

RESET WEBINAR SERIES

MOBILISING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL OF CARE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

HELD ON

Tuesday 11 February 2026 | Zoom



**Northern Ireland
Confederation**
for Health and Social Care





Executive Summary

Key Points:

The 'Health and Social Care Reset Plan', published in July 2025, proposed a new 'Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Model of Care' for Northern Ireland. This model is intended to bring care as close as possible to those who need it and deliver greater levels of care for people in their communities.

This model will involve community pharmacy, GPs, voluntary and community organisations, HSC Trusts, independent providers, other statutory bodies, and local government working closely together in formal partnership to provide integrated care.

- A phased approach has been taken to the development of the neighbourhood model, with the implementation phase beginning in April 2026.
- The proposed model will see the establishment of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) – a type of collaborative provider alliance.
- The neighbourhood model offers an opportunity to create stable conditions for partnership. It is also about 'scalability' and maximising the infrastructure already in place at neighbourhood level.
- One of the central goals of the new neighbourhood model will be to make care more joined up and 'human'.
- Some of the expected benefits of the new model include improved health outcomes; more efficient and sustainable use of resources; greater patient and carer satisfaction; and stronger community resilience.
- There is broad support for the neighbourhood model across NICON's membership – we must all come together at this key juncture to help ensure that the model is implemented effectively

“ *The neighbourhood model is about reconnecting care around people and places in a way that feels more humane. The model will be small enough to feel local, but big enough to make a difference. At its heart, it's about relationships and trust. From a primary care point of view, I think neighbourhoods work best when they're small enough to feel genuinely local, but big enough to make a difference, and built around communities that people recognise*

Dr Siobhán McEntee

NICON Primary Care Lead



Background & Development

Background

A core element of the Health and Social Care Reset Plan for Northern Ireland is the proposal to move to a neighbourhood model of care. The purpose behind this model is to help providers work together to effectively manage rising demand and offer more advanced and specialist services closer to communities. Following a widespread engagement process led by the Department of Health (DoH), the next phase will see the model start to be built.

In this webinar, we set out the policy ambition and design principles of the neighbourhood model and explored next steps. To support our focus on mobilisation, we invited a range of system leaders to set out what they believe are the key opportunities arising from this new model. We heard from Prof Cathy Harrison, Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, DoH; Dr Siobhán McEntee, NICON Primary Care Lead; Prof Michelle Tennyson, Chief Allied Health Professions Officer, DoH; and Gillian Lewis, Head of the NI Health Collective.

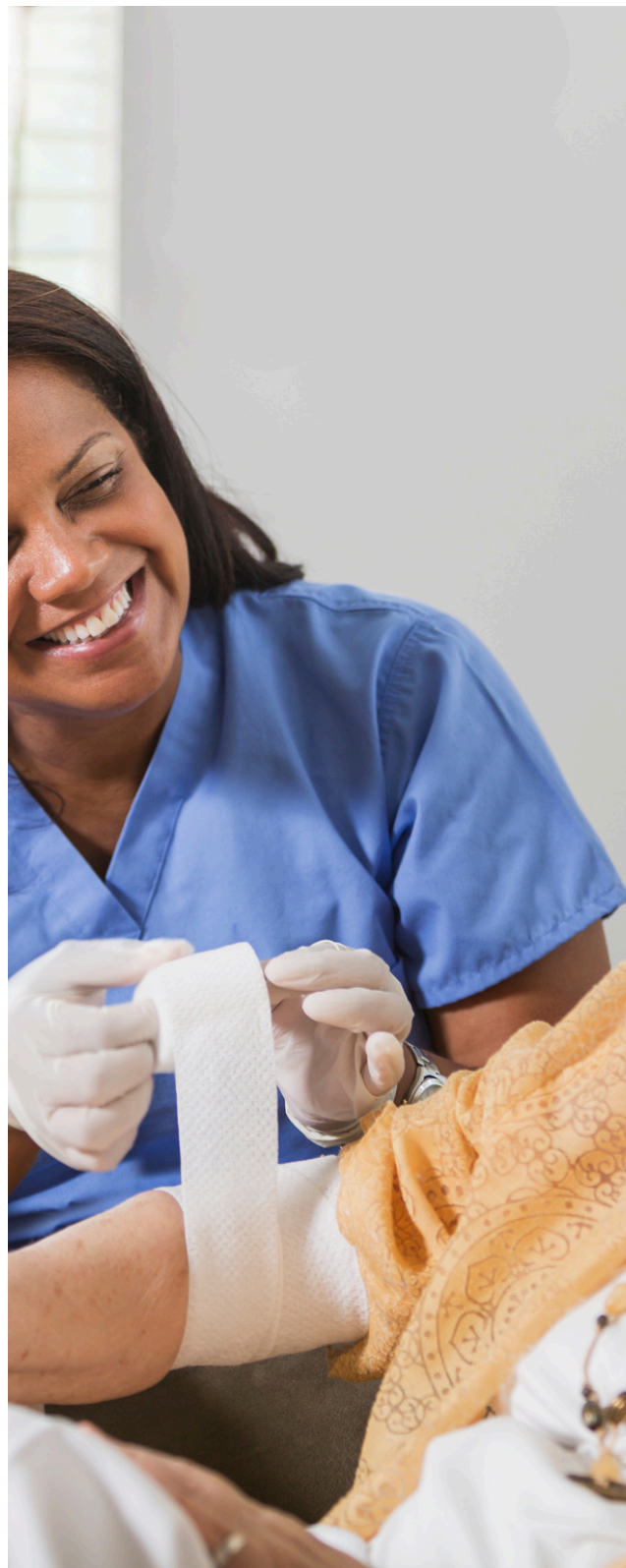
Development of the neighbourhood model

- Demand is currently outstripping resource within the HSC system in NI and is always going to without change. We need to move away from siloed working and deliver care closer to the community so we can improve access and optimise use of our resources.
- The 'Health and Social Care Reset Plan', published in July 2025, proposed a new 'Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Model of Care' for primary, community, and social care. This model is intended to bring care as close as possible to those who need it and deliver greater levels of care for people in their communities.
- This model will involve community pharmacy, GPs, voluntary and community organisations, HSC Trusts, independent providers, other statutory bodies, and local government working closely together in formal partnership to provide integrated care.
- A phased approach has been taken to the development of the neighbourhood model: 1. Design phase to Jan 2026 (complete); 2. Build Phase to April 2026 (current phase); 3. Implementation Phase from April 2026 (next phase).
- The proposed model will see the establishment of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) – a type of collaborative provider alliance. These will operate within the Trust footprint at GP Federation level, serving an average population of 115,000. They will be supported by collaborative agreements and report to the SPPG. The implementation phase will see the establishment of all 17 INTs in waves during 2026/27.
- A funding plan will support delivery from April 2026. There is no new funding to support the model, rather existing HSC funding will be used to meet needs closer to home.
- During the design phase feedback was gathered from stakeholders through a call for evidence. More feedback will be gathered during the 'build' phase, including engagement with service users and carers.



Next steps and intended outcomes of the new model:

- Transformation often fails – it is important that we draw on case studies and look at other successful neighbourhood models, such as the Nuka System of Care in Alaska and the Canterbury model in New Zealand. The success of these international models relates to their intentionality around relationships – relationships are core to model design.
- There are also lessons to learn from how councils already operate at a local level, particularly around community planning and ‘place based’ intelligence.
- The neighbourhood model offers an opportunity to create stable conditions for partnership. It is also about ‘scalability’ and maximising the infrastructure already in place at neighbourhood level.
- The voluntary and community sector will play a key role in the new model, particularly because of its focus on social prescribing. This sector is already deeply rooted in neighbourhoods across NI and supports people from birth through to end of life.
- It will also be important to look at how the expertise of social workers can be integrated and harnessed at community level.
- Moving to shared systems will be a gradual process. The initial focus of INTs will be on bringing teams together and understanding roles.
- One of the central goals of the new neighbourhood model will be to make care more joined up and ‘human’, in addition to enabling earlier and more targeted intervention.
- Some of the expected benefits of the new model include improved health outcomes; more efficient and sustainable use of resources; greater patient and carer satisfaction; and stronger community resilience.
- It is hoped that the transition to a neighbourhood model will make staff feel safer and more supported, while also helping to boost patients’ trust in the system.
- There is broad support for the neighbourhood model across NICON’s membership – our members are pleased to see the model move beyond aspiration. We are at the point where key decisions about design, resourcing, and partnership working will determine whether the model genuinely changes how care is experienced by people in their families and in their communities. We must all come together at this key juncture to help ensure that the model is implemented effectively.



Learn More

You can watch the session on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/NeighbourhoodModel>.

This webinar was held as part of NICON's 'Reset' discussion series, which will run throughout 2026.

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