



TOWER HAMLETS

**GP CARE
GROUP** cic

LOCAL PEOPLE, LOCAL HEALTH

2024
ANNUAL REPORT
AND ACCOUNTS

GP CARE GROUP ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

This Annual Report marks another busy year in the life of the GP Care Group and the healthcare system more widely. The July 2024 election saw a change of Government and with it, changes to the NHS and a move to more neighbourhood-based healthcare provision. As a community-based organisation with a strong track record of innovation, we stand ready to adapt to these changes as they are realised in the coming years.

2024 was a significant year in the life of the Care Group as we celebrated our first 10 years of operation. This was a decade where we went from a small organisation founded by the GPs of Tower Hamlets into one delivering healthcare services across two boroughs and beyond.

This special 10-year celebration brought together friends, colleagues, and partners from our early days – those who played a crucial role in shaping and advancing the organisation. It was a moment to reflect on the significant impact we have made, not only as an organisation but as a community, and to celebrate what the organisation means to our employees and the communities who benefit from our work.

A particular achievement this year was the team's successful bid for the North East London Training Hub. This accomplishment opens an exciting avenue for us to showcase the strength of our community education efforts to a broader audience. Congratulations to everyone involved in making this a reality.

In addition, we established our new People Committee a year ago, which has already made a significant impact by ensuring that we have the right workforce in place to meet our strategic goals. The committee is focused on listening to and addressing the needs of our employees, fostering a positive, supportive, and happy workplace culture. We are committed to

building on this foundation to ensure our workforce remains engaged, motivated, and well-prepared for the future.

As always, Care Group employees have remained unwavering in their commitment to the people in our communities, delivering high quality services to help reduce healthcare inequalities.

I want to express my gratitude to all our employees for their dedication, resilience, and hard work throughout the year. It is our people that will be the driving force for a second decade of success.



CEO STATEMENT

The year 2024/25 was a period of challenge and change, with all areas of the healthcare system experiencing greater financial pressures. Despite this challenging environment, the Care Group delivered high quality service provision and excellent support for primary care, helping to improve the lives of people in Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and beyond. As our Chair notes in his Foreword, we were proud to celebrate 10 years of operation during 2024.

In this Annual Report, we break down what we do into four key strands - what we call our DNA.

They are:

- Working with General Practice
- Neighbourhood-Based Healthcare Provider
- Social Value
- Training and Education.



Zainab Arian
GP Care Group CEO

SOCIAL VALUE

Our social value work has many different aspects - all with the aim of making a positive contribution to the communities we serve. We recognise the additional value we can bring as an established organisation based in local communities. Our social value programme includes offering work experience opportunities and internships to local people so they can take the first steps in a career in healthcare. It also means buying local where we can and developing and delivering a plan to become a more sustainable organisation. This exciting area of our work is set to grow and deepen in years to come.

NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

As a neighbourhood-based healthcare provider our work is rooted in the communities we serve. This spans our Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) at the Royal London Hospital, through to children's health services, both in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. I was particularly proud that our UTC treated more patients during the year, whilst also reducing waiting times.

At the end of the 2024/25 year, we said goodbye to the School Health Service in Tower Hamlets. The team achieved a great deal to help support young people's health and wellbeing throughout the seven years we operated the service. I would like to thank the whole team for everything they did.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Our Training Unit delivered excellent learning experiences with a wide range of partners, including the NHS, local government and voluntary sector. This includes mental health first aid, suicide prevention and motivational interviewing training. We are proud to support the monthly Protected Learning Time sessions, which we know our Primary Care colleagues value so much.

In addition, during the year we won the contract to deliver the North East London Training Hub, working in partnership with Community Matters, underlining our commitment to training and education.

WORKING WITH GENERAL PRACTICE

Our work with General Practice remains the foundation of everything we do. During the year, we continued to work closely with Primary Care Networks to deliver Extended Access Hub appointments on evenings and weekends. This work allows Tower Hamlets residents to receive care when they need it, to suit their busy lives.

We offer our social prescribing services through General Practice, which links patients to other, non-medical services throughout the borough. This is a vital way of addressing the wider determinants of health inequalities, such as financial or housing issues. In addition, our Care Group partnership model meant we continued to support Jubilee Street Practice and Island Health practices throughout 2024/25.

Looking back on the year, it was clear that we managed to deliver high quality services within a more financially stressed environment. These pressures look set to continue, which means we must be more innovative and agile, and responsive to the needs of our patients.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to our staff, who regularly go above and beyond in their work. Our people are our greatest asset, and it is only through working as a team, and with our partners, that we can help to reduce health inequalities for the people we serve.

WHO WE ARE

Tower Hamlets GP Care Group is a Community Interest Company, established in 2014 and **collectively owned** by all GP practices in Tower Hamlets. Our role is to enable General Practice to deliver services at scale, **working in partnership** with community, primary, and acute care providers. As a **social value organisation**, we reinvest back into our local community to help improve health and wellbeing.

Our Mission

To improve the health and wellbeing of the residents we serve by providing excellent community and primary care.

Our reach

We provide services across Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, covering over **600,000 residents**, with our training and education work supporting around **130,000 NHS staff** across North East London

Our values and behaviours

- Work together for patients
- Be kind
- Be the difference
- Be respectful
- Be the best we can
- Everyone counts



INTRODUCING OUR DNA

The Care Group has four key strands of activity – what we call our DNA.

These four strands are:

- Working with General Practice
- Neighbourhood-based healthcare provider
- Social value
- Training and education



WORKING WITH GENERAL PRACTICE

We were set up to provide a voice for Tower Hamlets General Practice in the wider healthcare system, and to ensure General Practice is stable and viable, with the required capacity and resources.

We engage with practices to ensure their needs are met and that there is co-ordination across General Practice to ensure the system is working well and meeting the needs of patients.

SOCIAL VALUE

As a community interest company, adding value for local people has always been a key part of what we do. This work ranges from promoting sustainability and enabling healthier communities, through to charitable partnerships, including winter clothing donations, buying local and offering training and employment opportunities for residents, such as work experience in primary care.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Our Training Unit, which has exciting plans for growth, delivers a wide range of learning experiences for the healthcare system in Tower Hamlets and beyond. The Care Group also took on responsibility for the North East London Training Hub from November 2024.

NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

This critical area of our work encompasses Integrated Urgent Primary Care, in particular running the Tower Hamlets Urgent Treatment Centre at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, our Same Day Access service at Cable Street and our extended Access Hubs across the Borough.

Our primary care services that directly support general practice are social prescribing and P-RESET.

Our integrated community services include 0-5 children's services in Tower Hamlets, 0-19 children and young people's services in Waltham Forest and our Advocacy and Interpreting services.

A CARE GROUP YEAR IN REVIEW

APRIL 2024

We launched our new **Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing (PBEW)** service in Waltham Forest. The service offers parent-infant relationship interventions and specialist support to expectant parents, and parents with children under two years, who are struggling with their emotional wellbeing.

The **Bright Beginnings** service, a pilot scheme providing additional support to babies and their families in the first 1001 days of life, launched. It is a Start for Life pilot run by the Care Group and funded by Department of Health and Social Care.

MAY 2024

Hannah Spiring, Community Infant Feeding Coordinator, was appointed joint-chair of the London National Infant Feeding Network (NIFN), supported by UNICEF UK. This platform is a way to boost support for infant feeding leads across London.



JUNE 2024

Tower Hamlets GP Dr Ballal Seddique delivered sessions on **basic life support** to local leisure centres throughout the summer. This is part of our social value commitment to our communities.

Our **Health Visiting team** supported research to monitor and **identify potential health problems** with a child's height before school entry. It was presented at an event in June at Queen Mary University of London to share the research findings with stakeholders and participating families.



JULY 2024

We hosted a **GP job fair** – speed dating style – to support general practice in recruiting locum and salaried GP positions. The event engaged with 12 practices across Tower Hamlets.

AUGUST 2024

We launched a new on-demand and responsive **British Sign Language** interpreting service for the deaf community in Tower Hamlets.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Care Group celebrated **10 years of service** in Tower Hamlets at an event in the Pavilion, Mile End. The event reflected our partnership working with organisations like Bart's Health, ELFT, Tower Hamlets Council, voluntary and community sector organisations, and the ICB joining us to celebrate.

OCTOBER 2024

Care Group was awarded the three-year, **North East London Training Hub** contract, in partnership with Community Matters. The programme provides CPD opportunities, recruitment support, staff wellbeing initiatives, and student placements for health professionals across the North East London Integrated Care System.

October was the busiest month at our **Urgent Treatment Centre**, with 9,240 patients seen – this is 489 more patients than the busiest month in 2023/24 and around 300 patients per day seen on average.



NOVEMBER 2024

A new, free 15-minute **workplace health check** service was launched in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The checks cover blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), diabetes risk, smoking, and alcohol status, with follow-up advice and signposting to GPs and support services.



DECEMBER 2024

Care Group was awarded the contract to deliver **Making Every Contact Count (MECC)** training by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Public Health. The programme equips staff to have health-focused conversations with residents.

A new **partnership with Carers Centres** in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest to strengthen support for unpaid carers was launched.

JANUARY 2025

Care Group introduced a new **work experience programme** for 16-year-olds interested in healthcare.

FEBRUARY 2025

In February, the Care Group launched a **health information** website tailored to the local **Somali community**.



MARCH 2025

Our **charitable partner**, Cycle Sisters, launched a new programme of activities, supported by the Care Group, including group cycle lessons in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. Cycle Sisters supports Muslim women to enjoy cycling within a supportive, friendly environment.

WORKING WITH GENERAL PRACTICE

As a GP Federation, a key part of our role is to advocate for General Practice in Tower Hamlets. We engage with General Practice and play a coordinating role to enable Primary Care to be as effective as possible. As part of this, the Care Group develops and delivers services that support our GP practices' patient population.



Social Prescribing

Social prescribing aims to address the social factors affecting health and wellbeing by connecting residents to non-medical support available in the borough. Typical issues are social isolation, money, housing or employment.

Tower Hamlets GP practices have an allocated social prescriber who receives referrals from a wide range of organisations, professionals and residents themselves, including GPs, nurses and other practice staff.

Performance highlights

Tower Hamlets Women's Health Hub

An initial scoping project by Barts Health at the Women's Health Hub found that one in five wanted a referral to a social prescriber.

Rahana Begum, a Care Group Social Prescriber, was seconded to the Hub, at Mile End hospital, from April 2024. The pilot was successful and will be funded by Barts Health until March 2027. Rahana said:



"We empower women who are having difficulty with local connections. We are here for them."



PLT Training

The Social Prescribing Manager delivered Protected Learning Time (PLT) training sessions for Primary Care staff, in partnership with Bromley by Bow Insights and Island Advice Centre. The training outlined the benefits of Social Prescribing and Social Welfare sessions in Primary Care. We have trained over 200 healthcare and other frontline staff as part of this work during 2024/25.

Tower Hamlets Urgent Care Centre (UTC)

We worked with the UTC at the Royal London Hospital to promote social prescribing within their service, supporting patients to self-refer.

Posters and leaflets were designed with QR codes to help patients self-refer while waiting in the UTC.

Facts and stats

Over **11,800** people were referred to Tower Hamlets social prescribers from **April 2024 to March 2025**.

Most common reasons for referrals:

14% Financial problems

11% Unsatisfactory living conditions

10% Housing unsuited to needs

8% General wellbeing concerns

8% Feeling lonely

Case study quote

A mother of two was supported with housing and applying for benefits following a relationship breakdown. She said:

"Thank you so much for your time and helping me find some clarity on the situation, you have given me hope."





Patient Experience team

The Patient Experience team is responsible for gathering feedback from people who receive health, social care and housing support services in Tower Hamlets and neighbouring boroughs. Through in-depth reviews, the team captures feedback and makes recommendations for replicable, cross organisational improvements.

Performance highlights

Whole system review of falls prevention: The team engaged with service users to gain insight into their experience of falls. Residents shared concerns about street lighting, uneven pavements, getting on and off buses, and rental bikes being dumped on the street. The team reached out to TfL and Lime Bikes who have since made improvements.

Diabetes prevention: The team collaborated on a pilot project with Blithehale Medical Practice in Bethnal Green to create a walking group for Bengali women, with the aim of helping to prevent diabetes.

Patient Experience engaged with a total of 152 people in the 2024/25 business year. These included:

3 home visits

89 in-person group feedback

55 telephone calls

2 online group meetings

P-RESET

P-RESET supports GP practices to provide care for people with drug and alcohol problems. It is a partnership with Tower Hamlets Council's commissioned drug and alcohol service, RESET, run by Change, Grow, Live.

P-RESET supports all but one Tower Hamlets practice to deliver alcohol screening and intervention, GP shared care prescribing and annual health checks and care plans for RESET-registered patients.

The team made strong progress through the year, reporting 57% completion rates for substance misuse annual health checks – the highest performance to date.

Performance highlights

Awareness campaigns: Throughout the year, P-RESET actively supported and promoted key public health campaigns, including Stoptober, DrinkCoach, and Alcohol Awareness Week.

Education training: The team delivered alcohol and substance misuse training for

GPs and wider practice teams. The training supported GPs to improve alcohol and drug screening in consultations, strengthen shared care arrangements and promote consistent, evidence-based practice.

Collaborative Efforts: Ongoing collaboration between GP practices and RESET care coordinators strengthened, with regular meetings for problem-solving and shared learning.

P-RESET Coordinators: Our coordinators supported Tower Hamlets GP practices to identify patients requiring annual health checks and coordinate follow-up activity. The coordinators helped ensure individuals received timely reviews and appropriate interventions.



TOWER HAMLETS TOGETHER



A key part of our role is to work with partners in Tower Hamlets to reduce healthcare inequalities. We are a founder member of Tower Hamlets Together (THT), an organisation which brings together key players in the local health and care system. During 2024/25, we worked to address issues such as creating an anti-racist healthcare system.



NEIGHBOURHOOD-BASED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

As a neighbourhood-based healthcare provider, we help to improve the health outcomes of the people we serve, both in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. By delivering culturally sensitive services, we aim to break down barriers to help residents access our health services, thereby reducing health inequalities.

TOWER HAMLETS



0-5 Children's Services

Our 0-5 Children's Service in Tower Hamlets is made up of two services: Health Visiting and the Family Nurse Partnership for younger mothers.

The **Health Visiting service** is a universal service that provides support for babies and parents from pregnancy up to five years of age. It includes six contacts, the first before birth, and the last when the child is two years old.

The **Family Nurse Partnership** is an early intervention home visiting programme for first-time young parents from early pregnancy until the child is two years old.

Health Visiting

The health visiting service is provided by teams, which include:

- Health Visitors - nurses or midwives with specialist training to support families and improve health outcomes.
- Nurses
- Nursery nurses
- Support workers.

Facts and stats

In 2024/25 4068 babies were born in Tower Hamlets, 26 more than the previous year.

Contact	Appointments delivered 2024/25	% Change from 2023/24
Pre-birth	2,040	+18%
New birth visit - 14 days	3,694	+7%
6-8 weeks	2,918	+1%
3-4 months	2,374	-3%
12-15 months	2,967	+14%
2-2.5 years	2,180	-18%



Performance review

Our Health Visiting performance improved in several areas during 2024/25, most notably with a big rise in pre-birth (antenatal) contacts. This is critical because it means parents can be supported with advice around feeding, sleeping and immunisations. There were also rises in new birth visits in the first 14 days of a baby's life, and for the one-year developmental review.

We saw a significant decrease in contacts for the two-year developmental review. This was due to a case backlog which was being tackled during this period. We have developed the service over the past year to support more engagement with the two-year review, and performance is trending strongly upwards in early 2025/26 data.

What our patients said

94% of survey respondents rated the health visiting service as excellent, good or fair.

96% rated the practitioner's friendliness and approachability as average or excellent.

We recruited a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) specialist practitioner. This led to the development of a thorough Integrated Referral Pathway and a SEND service directory for Tower Hamlets. This appointment led to timely access for SEND support for children who needed it.

Our service demonstrated strong partnership engagement and involvement in multi-agency safeguarding reviews, SEND pathways, Family Hub development and health inequalities initiatives in Tower Hamlets. This meant more families got the right support at the right time.

Extending access: We introduced clinics on Saturdays and in the evenings to help more parents access pre-birth and new birth services.

Promoting breastfeeding: Our UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative Coordinator, Hannah Spiring, was elected to chair the London National Infant Feeding Network in April 2024. This work helps strengthen pathways for families by ensuring the latest evidence is used by our teams.

Patient comment

"I was seen by Denise McFarlane and received the most amazing support and guidance from her. I felt my efforts as a mother are being acknowledged, which is rare for me to receive as an immigrant parent with no extended family around. I am so grateful for her service, and the amazing energy she brings."

Family Nurse Partnership

The Family Nurse Partnership continued to perform well during 2024/25. There was an improvement through the year, with 100% in Q4 of our Family Nurse Partnership clients were enrolled by 28 weeks from January to March 2025. Child development monitoring was carried out in a timely fashion, with assessments at four months and 24 months 100% completed.

Bright Beginnings

Bright Beginnings was a Start for Life pilot to help provide additional support for parents and their babies in the first 1001 days of life. It ran from June 2024 to December 2025. It offered support through four pathways: social prescribing; perinatal support; immunisation plus; and social communication.

The service received over 300 referrals across the four pathways since June 2024. Bright Beginnings has worked in partnership with several organisations to deliver its four pathways. It worked with PCNs 6,7 and 8 for immunisation plus; with Toyhouse for communication; with Family Hubs for social prescribing; and with the perinatal team for the perinatal pathway.

“I think the service is excellent and much needed to provide parents with direction in the early years of a child’s development.”

Bright Beginnings patient comment



PRIMARY CARE SERVICES



LARC Hub

The Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) Hub is part of the Sexual and Reproductive Health Network Integrated Service. It is designed to deliver high-quality sexual and reproductive health services in primary care. It was established to improve access and increase uptake of LARC in areas with historically low provision. Long-acting reversible contraception allows women to plan their pregnancies more easily, without the need to go in for repeat prescriptions, saving the patients' time and the NHS time and money.

Performance highlights

Training: The LARC Hub is being designated as an Nexplanon Training Hub for Health Professionals to support and train local coil fitters, aiming to build LARC capacity in underperforming networks.

Improved uptake: The service achieved an improvement in LARC uptake across Tower Hamlets compared with the previous year. A total of 425 LARC procedures were completed, compared to 416 in 2023/24.

Satisfaction rates: 91% of patients surveyed reported being satisfied with the care they received.

Same Day Access service

The Same Day Access service aims to improve access to urgent care through General Practice, reducing the need for alternative urgent care services.

The service is a GP-led initiative with appointments ringfenced for NHS 111 referrals and urgent and emergency services across North East London, including A&E and Urgent Treatment Centres. The service operates daily from 12-8pm, located within a 15-minute walk from the Royal London Hospital.

On average, the service offers 1,000 appointments per month, improving access to urgent primary care and reducing pressure on emergency services and General Practice.

Facts and stats

20,454 Number of face-to-face appointments delivered through the Same Day Access service.

10,988 Number of patients streamed from the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) and Royal London Hospital's Emergency Department to the Same Day Access Hub at Cable Street - over half of patients to the hub come via the Royal London.

5,195 Face-to-face appointments NHS 111 booked directly into the service, avoiding unnecessary visits and pressure on the Royal London Hospital.



Extended Access Hubs

Every GP practice in Tower Hamlets can offer appointments out of normal business hours during the week and at weekends through hubs across the borough. The Extended Access hubs are open from 6.30-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-5pm on a Saturday.

During the 2024/25 year, 210 patients participated in our service feedback survey, with four out of five (82%) rating the care they received as good or excellent.

Patients consistently described the care provided by nurses as excellent. Reception colleagues were highlighted as friendly and welcoming, contributing positively to the overall patient experience.

These results reflect the continued dedication of our team to delivering compassionate, high-quality care.

Facts and stats

30,938

Number of appointments offered total

10,161

Number of GP appointments

5,026

Number of Advanced Nurse Practitioner appointments

5,991

Number of Nurses appointments

9,760

Number of Healthcare Assistant appointments



TOWER HAMLETS URGENT TREATMENT CENTRE

Patients at the Tower Hamlets Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) waited on average 35 mins less in 2024/25 than the previous year – despite 7,000 more patients coming through the door.

More than 100,000 patients visited the UTC at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, an average of 280 people per day. That's about 20 more patients per day compared with the previous year. Patients with non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries are referred to the UTC from the A&E department.

The UTC is equipped to diagnose and deal with many of the most common ailments people attend A&E for. These include minor head

injuries, cuts and grazes, bites and stings, mild burns, skin infections and many other non-life-threatening issues.

Tower Hamlets is one of the busiest UTCs in the UK and one of the few that continues to receive patients referred directly from an A&E department.

76% of patients said they would recommend the UTC and Out of Hours Service to friends and family.

2024/25 Facts and stats

Contact	Numbers	% Change from 2023/24
Attendances at UTC	102,471 patients	+8%
Average length of stay	2hrs 48mins	-17%
Busiest month	October 2024 – 9,240 patients	+6%
Quietest month	August 2024 – 7,741 patients	+4%

OUT OF HOURS SERVICE



The Out of Hours Service ensures continuity of care for Tower Hamlets residents when GP surgeries are closed. The service operates seven days a week, 6.30pm to 8am, Monday – Thursday. There is a 24-hour service from the Royal London Hospital from 6.30pm Friday to 8am Monday. A home visiting service is available for patients who cannot attend the clinic in person. Patients access the Out of Hours service by contacting NHS 111. This is

different from our Extended Access Hubs which offers primary care for specific conditions on evenings and Saturdays.

Around **330 patients** were seen **face-to-face per month**. Home visits rose by **28%** from **573 in 2023/24** to **732 in 2024/25**, highlighting the service's ability to attend to patients away from usual healthcare locations.

2024/25 Facts and stats

	2024/25	Change from 2023/24
Face-to-face care	3,986	Down 1,986
Home visits	732	Up 159
Advice by phone	12,048	Down 306
% Set and seen within 2 hours	60%	Down 2.1%
% Set and seen within 6 hours	86%	Down 2.3%

ADVOCACY AND INTERPRETING SERVICE

The Tower Hamlets Advocacy and Interpreting Service is free and confidential for individuals requiring language support and bilingual advocacy either face to face or through telephone interpreting. The patient must be registered with one of our partner GP practices or a small group of approved organisations in Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Performance highlights

In 2024/25, the service delivered 46,515 advocacy and interpreting service activities compared to 49,675 in 2023/24, a decrease of 6.4%. This is largely due to new migrant communities moving to areas outside of Tower Hamlets. In terms of in-house call volumes, 49% were for Sylheti, 20% for Bengali and 7% for Somali.

The service delivered 85% of its activities through telephone interpreting, and 15% face-to-face. During the year, the split between interpreting and advocacy was 51% to 49%, respectively. This is provided through our in-house team; a third sector interpreter provider, Praxis Project; and the Language Shop service for a broader range of languages.

“Anis is consistently calm, patient and polite with the patients and is extremely skilled at helping unpick the underlying issues.”

A local GP on a member of our Advocacy team



WALTHAM FOREST



0-19 Children and Young People's Services

The Care Group runs 0-19 children and young people's services in the London Borough of Waltham Forest. These services are:

- Health Visiting
- School Health and Wellbeing
- Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing (PBEW)
- Family Nursing Partnership (FNP)

Performance analysis

The Health Visiting service made strong progress during the 2024/25 year, with uptake improving across each of the five mandated reviews. The new birth visit performance was strong, with around 92% of visits taking place within the first 14 days of life. The 6-8 week visit also saw good performance levels, with 85% of babies being seen for this contact.

The antenatal review has been a challenging area of delivery. However, specific focus on this by the team has been key to significant improvement. The upwards trajectory for the Health Visiting service in Waltham Forest has continued into the current, 2025/26 year, to help support more babies make a healthy start to life, and also supporting the wellbeing of mothers.

Facts and stats

Contact	Appointments delivered 2024/25	% Change from 2023/24
Pre-birth	917	+98%
New birth visit - 14 days	3,305	+5%
6-8 weeks	2,962	+10%
12-15 months	2,055	+36%
2-2.5 years	2,246	+24%

Performance highlights

Digital booking: The introduction of digital booking tools made it easier for parents to arrange their appointments.

Widening access: Saturday clinics were added during the year, which has given families more flexibility and helped raise uptake of the two-year review.

Strengthening our effectiveness: A new way of allocating cases was introduced, which allowed better tracking of caseloads, helping us work more effectively. In addition, we recruited two Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) to support students.

Better collaboration: We collaborated with Family Hubs to offer a 'one-stop shop' model, so families can access health visiting alongside other services in one place.

Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing service

The Parent and Baby Emotional Wellbeing (PBEW) service began as a pilot and was evaluated in partnership with the local authority. Following a successful first year, it was recommissioned to continue providing much-needed support for parents experiencing perinatal mental health challenges.

Parents have reported that the opportunity to receive tailored support during a vulnerable time has been essential in helping them manage their mental health and strengthen their relationship with their baby.

In July 2024, our Patient Experience team conducted 12 telephone interviews with PBEW patients with highly positive feedback about reliability and responsiveness.

Family Nurse Partnership

In addition to supporting families on the programme this year, we established young parent groups in Family Hubs, creating safe and supportive spaces for families to come together. These groups allowed families the chance to directly access baby banks and food banks.

This practical support, alongside the opportunity to spend time together, has reduced isolation and helped young parents form friendships and connections with trusted professionals.



"I love the supportive, positive environment."

Mother in the FNP programme



SEND contribution

The service was part of the local authority's successful Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) inspection. Health visiting teams have increased awareness of SEND pathways and strengthened referrals from universal health visiting into early years and inclusion services, ensuring children with additional needs are identified early and supported appropriately.



"Having someone to talk to in those first weeks changed everything — I felt seen and supported."

PBEW service user



SAFEGUARDING



Safeguarding Strategy

The Care Group believes everyone has the right to be safe from abuse and protected from harm. We are committed to safeguard children and adults who are at risk of harm. We published a safeguarding strategy this year detailing our commitment and how we are going to deliver our vision of safeguarding our patients at 'Every age and at every stage'.

Performance highlights

Learning from incidents and reviews promotes patient safety and supports practice excellence. We regularly review our training offer and deliver in-house training to ensure learning is embedded and having a positive impact. This is demonstrated by rising safeguarding training compliance, increased calls to the Safeguarding Team for advice, and evidence that staff are making effective referrals.

Listening to our staff

We carried out a 360° survey in November 2024 to ask staff how we can improve our safeguarding functions and adjusted our training and safeguarding supervision as a result.

IT AND AI

Our IT and artificial intelligence (AI) teams support the services we provide to make the best use of new and emerging technologies. The team works across the North East London healthcare system and with relevant commercial partners.

Performance highlights

Developing a new AI model

The team began developing the Scribe large language model (LLM) in February 2025. Scribe can help to dictate notes of patient consultations. It is currently being tested at Tower Hamlets UTC and being evaluated for effectiveness by a lead GP.

Providing support to a system partner

We partnered with HN (Health Navigator) to manage their system access and support. HN identifies people in North East London (NEL) likely to experience extended hospital stays and offers them clinical coaching. This then reduces risk of hospital admissions.

Using ambient AI in GP practices

In February 2025, the Care Group was selected by NEL Integrated Care Board (ICB) to conduct an evaluation on ambient AI use in NEL practices. Forty practices agreed to take part in a pilot of an AI tool. The tool works discreetly listening to GP-patient conversations and creates structured clinical notes in line with normal clinical governance and permissions.

Our team will conclude its analysis in 2026, allowing the ICB to take an informed, evidence-based decision about the value of the tool for General Practice.

SOCIAL VALUE

The Care Group laid the foundations for much of its longer term sustainability work during 2024/25. The internal Green Working Group was created and meets monthly to plan green initiatives.

Performance highlights

Promoting environmental sustainability

Net zero commitments were made in line with the North East London (NEL) Green Plan 2022-25, in our initial Green Working Plan, published September 2024. Actions included:

- Net zero training from the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals completed by two staff members. This led to the development of an internal Carbon Reduction Plan.
- Participation in co-production workshops for the renewed NEL Green Plan.
- Green energy purchased for our Island Health headquarters.

Charitable partnerships

We hosted a charity quiz night, raising over £200 in vital funds for local charity, Neighbours in Poplar.

Enabling healthier communities

We continued to support the Cycle Sisters charity throughout 2024/25, helping more Muslim women to get fit and connect with others through cycling, with 220 taking part in a cycling challenge in February 2025.

Training & development opportunities for residents

We facilitated 16 work placements in primary care for young residents.

Attended multiple school fairs to promote healthcare careers, engaging with around 750 people.

Offered fully funded maths and English GCSE places for people in Tower Hamlets.

Buy local

We intentionally purchase services from local providers wherever possible. This year we have started work on our buy local programme to ensure that we have even greater impact with every pound that we spend locally.





OUR WORKFORCE



People Services

The People Services team delivers operational workforce support that strengthens governance, ensures system resilience and enables the organisation to meet its staffing and workforce requirements.

Performance highlights

Effective leadership: Regular training for managers and supervisors to effectively support their teams on topics such as safer recruitment and managing performance.

Digitisation: Most operational HR processes are now digitised. We have also moved professional registration and DBS compliance to the ESR workforce system.

Recruitment and onboarding: Recruitment processes have been streamlined so that, on average, the period between job offer and confirmed start date was just over three weeks.

Employee Benefits brochure: The brochure brings together our full benefits offer, covering wellbeing, professional development, lifestyle savings, and tax-efficient schemes.

Payslips: 100% of payslips were provided online from May 2024. This is more secure, efficient, saves money and is better environmentally.

Pay policy: We launched our new pay policy and consolidated our four pay structures in March 2025.

Health and Wellbeing

As a provider of health services, the Care Group knows that the health and wellbeing of our staff is central to our ability to do our jobs well. We developed a new approach to our wellbeing programme in autumn 2024, with monthly themes on areas such as mindfulness and fitness.

Performance highlights

Broadening access: We ensured all teams could access wellbeing support. We ran health and wellbeing surgeries at our offices and clinical sites, with drop-in advice and wellbeing resources on offer.

Health and wellbeing days were delivered in April and October for staff and colleagues from across the local healthcare system, attended by over 130 people, with a 95% satisfaction rate.

Mental Health First Aiders: Eight new MHFAiders were trained during 2024/25, growing the network to 15 across the organisation.

“The practical tips were excellent.”
Mindfulness workshop participant

People Development

Our People Development function was created in July 2024 to support the learning needs of staff across the organisation.

Performance highlights

Handling Patient Relations: This practical workshop supports staff to de-escalate conflict, communicate effectively, and protect their wellbeing. We delivered three workshops to 36 participants during the year.

Leadership and management: The team developed and delivered a new training programme for leaders and managers. Called Elevate Core, it provides team and service leads with the knowledge and skills to manage people effectively. All 20 participants reported they were confident in applying the tools and approaches in their daily roles.

Our plans for next year include an exciting new online learning management system.

“Elevate Core gave me the confidence to apply new leadership techniques directly in my service.”
Elevate Core participant



TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Delivering excellent training and education experiences is a core part of our offer, both to healthcare professionals in Tower Hamlets and beyond, to residents and colleagues in other sectors too.

NEL Training Hub

In November 2024, the Care Group was awarded responsibility for the North East London (NEL) Training Hub, delivered in partnership with Community Matters. The Training Hub quickly set up a website and a weekly newsletter to reach colleagues with vital events and programme information.

The NEL Training Hub has delivered a wide range of training webinars and strengthened the number of primary care learning environments across the patch. In addition, the Training Hub supported pan-London programmes for GPs and launched wellbeing and work experience programmes.

Care Group Training Unit

Separate from NEL Training Hub is the Care Group's in-house Training Unit, which offers a range of training services to Primary Care and other healthcare and public sector organisations.

The Training Unit supports a work experience programme to help kick-start the careers of talented local people. Sixteen completed the programme, with the vast majority reporting an increased interest in healthcare careers. In addition, we engaged with around 750 young people through careers fairs.

The **Making Every Contact Count** training was a new initiative delivered in 2024/25 which helps to reduce social isolation, which is a key factor in health inequalities.

The Protected Learning Time programme continued to be delivered to Tower Hamlets Primary Care, with over 2000 places filled in the programme during 2024/25.

Facts and stats

- Over **40 staff** forums were facilitated with over **1500 primary care staff**
- **Eight local staff** trained to deliver ear acupuncture services.
- Delivery of a Foundational Motivational Interviewing Programme in Sri Lanka with **27 participants** in January 2025
- Consistently over **95% satisfaction rating** across programme delivery
- **30 additional staff** have been paired with a coach or mentor.
- Training accessed by **over 15,000 people** from the workforce community.

FINANCE

The Care Group has maintained stability in 2025. Economic challenges, such as inflation and wage pressures, have had an impact on the financial margin. We remained focused on securing financial resilience and maintaining high-quality service delivery along with performance improvements and developments.

The organisation's performance in 2024/2025 shows declines in profitability and efficiency, with negative earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT), return on capital employed (ROCE), and operating cash flow. However, there has been an improvement in liquidity, as reflected in higher working capital and increased investment in staff.

Revenue -

£44 Million

(8% increase)

Revenue growth against earnings



Service developments

During 2024/25, the Care Group continued to deliver on its mission to improve the health and wellbeing of residents through high-quality, innovative and inclusive community and primary care. We are focusing on service redesign, pathway integration, and digital innovation to meet demand more efficiently, while continuing to advocate for sustainable funding models that reflect the complexity of population health needs.



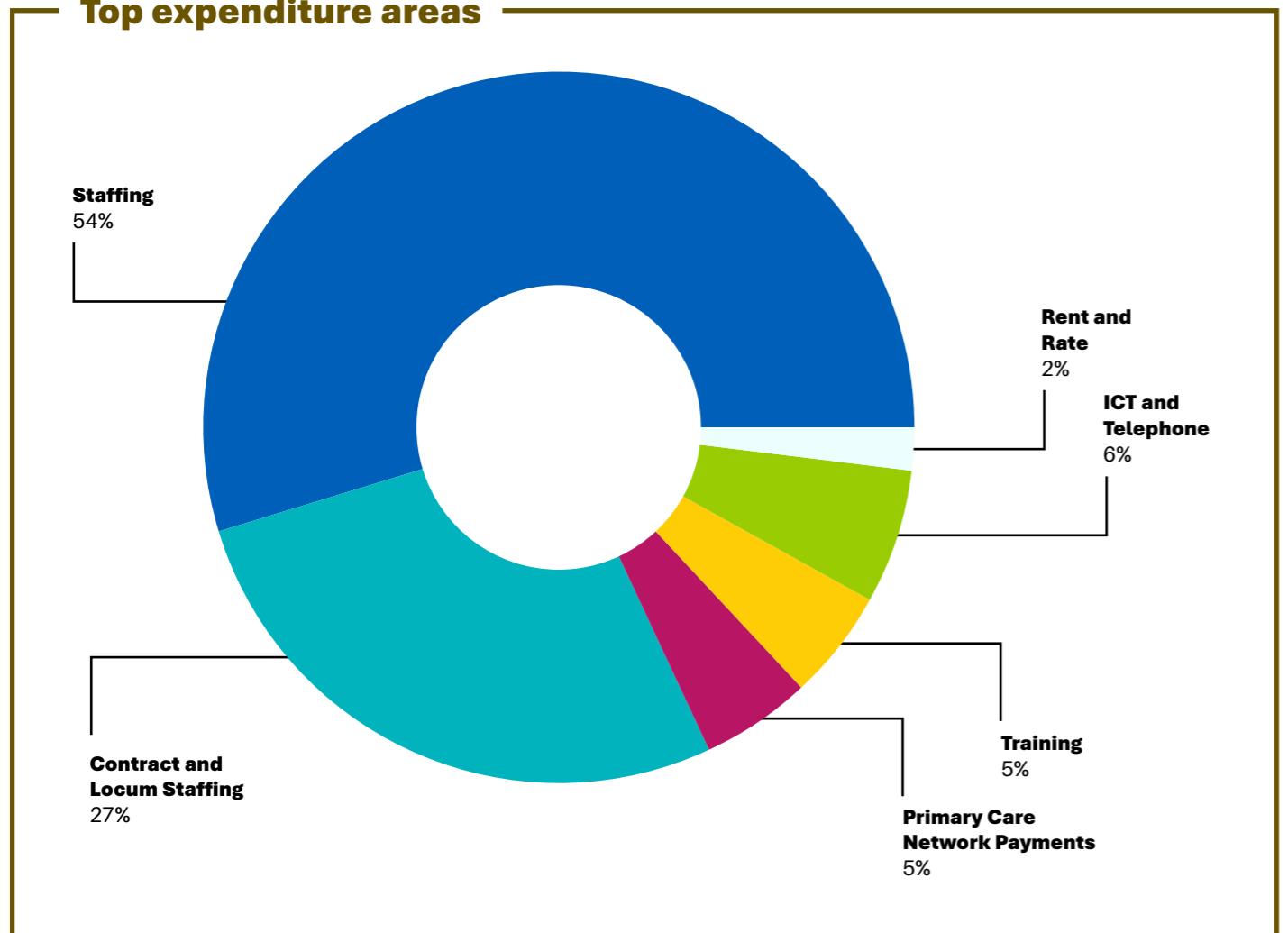
Spend Profile - £44.6 Million (8% increase)

Due to the nature of our services, over half of our expenditure relates to staffing costs (see expenditure chart below). Contract and locum staffing spend relates to GP expenditure and Community nursing. We continue to invest in ICT, enhancing the use of Office 365 across our workforce. Non-pay items span across the normal categories, such as insurance, printing, professional fees and furniture.

Going concern

The Board of Directors is required to assess the Care Group's ability to remain trading for at least the next 12 months. The test for going concern was undertaken and the Board's assessment shows that the Care Group can sustain the impact of significant prudent assumptions and continue to operate beyond a 12-month period.

Top expenditure areas



Financial results

MKS LLP, our External Auditors, [have issued an unqualified audit opinion on the individual financial statements]. They have confirmed that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the companies' affairs and there are no issues to report in respect of going concern.

These 2024/25 accounts are to be filed in January 2026

1. Annual Revenue of £44 million
1. Average number of employees: 683.

A version of the full set of accounts will be available at Companies House from February 2026.



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