

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2025

Report Author: Andrew Clayton, Partnership Governance Lead BLMK ICB

Report Approved by:

Sarah Hughes, Non-Executive Member
Ruth Bailey, Non-Executive Member
Dr Fiona Head, Executive Clinical Director Utilisation Management (Medical Director)
Louis Kamfer, Executive Director of Strategy, Planning and Evaluation
Sarah Stanley, Executive Clinical Director Total Quality Management

Report to the: Boards in Public

Item 12.2 Appendix B: Utilisation Management and Quality Improvement Committee (UMQIC)
Chair's Alert, Advise and Assure Report

Committee: Utilisation Management & Quality Improvement Committee 14 November 2025: Joint Meeting between NHS Cambridge & Peterborough (C&P) ICB and NHS Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes (BLMK) meeting in Common with the Hertfordshire & West Essex (H&WE) ICB System Transformation and Quality Improvement Committee (STQIC)

Relevant ICB: All ICBs

Recommendation: The Board is asked to:

- **Note** the report.

Agenda items covered:
• Governance and Terms of Reference • Risk Reports • Integrated Quality and Performance Reports • Commissioning Intentions 2026 – 2031 and Strategic Planning • Annual Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Report (HWE) • Continuing Healthcare Report (HWE) • Portfolio Report (BLMK)
ALERT: Matters that need the Board's attention or action, e.g. an area of non-compliance, safety or a threat to the ICS strategy
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ADVISE: The Board of areas subject to on-going monitoring or development or where there is insufficient assurance
• Valproate Prescribing. Assurance has been received from 12 of the 14 provider trusts across the ICBs in respect of the requirement for two specialist signatures to approve

prescription to patients where appropriate, in compliance with the National Patient Safety Alert. This presents a significant risk to a small number of patients. Assurances are outstanding from NW Anglia NHS Foundation Trust and Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Action to remedy non-compliance will be taken through the contractual route and will be monitored by the Committee.

- Paediatric Audiology Screening. Levels of diagnosis are below those predicted and further review has identified capacity problems across all ICBs. This is a national concern and the “Kingdom Review of Children’s Hearing Services,” was recently commissioned to consider the response of NHS England to service failures and to make recommendations for action. The Review issued its Final Report on 10 November 2025. This service will continue to be monitored by the Committee as a priority, and work will be undertaken on the risk profiling to support oversight. The Committee has requested that a consolidated ICB report be brought to its next meeting in January 2026.
- The Committee discussed the importance of patient voice in the new governance arrangements for Central East. Patient representatives had shared that they wanted two-way feedback where they could both hear from ICB staff as well as challenge on behalf of patients; they wanted co-production so they could bring the patient voice and experience to strategic developments, pathway re-design and service reconfigurations and they wanted to be empowered to support the work and priorities of the ICB. The Committee agreed that there needed to be clarity about how patient voice would be incorporated into the governance structures and work of Central East ICB and sought assurance on how this would be achieved.
- Maternity services at Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust remain a concern, but action is being taken, including regional support, and an agreed improvement approach has been developed. The Committee will monitor this situation on a priority basis
- The Committee noted that the workforce was facing significant challenges, including for example the forthcoming staff consultation and ongoing industrial action, and sought assurance from the Board that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that these challenges are monitored and considered appropriately within the new governance framework.
- We continue to see long wait times for paediatric community services across HWE, including neurodevelopmental services. Following discussion between ICB and providers, the Central East cluster has commenced a review of current HWE contracts and specifications for commissioned community services, a waiting list review and development of options for a sustainable new model of care or service reconfiguration. The work is being undertaken collaboratively and the outputs will be shared with UM&QI committee for discussion on next steps.

ASSURE: Inform the Board where positive assurance has been received

- Ongoing monitoring and management of Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) Winter Planning performance and risk will be provided by the Management Executive over the Winter period to ensure that appropriate actions and mitigation are employed as required. A report will be brought to the Committee in January 2026.
- Across the three ICBs there are important areas of consistent successful performance, including Referral to Treatment (RTT) and primary care experience. Other areas are more challenging and will be considered by the Committee going forward.

RISK: Advise the Board which risks were discussed and any new risks identified

- Discussion on risk and reporting methodologies across the three ICBs were considered at the meeting, with a view to aligning reporting at future meetings, whilst recognising that each ICB remained a sovereign statutory organisation and priorities will vary accordingly until a single organisation is established in April 2026.
 - Specific risks discussed at the meeting included the following:
 - Industrial Action

- Urgent and Emergency Care/Winter Planning
- Workforce, including in the context of ongoing staff consultation.
- Hospital Flow/admissions and discharge (physical and mental health)
- Continuing Healthcare demand and performance

CELEBRATING SUCCESS: Share any practice, innovation or action that the Committee considers to be outstanding

- Staff from across the three ICBs are working well together to ensure that the Committee has oversight of matters within its remit, for example in risk and performance reporting and operational planning. The meeting provided further guidance to support integration to ensure that the Committee can continue to provide the Board with the assurance it requires going forward.

Forward plan issues:

- This was a productive first meeting of the Committee, and time was allowed for it to consider its future role to ensure that it can provide efficient and effective oversight and assurance of utilisation management and quality improvement work to the Board. This consideration will continue at the next meeting in January 2026. Further work is required on reporting mechanisms to the Committee, and the Terms of Reference will be kept under review.

Date and time of next meeting:

Friday, 23 January 2026 at 10am

List of appendices

Nil

Background reading

Nil