

Neighbourhood Based Care Board – headline summary

April 2026

The Neighbourhood Based Care Board met on 22 April 2026 to review progress across the neighbourhood programme and agree next steps. The main focus this month was on managing delivery risks, strengthening how we evaluate impact, embedding mental health within neighbourhood care, and building the right workforce foundations to support neighbourhood teams.

Key messages at a glance

- Neighbourhood delivery is moving into a more operational phase, with a need for clearer ownership of shared risks and a stronger, more consistent approach to evaluation.
- Mental health needs to be more fully embedded within neighbourhood care, with local prioritisation of investment.
- Workforce support, leadership development and clinical governance remain critical enablers as integrated neighbourhood teams mature.

Managing delivery risks and evaluating impact

Work is underway to bring together the main risks to delivering neighbourhood-based care, drawing from borough, programme and system risk registers. The focus is on making shared risks visible, clearly owned and managed consistently as implementation accelerates.

Key risks include access to suitable community estates, data and digital interoperability, clarity of clinical and operational accountability across organisations, workforce capacity, and the risk of shifting activity into neighbourhood care without a matching shift in resources.

The agreed risks will now be reviewed with the SEL Primary Care Plus group to confirm controls, gaps and mitigations, ahead of approval through ICB governance

There was a discussion about how the broader impact of neighbourhood working could be evaluated, beyond tracking activity and early metrics.

A small Neighbourhood Health evaluation group will be formed, with members volunteering from the Board and wider system to help shape a potential evaluation scope to be commissioned.



Mental health within neighbourhood-based care

Learning from the Lewisham 24/7 community mental health pilot highlights the potential impact of community-based, multidisciplinary mental health support, with early indications of improved access and experience and reduced hospital-based activity.

The priority now is to embed mental health more consistently within neighbourhood-based care, ensuring learning is shared and supported by robust evaluation. Three linked areas require particular focus:

- Strengthening integrated neighbourhood teams to take a 'mind and body' approach, including better support for people with severe mental illness (SMI)
- Improving physical health outcomes for people with SMI in the community
- Clarifying the role of community-based secondary mental health services within the wider neighbourhood offer

New investment has been made available through the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) for mental health. Local areas will need to prioritise the available investment based on need and readiness

Key considerations

- Clear local governance and sign-off through integrator and other place arrangements
- Meaningful engagement with local partners to support prioritisation and delivery

Workforce development and clinical governance

Progress continues on workforce and governance arrangements to support neighbourhood teams, including:

- High engagement in neighbourhood care staff webinars, helping staff understand what neighbourhood working means for their roles
- Leadership and organisational development support, particularly for middle managers working across integrated teams
- Development of a South East London framework to support staff movement, risk management and performance within neighbourhood teams

The emphasis is on keeping workforce frameworks practical and proportionate, with further testing using real neighbourhood scenarios to ensure they support delivery rather than add bureaucracy.

Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT) modelling



The second phase of modelling work on integrated neighbourhood teams is ongoing. Further engagement has been invited as this work reaches its conclusion, to ensure emerging models are grounded in delivery realities and local context.

As always, papers and key documents that outline the SEL Neighbourhood approach can be found [here](#)

