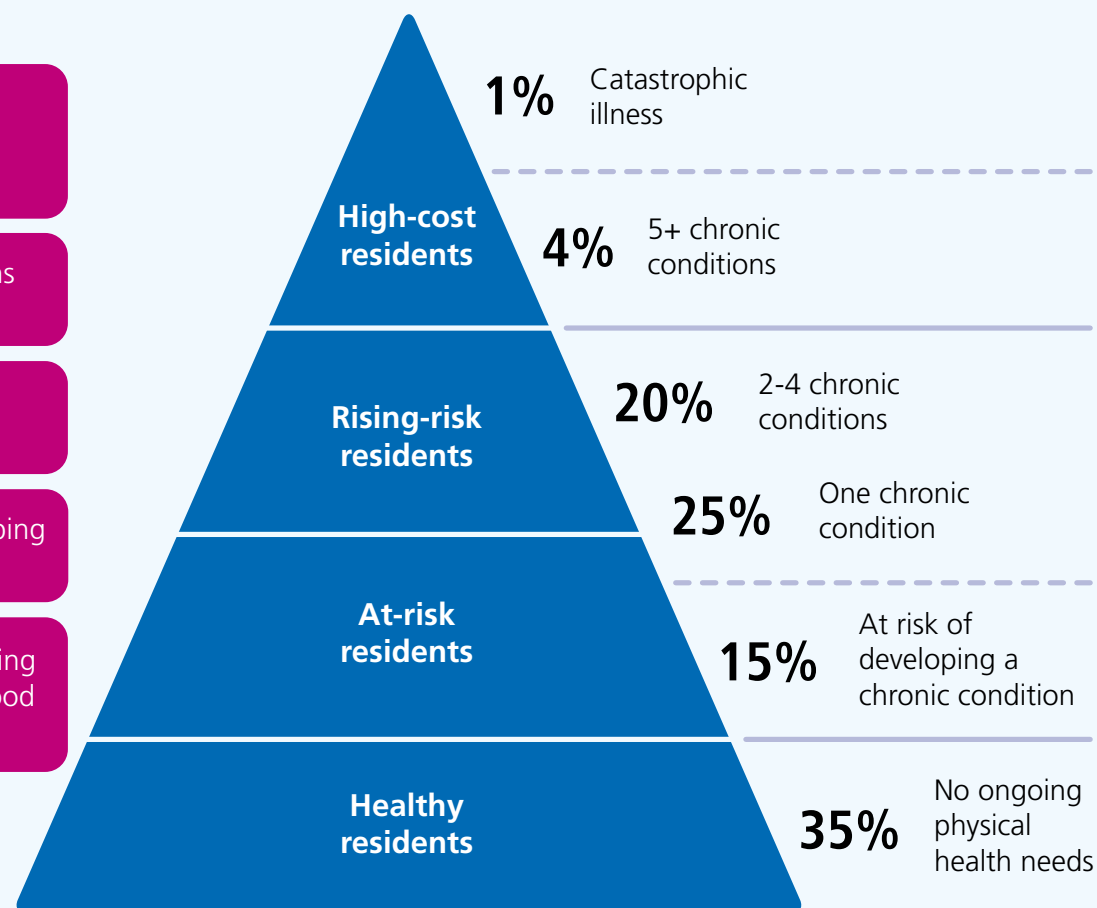
Proactive INTs supporting residents living with multiple long-term conditions (mLTCs) and frailty – a core team with specialist reach

Strengthening consistency and **levelling up primary and community support for LTC and frailty** identification, care planning and management

Targeted proactive care and support model for those at risk of developing chronic conditions in the future due to entrenched health inequalities

Neighbourhood asset-based health promotion and prevention (including work and housing). Offers tailored to specific needs of resident neighbourhood population

It is acknowledged that this model has been developed through a healthcare lens and will require further work with our local authority and VCSE partners in support of the Prevention Framework delivery and implementation.



The Vital 5

A number of modifiable risk factors – such as smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity, and harmful alcohol use – drive a significant share of preventable illness and early death globally ⁽⁵⁾. This pattern is also evident in SEL, where these risk factors disproportionately affect minoritised communities and residents living in areas of deprivation. These are known as the Vital 5: healthy blood pressure, healthy weight, less drinking, stop smoking and healthy mind.

Our focus on the Vital 5 has enabled more coordinated prevention across SEL, bringing together partners to support awareness, better detect people at risk and provide proactive support tailored to individual needs. To date, via the Vital 5 programme, we have:



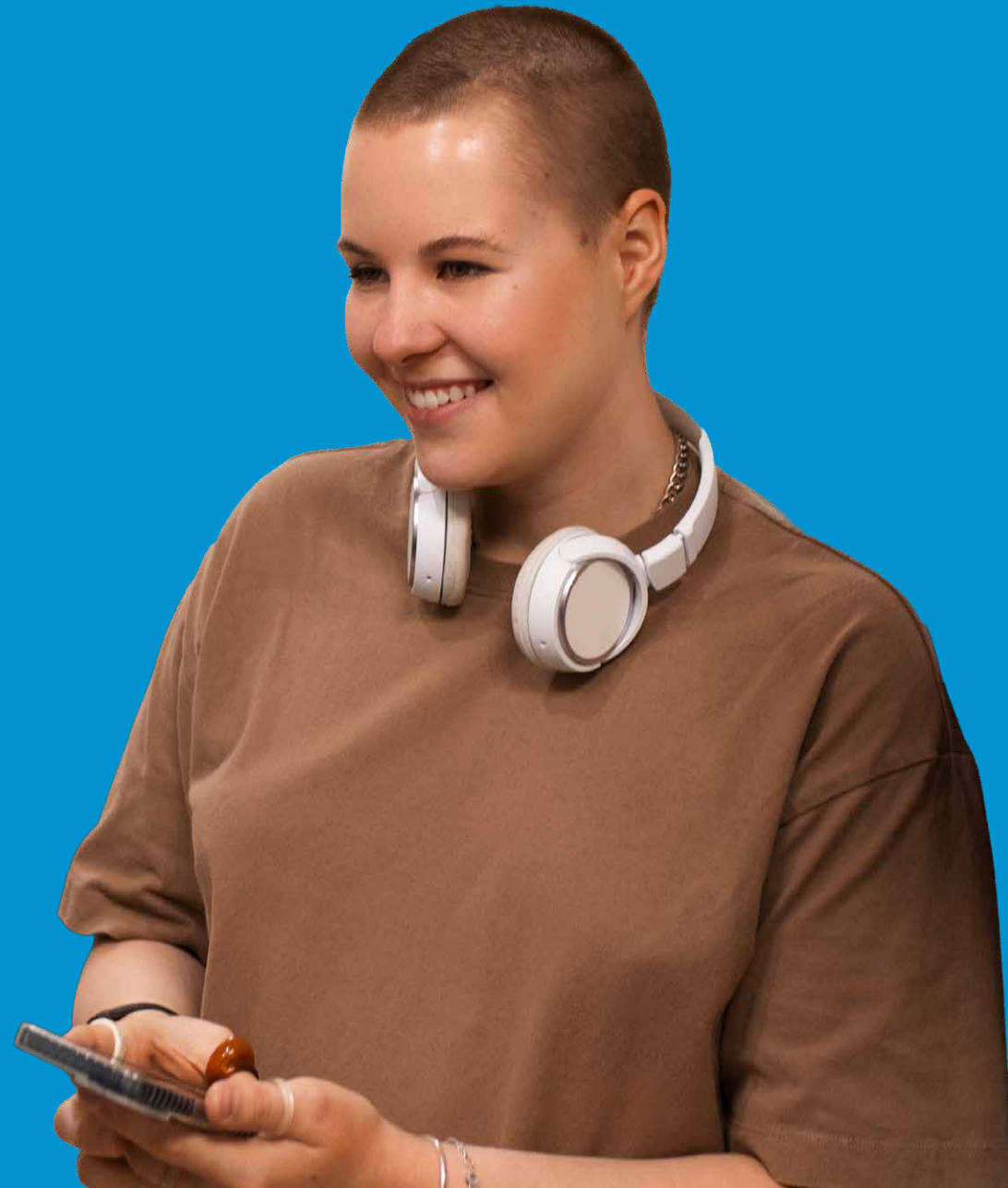
- Delivered more than 150,000 Vital 5 Checks to help residents improve their health and wellbeing
- Launched a plan to take action against the growing public health impact of alcohol
- Supported residents to quit smoking and manage their physical and mental health
- Brought together partners and residents to improve weight management services
- Worked with local organisations to provide blood pressure checks in the community

We have reflected learning from our approach to the Vital 5 in our Prevention Framework and sought to enhance our approach to better reflect evidence and insights. This has included:

- Shifting our focus on healthy weight to include physical activity and affordable nutritious food
- Adding key wider social determinant risk factors that should be considered alongside health risk factors
- Ensuring that our approach to the Vital 5 is delivered in the context of making every prevention and wellbeing contact count - for example, vaccinations and immunisations, screening, women's health, pre-diabetes and equipping staff to be prevention focused in their day-to-day interactions with residents.



Our prevention offer



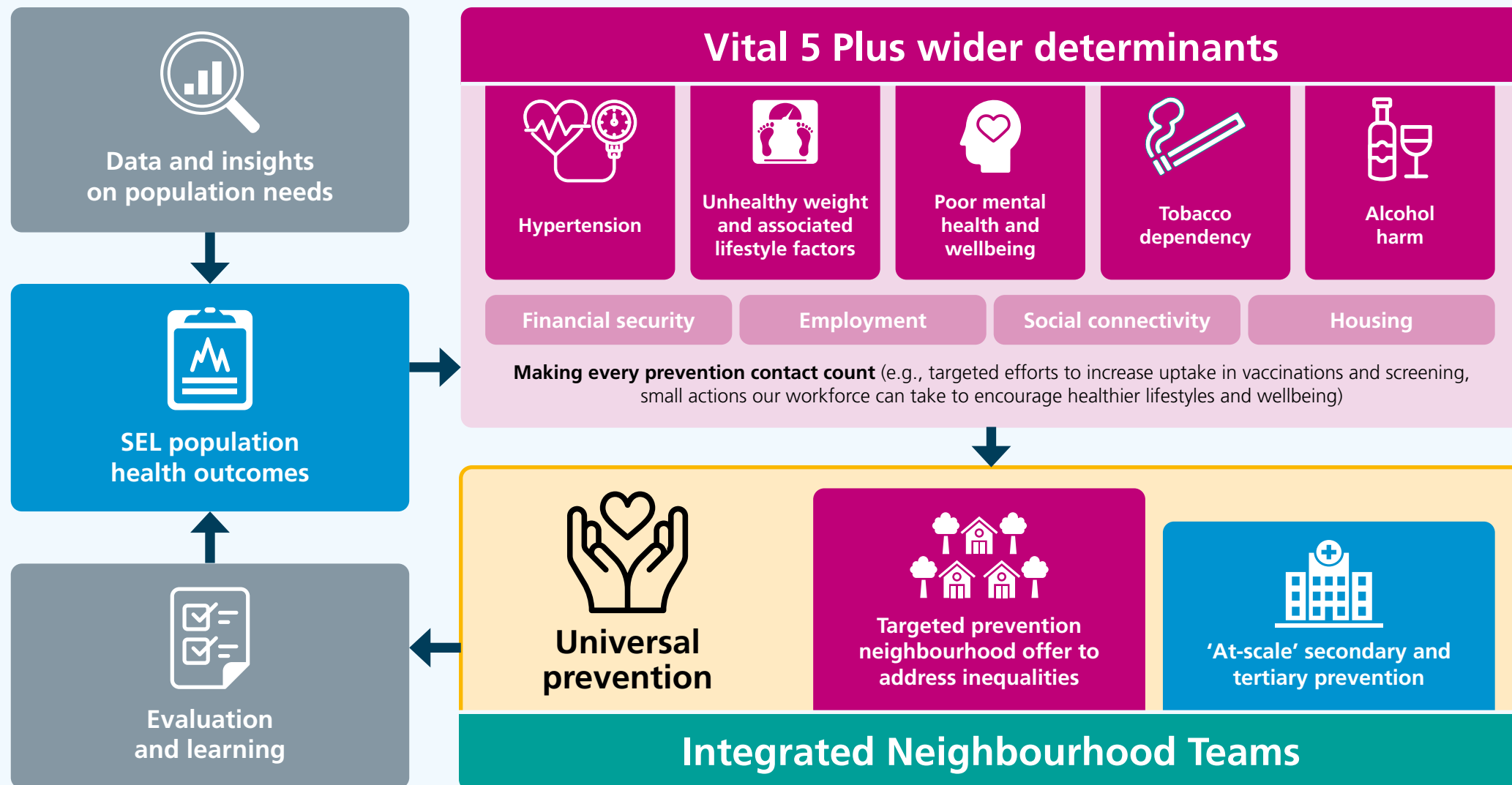
Prevention across the life course represents a systematic approach focusing on social determinants, risk reduction, early disease detection, and reducing complications and overtreatment.

The SEL ICS prevention offer will support residents in the healthy, at-risk and rising-risk groups, helping to prevent escalation into more complex needs. Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) will continue to focus on people at high-risk, as well as some rising-risk residents, to prevent further deterioration and reduce avoidable complexity.

The SEL ICS prevention approach focuses on the 'Vital 5 Plus', building on evidence-based work across the system and aligning with the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan. This model adopts a life-course perspective, using adult prevention as a lever to improve outcomes for maternal health, children, and young people, ensuring a comprehensive and sustainable approach to wellbeing. This approach aligns to SEL ICS's start well, live well and age well considerations set out for strategic commissioning.



The SEL prevention offer



The SEL prevention offer

The SEL prevention offer includes three inter-connected tiers:



Universal prevention

For all eligible residents, regardless of 'risk status' or post-code, which seeks to promote overall health and wellbeing, reduce lifestyle risks and prevent infectious disease.

This is through broad population-level access to lifestyle advice, preventative interventions and support - to improve the conditions in which we work, live and grow.

This includes, for example, school and community-based education programmes, oral health, screening and vaccination programmes, smoking bans, and alcohol licensing.



Targeted prevention neighbourhood offer

Designed to enable early detection and intervention for Vital 5 Plus risk factors through a proactive and tailored 'whole-families approach'. This will be targeted specifically at neighbourhoods at rising risk of poorer health outcomes who are more likely to experience health inequalities.

Neighbourhood models enable local variation while maintaining a consistent prevention foundation across the system, allowing for shared learning and comparable outcomes.



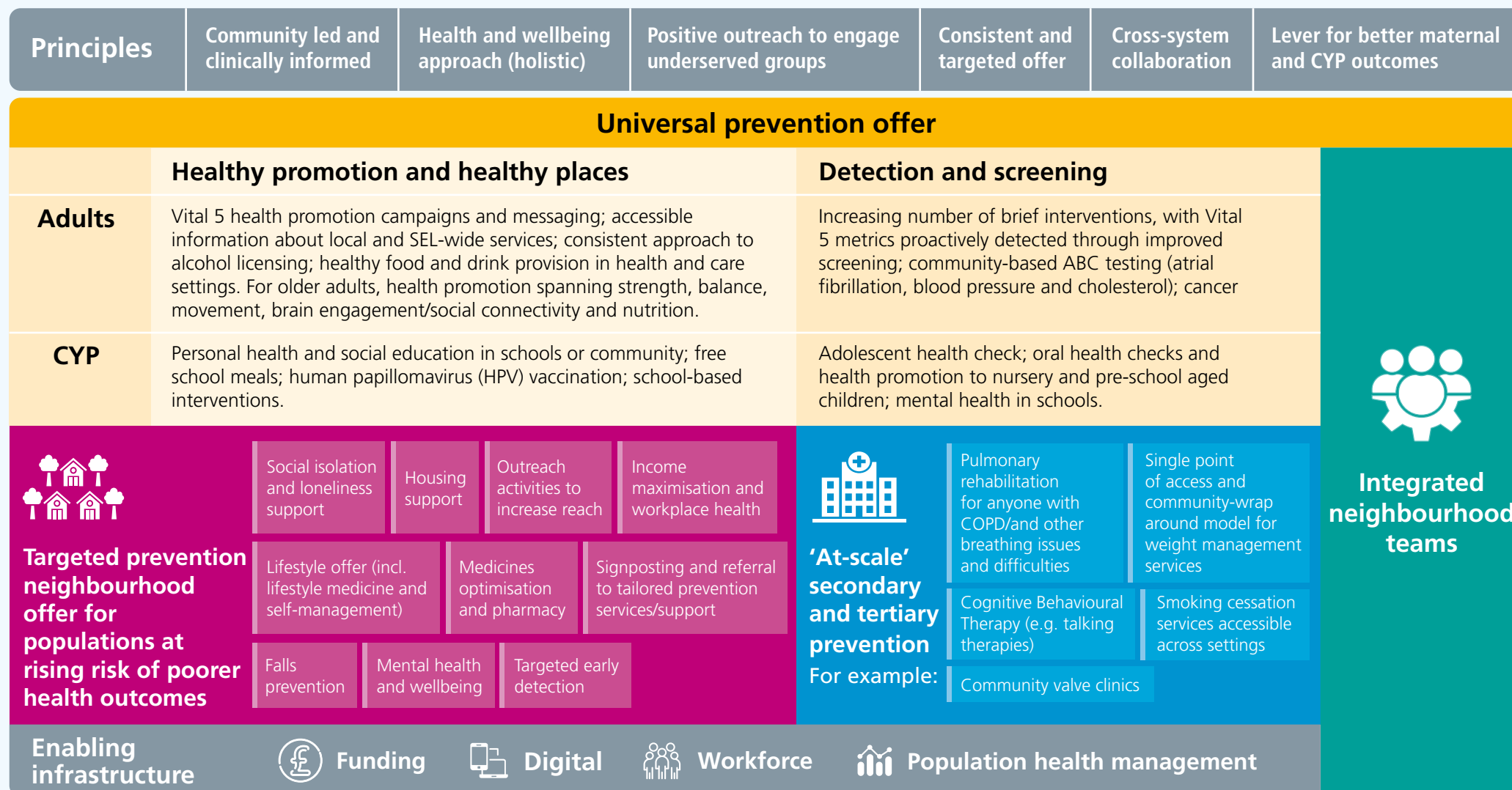
'At-scale' secondary and tertiary prevention

Secondary and tertiary preventative interventions delivered across neighbourhoods or pan-borough due to economies of scale with links back into community-based services. For example: women's and girls' health hubs, smoking cessation services across settings, alcohol care teams in hospitals, reablement services, and community valve clinics.

Integrated Neighbourhood Teams

The SEL prevention offer will complement INT models of care. INTs provide a structure for multi-disciplinary collaboration and integrated services across health, care, public services and VCSE. They will deliver holistic, prevention-focused care initially for complex high-risk residents and some at rising-risk of complexity. INTs are part of the wider development of neighbourhood health and care, which seeks to deliver care and support closer to home and enable healthier places.

Building blocks of a SEL prevention offer



Prevention-focused population health outcomes

By 2035, SEL ICS aims to increase the likelihood that people will remain in the best health they can be for as long as possible, and in doing so, reduce disparities in healthy life expectancy.

The SEL prevention offer is aligned to a prioritised set of system-level outcome statements, which include markers for progress in the short and medium term. This prioritises efforts to improve population health and reduce inequalities, particularly for underserved groups, and establishes a foundation for future prevention-focused action across working age adults, children and young people, and maternity and neonates.

There are also specific outcomes supporting the workforce, given the Prevention Framework is positioned as an opportunity to increase preventative impact for our residents and our work and care force including informal carers.

These outcomes statements will feed into wider SEL ICS efforts to establish Population Health outcomes, alongside other outcome frameworks (e.g., SEL Ageing Well Framework and SEL Neighbourhood Working Framework). This will include the development of indicator metrics and benchmarks, and the ability to split key demographic factors, such as protected characteristics and levels of deprivation, to identify whether specific groups require additional focus or resource allocation.



SEL ICS long-term ambitions

- Reducing the inequality gap in healthy life expectancy.
- Ensuring a good start in life and reducing inequalities in child health outcomes and development.
- Building trust and confidence in preventative healthcare services in our communities.
- Reduction in preventable deaths due to infectious disease and chronic disease.
- Reducing the gap between mental and physical health outcomes.

Prevention neighbourhood offer – taking a life course approach

Prioritised population health outcomes

Inputs	Strategic use of commissioning investment	Workforce	Partnerships enabling collaboration	Evidence base and insight informed policies	Resident, carer and family voice	Community spaces	Population health management capability	Digital and artificial intelligence	National prevention programmes	Care pathways
Long-term ambitions	Build trust in preventative services		Reduce gap between mental and physical health outcomes		Reduce preventable deaths due to infectious and chronic diseases		Ensure a good start in life and reduce child health inequalities		Reduce healthy life expectancy inequalities	

Maternal and neonates at rising risk of poorer health outcomes

Activities	• Implementation of national programmes and best practice care pathways for maternity, neonatal and mental health • Deliver training for maternity and neonatal staff • Incorporate service user in design and evaluation of maternity and neonatal services • Provision of accessible information		• Promote use of community spaces for parenting support • Implementation of targeted care to reduce unwarranted variation and avoidable incidents • Implementation of preventative / preconception measures • Embed the delivery of relational /personalised care across SEL maternity units	
Lead markers for progress	• Compliance data for maternity and neonatal evidence-based improvement programmes	• Number of staff attending training in advocacy, cultural sensitivity, trauma-informed care and communication. • Number of avoidable maternal and neonatal deaths, and morbidities	• Number of women receiving life course health management when they have experienced complexities due to pregnancy and/or childbirth	
3 – 5-year outcomes	1. Increased staff knowledge and skills in advocacy, cultural sensitivity, trauma informed care and communication 2. Decreased avoidable perinatal mortality and morbidity 3. Improved interface between maternity and neonatal providers and other specialties (e.g., mental health)		4. Increased number of higher-risk women receiving life course screening for diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental health. 5. Embedded service user voice in service transformation, delivery and care 6. Embedded pre-pregnancy health across SEL to support people planning for healthy pregnancy birth and beyond	

Inputs	Strategic use of commissioning investment	Workforce	Partnerships enabling collaboration	Evidence base and insight informed policies	Resident, carer and family voice	Community spaces	Population health management capability	Digital and artificial intelligence	National prevention programmes	Care pathways
Long-term ambitions		Build trust in preventative services	Reduce gap between mental and physical health outcomes		Reduce preventable deaths due to infectious and chronic diseases		Ensure a good start in life and reduce child health inequalities		Reduce healthy life expectancy inequalities	
Children and young people at rising risk of poorer health outcomes										
Activities	• Diagnosis of asthma in primary and community care • Delivery of routine childhood vaccinations, including HPV catch-up programmes for those who missed vaccination in Year 8 • CYP participation in regular physical activity • Embed mental health support within physical health pathways					• Enable enhanced understanding of mental health and wellbeing among CYP, parents/carers, and healthcare professionals • Delivery of community programmes that support early detection of mental health needs • Delivery of mental health education and support to parents and/or peer support				
Lead markers for progress	• Number diagnosed with asthma in primary and community care; number of exacerbations and hospital admissions • Uptake of routine and HPV vaccinations • Number participating in regular physical activity through educational/community settings			• Number screened for overweight/obesity • Number of preventable hospital admissions • Number of families engaged with mental health and wellbeing support and interventions		• Number of community programmes delivering mental health interventions and support to CYP • Knowledge across the health system of mental health and wellbeing				
3 – 5-year outcomes	1. Reduce asthma mortality and emergency admissions for asthma 2. Reduce gap in mental and physical health outcomes between areas of high and low deprivation 3. Decrease prevalence of childhood obesity					4. Increase uptake of routine childhood vaccinations, including HPV catch-up programmes for those who missed vaccination in Year 8 5. Improve CYP mental health and wellbeing. 6. Reduce preventable hospital admissions by improving joint management of physical and mental health conditions				

Working age adults at rising risk of poorer health outcomes (e.g., Cardiovascular-renal-metabolic health or frailty)			
Activities	• Early detection, screening and management of long-term conditions and risk factors (e.g., Vital 5) • Medicines optimisation, self-management support and promotion of healthier behaviours (supported by digital) • Train healthcare providers on prevention and risk management • Early detection of mental health conditions in primary care • Delivery of accessible community-based interventions for adults with long term conditions, risk factors and/or common mental health issues (that include peer support) • Deep-rooted listening and community organising with underserved communities		
Lead markers for progress	• Number screened for Vital 5 risk factors and/or long-term conditions • Number referred to, engaging with and completing Vital 5 interventions /prevention interventions such as weight management programmes, smoking cessation and talking therapies • Use of NHS-approved digital self-management and prevention tools • Cancer screening coverage • Self-reported physical activity levels in adults • Number of community-based interventions delivering lifestyle medicine, structured education, health coaching • Number of healthcare professionals trained in prevention and risk factors. • Knowledge and understanding across the health system of mental health and wellbeing, with links to workplaces and communities		
3 – 5-year outcomes	1. Reduce inequality in the detection, screening and management of risk factors and long-term conditions, through early targeted interventions for priority populations; and people living in deprived neighbourhoods 2. Reduce prevalence of Vital 5 risk factors 3. Reduce demand for unplanned/planned care services through earlier identification, diagnosis and improved management of long-term conditions, including cancer and women's health. 4. Improve trust and confidence in health and care services; resulting in higher uptake and more equitable access 5. Improve earlier stage cancer diagnosis and equitable uptake of national screening programmes for: breast, bowel, cervical, and lung cancer 6. Increase individual activation and self-management of physical and mental health supported by holistic detection and collaboration with housing, employment, and social services		

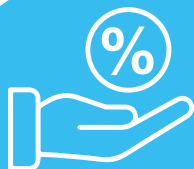
Our plan



Engagement with partners across SEL ICS has highlighted 'foundational' building blocks to enable and support the realisation of our ambitions. These require a set of system-level enabling actions to overcome potential barriers to success:



Enabling a more comprehensive understanding of population needs across SEL, the evidence-base for prevention, and gaps that require collaborative action across SEL ICS. This will involve collaborative working with partners across the SEL ICB business intelligence team, SEL public health analytics network and KCL Population Health Institute.



Incorporating the high level prioritised outcomes for prevention into a standardised approach for a system-level outcomes framework (including lead markers for short and medium term on/off track assessments) and frameworks for return on investment and social return on investment that can be applied more broadly in support of strategic commissioning for prevention and early intervention across health and care.



Adjusting our funding and planning approaches to enable SEL ICB (at system and place) and local authority partners to ensure resources are appropriately directed towards prevention and capacity building to enable health creation. This should be alongside other key enablers such as population health management, digital innovation, and embedding prevention as a key priority for SEL ICS workforce development, with inclusion of VCSE partners and carers as part of overall 'making every prevention contact count' endeavours.



Developing a toolkit for high-impact prevention that can practically support teams on the ground who are involved in the commissioning, delivery and improvement of preventative interventions, pathways and models of care.

Supporting information



Abbreviations

AF	Atrial Fibrillation
BMI	Body Mass Index
BP	Blood Pressure
CAMHS	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
CYP	Children and Young People
HCP	Healthcare Professionals
HPV	Human papillomavirus
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICS	Integrated Care System
INT	Integrated Neighbourhood Team

JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
KCL	King's College London
LD	Learning Disability
LTC	Long Term Condition
MNVP	Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships
ROI	Return on Investment
SROI	Social Return on Investment
SEL	South East London
SMI	Serious Mental Illness
VCSE	Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise

Acknowledgements

South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) and King's Health Partners are grateful to the following for their input to the Prevention Framework.

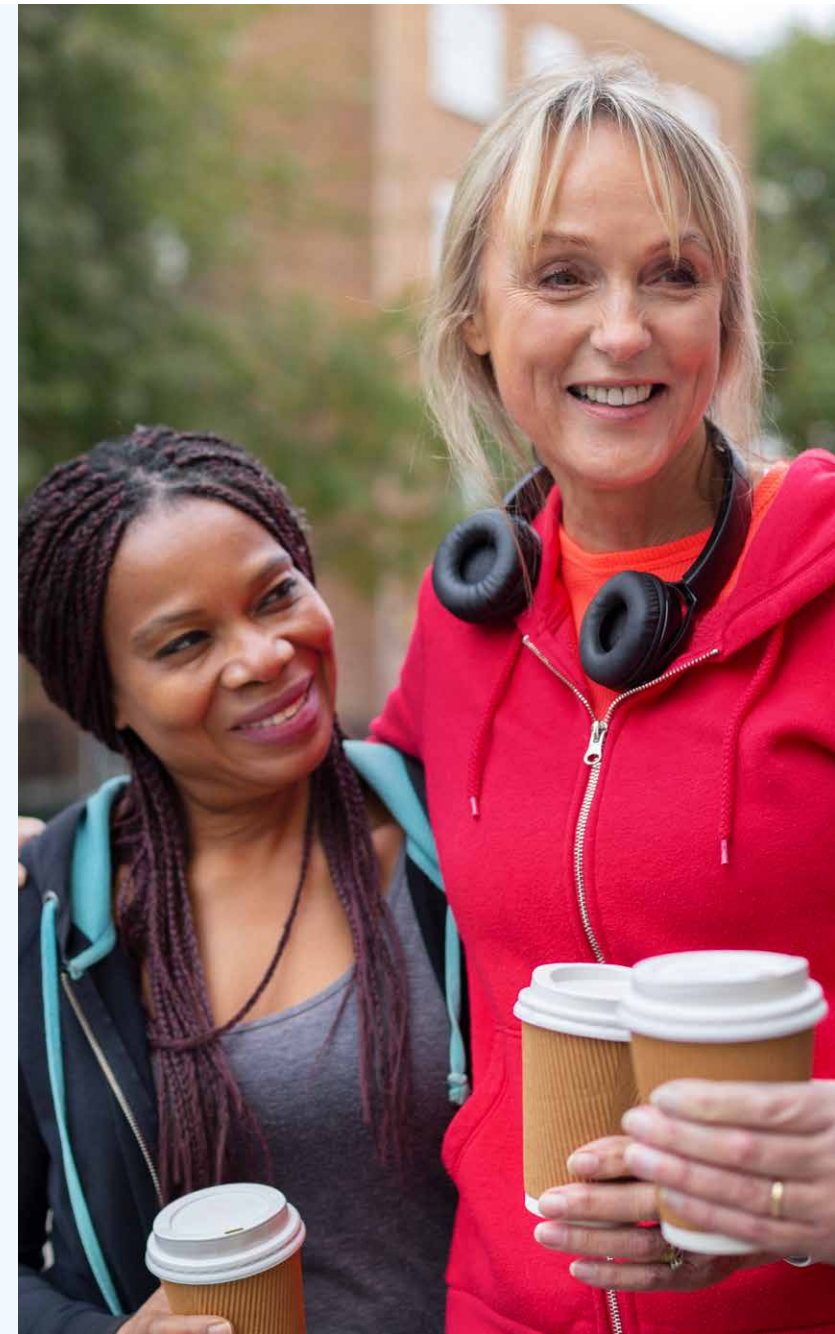
- Members of the SEL Prevention, Wellbeing and Equity Board
- Members of the multi-disciplinary coordinating group
- Care pathway leads spanning SEL ICB, local authorities and VCSEs
- Cordis Bright

We extend our gratitude to all participants in the 2025 Prevention Framework workshop series for their valuable contributions to testing and refining our approach, with particular appreciation to our SEL VCSE and resident organisations for including SEL residents' voices.

Insights gained from people and communities in SEL have significantly informed the Prevention Framework. We recognise that building trust and developing relationships takes time and commitment. We know from previous work within the system that residents are asked repeatedly to engage in co-design but don't always see the result. Therefore, we undertook an exercise to synthesise insights from across the system.

SEL ICS Engagement Teams and VCSE Alliance have been involved in leading and shaping this work. As Neighbourhood working continues to evolve, and we develop our approach to prevention, we will continue to engage with communities to understand their needs with respect to developing and implementing prevention interventions.

Building trust and strong relationships with communities takes time and is essential for success. The Trust and Health Creation initiative will play a key role by co-developing a practical blueprint to achieve this effectively.



References

- (1) Foundational elements - SEL narrative. October 2025
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- (3) Health Index for South East London, Ethica Health Partners. October (2025)
- (4) [Scotland's Population Health Framework](#), COSLA and Scottish Government. (2025)
- (5) [Global Burden of Disease study](#), IHME (2023)