



# Working together...

## during the covid19 pandemic

How NHS and independent sector partnerships are ensuring patients get the care they need during covid19



# Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Working together... during the covid19 pandemic</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Working together... to deliver urgent NHS care</b>	<b>5</b>
Aspen Healthcare: Parkside and Highgate Hospitals and NHS London Hospitals	6
BMI The Park Hospital and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust	7
Bupa Cromwell Hospital and the Royal Marsden Cancer Hub	8
Care UK Peninsula NHS Treatment Centre and University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust	9
Circle Bath Hospital and Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH)	10
Cleveland Clinic - sharing international best practice around covid19	11
HCA Healthcare UK - supporting the NHS deliver cancer, cardiac and urgent care	12
Horder Healthcare's The McIndoe Centre and Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH)	13
St John & St Elizabeth Hospital and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust	14
KIMS Hospital - supporting the NHS in Kent	15
King Edward VII's Hospital and Imperial College NHS Trust	16
NES Healthcare - Resident Medical Officers (RMOs) working in conjunction with the NHS	17
Nuffield Health's Plymouth Hospital and University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust Derriford NHS Hospital	18
Phoenix Hospital Group and Mid Essex NHS Trust	19
Ramsay Blakelands Hospital and Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS FT	20
Schoen Clinic – supporting the NHS Nightingale Hospital	21
Spire Southampton & University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust	22
Transform Hospital Group, NHS Worcester Health and Care Trust & University Hospital Birmingham	23
18 Week Support and Medway NHS Trust	24
Vanguard - providing additional infrastructure and ventilators to the NHS	25

<b>Working together... to deliver care in the community</b>	<b>26</b>
Capita and Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust	27
Care UK - NHS Buckinghamshire MSK Integrated Care Service	28
Connect Health - providing innovative virtual student placements	29
Diagnostic Healthcare - ultrasound services for urgent and DVT patients	30
HealthHarmonie - supporting ophthalmology patients in Birmingham	31
HomeLink Healthcare - supporting NHS Hospitals in Norfolk	32
InHealth - repurposing community facilities to support the NHS	33
LivingCare - supporting endoscopy patients in Yorkshire	34
Newmedica - supporting the NHS in Teesside	35
OneMedical Group - supporting the NHS with urgent care	36
Operose Health - delivering community eye care in Worcester	37
Virgin Care - providing innovative online consultations for the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service	38
<b>Working together... to deliver diagnostics care</b>	<b>39</b>
Alliance Medical	40
InHealth	40
<b>Working together... to support covid19 patients</b>	<b>41</b>
Operose Health - providing "hot sites" for covid19 patients	41
Trust Plus and London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	42
<b>Working together... with the NHS in Wales</b>	<b>43</b>
Spire Cardiff and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board	43
HMT Sancta Maria Hospital and Swansea Bay University Health Board	44
BMI Werndale Hospital	44
<b>Next steps</b>	<b>45</b>

# Working together...

## during the covid19 pandemic

The covid19 pandemic has placed unprecedented strain on the health service and all providers across the healthcare system have truly stepped up to ensure that patients can get the care they need.

Since its inception in 1948, the NHS has always been a partnership between publicly-owned providers and independent organisations - including GPs, pharmacies, charities, and social enterprises and the independent sector - all of whom are committed to delivering high quality care to NHS patients, free at the point of use. And as the NHS was confronted with dealing with covid19, undoubtedly the biggest challenge in history, these partnerships have strengthened and renewed, with independent providers across the acute, diagnostic, primary and community sector - including those who had traditionally only delivered privately funded care - stepping up and supporting the NHS and ensure that patient treatment can continue as much as is possible.

Now that we are, thankfully, beginning to move beyond the initial peak of the pandemic, we want to take this opportunity to highlight some of the outstanding partnership working where providers and their staff from across the independent sector and NHS have worked beyond their traditional organisational boundaries and gone above and beyond to ensure both covid19 and non-covid patients get the best possible care.

# Working together...

## to deliver urgent NHS care

As part of their work to free up an additional 30 000 extra hospital beds to deal with the covid19 pandemic, at the end of March 2020, NHS England announced a partnership agreement which resulted in almost 30 independent hospital groups (representing around 200 individual sites) being effectively block-booked. These resources are to be deployed as the NHS sees fit in treating both covid19 patients and those needing urgent NHS treatment, and crucially to provide "buffer capacity" to be used during any surges in the virus. This includes the almost 8,000 hospital beds, 1200 ventilators, and more than 10,000 nurses, 700 doctors and 8,000 other clinical staff in the independent hospital sector, which have been made available to the NHS "at cost" meaning no profit will be made. The agreement began at the end of March for an initial 14 week period but the sector have committed to supporting the NHS for as long as is required.

As a result of this partnership, hundreds of thousands of NHS patients have been able to access treatment for cancer and other urgent needs that they would not have been able to otherwise due to NHS hospitals being deployed for covid19 related treatment.

Here are just some of the examples of where independent hospitals have worked together with their NHS counterparts for the benefit of patients.



## Aspen Healthcare: Parkside and Highgate Hospitals and NHS London Hospitals

Parkside Private Hospital, located in Wimbledon, is part of the Aspen Healthcare Group and has been supporting St George's Hospital during the covid19 pandemic to ensure that patients require time critical surgery they need. The hospital is being used as a step-down facility for ambulatory trauma cases, plastics and diagnostics for St George's Hospital. Pre-screening assessments for admissions including chest



x-ray, blood tests and swabs which have been carried out on a timely basis, allowing for a seamless referral pathway. Parkside Private Hospital is also supporting Kingston NHS Trust, treating paediatric dental cases and carrying out diagnostics CT scans and has released 7 of their anaesthetic ventilator machines to the NHS South West London Elective Orthopaedic Centre in Epsom, which is earmarked as a Covid-Centre. 40 clinical and non-clinical staff from Parkside have also volunteered to support the Nightingale Hospital.

Highgate Private Hospital in North London, also part of Aspen Healthcare, has been working closely with Whittington Health NHS Trust to care for patients during covid19. Highgate's Hospital Director and Matron quickly established effective communications with senior Whittington Trust colleagues with the creation of IT links between the two hospitals to enable Highgate Hospital beds to be set up as one of the Whittington's 'wards' on their Patient Administration System portal, allowing post-operative orthopaedic patients being admitted to Highgate. Daily outpatient space has also been created for immune-suppressed patients to receive biological infusions, as well as a regular Parkinson's Clinics and Falls Clinic. Highgate have also sent 30 clinical staff to work on the Whittington wards to help care for frail elderly patients, many of whom have tested positive to covid19. This is a very different workload compared to the elective surgical work their clinical staff are used to, but they rolled up their sleeves to nurse these patients, even creating a WhatsApp Group entitled 'HIGHWHITT' to enable key individuals from both sites to communicate with each other regularly about shift patterns, training, challenges and solutions.

Over  
**1500**  
diagnostic tests  
carried out

## BMI The Park Hospital and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

BMI The Park Hospital transformed into a specialist cancer centre over the course of a weekend and has now treated around half of Nottingham's total of 700 cancer patients who needed surgery during the covid19 pandemic, working as an extension of Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH).

BMI The Park Hospital has adapted its high-dependency unit (HDU) capacity in order to provide full support to the NHS, transforming a recovery suite to an expanded HDU and thus increasing beds from an original five to 12 in order to accommodate patients with the most complex needs in Nottingham. Up to 20 operations have been completed every day, including operations for people with breast cancer, kidney cancer, liver cancer, pancreatic cancer, throat cancer, thyroid cancer and bowel cancer.

The increased HDU capacity at The Park has enabled NUH to allocate its own HDU capacity to treating covid19 patients, also leading to a geographical separation to shield cancer patients from Covid patients.

**Cancer lead for Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust Mr James Catton said:**

**"We need HDU beds in order to provide surgery for the most complex cases. We already had HDU expertise, but the limiting factor was the number of HDU beds. Over the course of a weekend - on Friday it was a recovery ward and on Monday it was an HDU - BMI The Park was turned into a cancer hospital. That foresight, the willingness to change, the established HDU expertise and the supplement of junior staff, anaesthetic cover and NHS staff working alongside Park teams has allowed us to transform BMI The Park into arguably the largest HDU outside London, enabling us to work on the most complex cases."**

Up to  
**20**  
operations  
carried out every  
day

## Bupa Cromwell Hospital and the Royal Marsden Cancer Hub

Bupa Cromwell Hospital has been appointed by NHS England to support the Royal Marsden Cancer Hub to make sure cancer patients across the capital can still access urgent treatment.

To support this, the hospital brought forward the opening of its brand new 10-bed intensive care unit, which was due to be completed later this year. It was up and running at the end of March to help deliver critical care, while the former intensive care unit was repurposed into a high dependency unit.



The hospital has performed more than 500 time critical cancer surgeries including breast, urology, gynaecology, colorectal and endocrine surgery for patients from several London NHS trusts. In addition to cancer care, the hospital is also providing dialysis and medical step down care for NHS patients, and has delivered over 2,500 nights of care for NHS patients since the start of the covid19 pandemic.

**Medical Director at The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, Dr Nicholas van As, said:**

**“It has been incredible to see such collaboration across NHS and independent organisations in order to ensure that during the biggest crisis the NHS has ever faced, patients who need urgent cancer surgery can access it.**

**“Over a thousand patients from London and further afield have been able to have surgery so far thanks to our Cancer Hub alone, with many more benefitting from the models we helped set up across London and around the country.**

**“By having an overview of ICU bed capacity and surgical expertise, we can match each patient to the right team in the right location, whether at The Royal Marsden or at Bupa Cromwell. We look forward to working with Bupa Cromwell as we all move through recovery, and planning for peaks in demand on the other side of the pandemic.”**

## Care UK Peninsula NHS Treatment Centre and University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust

The team at Care UK’s Peninsula NHS Treatment Centre in Plymouth have completely repurposed their service to help in the response to covid19. Working with Universities Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust (UHP), the unit has gone from doing one core specialty to nine in the space of just weeks.

Since the end of March, the team at Peninsula have upskilled and adapted to take on patients for surgery in the areas of breast cancer, urgent urology, vascular, cancer plastics, ambulatory trauma for plastics, ambulatory trauma for orthopaedics, urgent ENT and urgent general surgery.

The hospital’s three operating theatres are working at 100% capacity five days a week, with procedures carried out by clinical and nursing teams from Peninsula, UHP and Nuffield. Between 30th March and 20th June they have carried out 595 surgical procedures and 1862 Outpatient Department appointments. The hospital’s Outpatient Department team is carrying out pre-assessment clinics and covid19 swabbing for all patients coming to Peninsula for care. The department is also accommodating plastics clinics, vascular ultrasound clinics, gynaecology clinics, occupational therapy and physiotherapy lumbar clinics.

Peninsula’s MRI facility is being used for NHS patients, and the hospital’s 30 beds are accommodating patients who require a post-operative stay and stepdown patients from local NHS Trusts.

**Kevin Baber, Chief Operating Officer at University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust said:**

**“The long and effective partnership we have enjoyed with the team at Peninsula NHS Treatment Centre has meant that they have been able to accurately interpret the treatment needs of our patients.**

**“We are impressed by how quickly, safely and efficiently the Peninsula team has mobilised to meet the challenge, switching from planned elective surgery to trauma and upskilling to take on specialties the hospital has never carried out before.**

**“All this while maintaining high levels of patient care and safety. We are confident that our patients are in good hands.”**

**3**  
**operating**  
**theatres**  
working at 100% capacity  
five days a week

## Circle Bath Hospital and Royal United Hospitals Bath (RUH)

50  
NHS staff  
transferred

To support the NHS during the pandemic, Circle Bath Hospital was transformed into a cancer treatment hospital. After close collaboration with NHS colleagues at RUH, vital oncology and haematology services were transferred in the space of just two weeks. To make this happen, dozens of NHS computers and telephones were installed, over 50 NHS colleagues were welcomed and inducted, and wards were completely transformed ready for new services.

In addition, the hospital welcomed staff and patients from Yeovil District Hospital to provide urgent oncology services, and capacity was increased in radiology services to help meet demand. The team also supported with trauma surgery for hand, wrist and knee

procedures, along with urgent ENT cancer surgery. Staff previously working in administrative and office-based jobs volunteered to take on cleaning, catering and healthcare assistant roles to help meet increased demand. Up until the end of May 2020, over 1000 NHS day case oncology patients were seen at Circle Bath Hospital to support NHS colleagues during the pandemic.

**Caroline Gilleece, RUH Matron for Haematology/Oncology and Lead Cancer Nurse, said:**

**“In the first week of April it was agreed that Circle Bath and Royal United Hospital work collaboratively to provide a safe environment for oncology / haematology in-patients and day care services at Circle Bath. This resulted in a great deal of hard work in planning and reorganisation to facilitate the relocation of services and make them operational at Circle Bath. For some, this was developing or amending standard operating procedures, adapting to a new way of working and environment. For others it was changing working hours, getting to grips with new equipment, IT systems and processes together with learning and developing knowledge and skills to enable safe and effective care for a group of patients whose care needs and requirements had previously been unfamiliar to you. In addition, you received new teams of staff who you made feel very welcome!**

**“On behalf of the Oncology / Haematology team I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Jenny, Lesley, Andrew, Claire and all the nursing team, Diana, pharmacists, receptionists, hostesses, catering teams, portering and maintenance. You all contributed to providing safe care to our patients and providing many fond memories for all our staff.”**

## Cleveland Clinic - sharing international best practice around covid19

More  
than  
30  
doctors, nurses  
and caregivers  
supporting the  
NHS

Globally, Cleveland Clinic has been sharing covid19 knowledge and best practices on PPE, testing, workforce education and research. Whilst Cleveland Clinic London has not yet opened the doors to its facilities, it has also made a positive impact in the fight against the pandemic, with more than 30 doctors, nurses and other caregivers supporting the NHS, their communities and colleagues.

London CEO Dr Brian Donley has led a series of webinars, with US and London leaders discussing the global picture, the UK's response and next steps in the pandemic. These have brought an international perspective from frontline experience in managing covid19 and researching the progression and treatment of the disease.

A number of Cleveland Clinic London's Institute Chairs meanwhile have been on the NHS frontline, running COVID wards and in one case donating blood plasma to help treat patients. The London Nursing team has also been actively supporting their NHS colleagues at this incredibly challenging time.

Other caregivers have sewn cotton masks for their teams, worked for medical advice hotlines in support of their local community, and supported the creation of the NHS' London Nightingale hospital.

**Dr Brian Donley, CEO, Cleveland Clinic London said:**

**“The covid19 pandemic has been a huge challenge for organisations all over the world. I am incredibly proud of the resilience, commitment and empathy that Cleveland Clinic London Caregivers have demonstrated in their dedication to the UK's health care response.**

**Many of our Caregivers immediately volunteered in NHS roles, and continue to be actively involved in fighting the pandemic. It's with immense pride that we have seen this united team of teams approach across the NHS and independent organisations, to ensure that patients receive the highest level of care at such a critical time.”**

## HCA Healthcare UK - supporting the NHS deliver cancer, cardiac and urgent care

HCA Healthcare UK is proud to be able to support the NHS in the national response to covid19. As part of their support HCA UK has made available over 800 beds, 1600 employed nurses, healthcare professionals and theatre practitioners, 77 ITU beds, 33 HDU beds and 38 theatres. HCA UK also provided vital equipment to the NHS included 29 ventilators, 17 anaesthetic machines, 108 syringe pumps and 20 volume infusion pumps and , 7 haemofiltration units. During this time, to ensure that care continues, they have partnered with leading NHS Trusts including; UCLH, Guy's and St Thomas', Kings, Royal Free, Imperial and Chelsea and Westminster, The Christie and University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust to provide care to treat the most urgent patients. HCA UK are part of NHS cancer hubs in London and Greater Manchester, and they are also part of the Pan-London and London Emergency Cardiac Service. As part their support to NHS patients they have performed over 2000 complex cancer surgeries, delivered over 200 NHS babies, and undertaken over 50 complex paediatric surgeries.



**Dr Majid Kazmi, Consultant Haematologist, Chief of Cancer Services at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and London Bridge Hospital and Deputy Medical Director at GSTT said:**

“We're able to treat high risk cancer patients in a safe environment where we can control who goes in and out of the building. .... A huge amount of logistical work is going on behind the scenes, but from a patient perspective we've made it as seamless as possible.”

Over  
**200**  
NHS babies  
delivered

## Horder Healthcare's The McIndoe Centre and Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH)

The McIndoe Centre in East Grinstead has been working in close coordination with the local Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH) to support the NHS through the covid19 crisis.

The McIndoe Centre, which specialises in plastic, reconstructive, ophthalmic and maxillofacial surgery, has helped provide capacity for QVH to become the regional cancer hub for breast, skin and head and neck cancers. An arrangement was made at the beginning of April for The McIndoe Centre, which is part of Horder Healthcare, to treat patients suffering from maxillofacial and plastics trauma.

A phased approach was implemented to reach the full service, which to date has seen over 350 theatre admissions, over 270 minor operations and over 350 outpatient follow ups. The McIndoe Centre is also treating urgent eye conditions.

Surgeries have been performed in The McIndoe Centre's theatres, with one theatre available 24 hours a day to ensure limb threatening injuries can be treated immediately. Minor operations have taken place in the treatment rooms on an outpatient basis. The medical and anaesthetic teams consist of QVH staff with theatre, ward and outpatient teams a combination of The McIndoe Centre and QVH staff working together. The capacity created by carrying out trauma surgery at the McIndoe Centre has allowed hundreds of patients from across Kent, Surrey and Sussex, who have been diagnosed with breast, skin or head and neck cancer, to receive vital cancer surgery at QVH.

**Steve Jenkin, Chief Executive of Queen Victoria Hospital, said:**

“Ensuring our patients continue to receive the high level of care they need and deserve, despite the pandemic, has driven us to rapidly mobilise and make use of the national contract to work with independent sector providers.

“Working with The McIndoe Centre has meant trauma patients can still come to our site in East Grinstead and be treated by our clinical team but in a different building, with additional measures in place to keep our patients and our staff safe.

“Such an arrangement is testament to the behind the scenes hard work of the QVH and The McIndoe Centre teams and is a positive example of how the NHS and private sector can work together.”



## St John & St Elizabeth Hospital and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

22  
staff  
volunteered

As part of the national response to the covid19 pandemic St John and St Elizabeth Hospital, based in North London, have been supporting their local NHS trust, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust by working in close partnership to provide care to local NHS patients.

Initially the Hospital provided support by receiving NHS step-down patients, offering them nursing care in individual rooms to aid them in their recovery and rehabilitation, with the arrangement helping to relieve the pressure off the NHS Trust to free up beds to treat covid19 patients. The Hospital also provided ventilators, syringe pumps and syringe drivers, and other essential equipment to support the effort.

Ambulances from St John's Hospice, the charitable Hospice as part of the St John and St Elizabeth Hospital, were used in many cases to transport step down patients from Imperial College and bring them to the Hospital.

More recently the Hospital has been supporting Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust by using their surgical theatre facilities to take on urgent time-critical surgical patients in a range of specialities from Trauma, Plastics and Orthopaedics, General and Gynae Surgery as well as supporting the renal team at Hammersmith with Peritoneal Dialysis Catheters.

The Hospital has also supported the effort with twenty two volunteers coming forward to support the NHS front-line at the Nightingale Hospital in London.

**Mrs Renee Cunane, a patient who was transferred from St Mary's Hospital to St Andrew's Ward at St John and St Elizabeth Hospital on the 6th May for step-down medical care, had this to say about her time at the Hospital:**

**"I really enjoyed my stay at St John and St Elizabeth Hospital, all the nurses have been very sweet and kind to me and the other staff I have met have all been very helpful."**

## KIMS Hospital - supporting the NHS in Kent

Over  
1500  
patients  
treated

To support the NHS as part of the Government's covid19 (CV-19) contingency planning, KIMS Hospital has played a significant role in Kent by working closely with three NHS Trusts; Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells (MTW), Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust, and Medway (MFT) to support patient care, including providing specialist clinical practitioners (ODPs) to support the care of CV-19 patients onsite in both MTW and MFT critical care units. KIMS Hospital itself has opened rapid access cancer outpatient and specialist cancer diagnostic clinics; run daily cancer surgical lists for gynae-oncology, urology and colorectal cancers; supported regular lists through the cardiac intervention suite, including rapid access chest pain clinic patients; managed a stroke rehab ward, working in close collaboration with the occupational therapists and physio teams from MTW who have been based at KIMS Hospital; and established eye-trauma outpatient and surgical service

Everyone across KIMS Hospital has worked closely together with the local NHS Trusts to ensure any administrative and clinical barriers were overcome and offer a safe service for patients. Their ODPs who left to work in the NHS all volunteered, and the team who remained have all stepped up to ensure continuity of safe service at KIMS Hospital. Over 1500 patients have been treated through these partnerships and KIMS Hospital will continue to work in the best interests of all patients in Kent.

**The CEO and MD from one of the local NHS Trusts said:**

**"By using your facilities, we have kept the gynae cancer pathway fully open throughout the pandemic, ensuring that patients have access to adequate diagnostics and treatments without delay. Relocating stroke rehabilitation to KIMS Hospital has provided effective protection and a fully 'green' pathway for some of our most vulnerable patients. Nosocomial infection would have a devastating impact in this patient group."**



## King Edward VII's Hospital and Imperial College NHS Trust

Over  
**500**  
NHS patients  
treated

King Edward VII's Hospital responded to the call from the NHS within 48 hours, turning over all resources in the fight against covid19 and admitting its first NHS patients on March 23rd, as the UK went into lockdown. From the outset, the hospital was committed to serving the NHS at pace, in any way it could.

Patients that required time critical cancer and benign surgery were able to access the treatment they needed as the hospital supported several London NHS trusts. The hospital also provided vital equipment to the NHS, including ventilators, to help treat seriously ill covid19 patients, and many staff from across the organisation volunteered to work at the Nightingale Hospital.

A particularly strong and successful partnership was forged between King Edward VII's Hospital and Imperial College NHS Trust. By committing all available resources with great speed and efficiency, the hospital's support has meant that over 500 NHS patients have accessed the treatment they urgently needed, and continue to do so.

**Nick Fox, Commercial Director of Imperial College NHS Trust said:**

**"The Independent sector providers have played a vital role in allowing the NHS Trust hospitals to tackle the covid19 pandemic. By providing pathways and capacity at incredibly short notice, it allowed the Trusts to focus on their key priorities of urgent and emergency care, and standing up significant increases to their critical care networks.**

**King Edward VII's Hospital have a long history of working with Imperial College and it's medical staff and could therefore stand up and help out very quickly, which was essential in the early days of the pandemic. From both a patient and a Trust perspective, working with King Edward VII's has been a huge success for all concerned."**

## NES Healthcare - Resident Medical Officers (RMOs) working in conjunction with the NHS

Hundreds  
of RMOs  
stepping up

Hundreds of RMOs have stepped up in the Covid crisis and have adapted as the hospitals to which they were assigned shifted their focus to assist the NHS, either with medical step-down patients, oncology care or directly with Covid patients themselves. Doctors primarily employed to manage post-surgical cases were suddenly confronted with different illnesses and comorbidities and were required to work alongside unfamiliar NHS consultants, SHOs and Registrars. NES doctors also worked on dedicated Covid wards in the NHS hospitals, providing additional cover to independent hospitals that were being heavily utilised by their local Trusts.

NES provided support, advice and clinical guidance to their doctors on managing all the categories of patient that they might encounter. One RMO called the NES clinical team for additional training with cancer surgery patients and following this the doctor received glowing accolades from the hospital team for the work they did. Another doctor that had only been working in the UK for 3 months and whose hospital suddenly took on many NHS geriatric patients for step down care ended up providing advice and guidance for the NHS doctors sent to work alongside her!

Like most frontline workers, NES Healthcare's RMOs have faced their own health issues. With a high proportion of employees from BAME backgrounds, we were conscious of the risks being highlighted and worked with hospital managers to secure PPE and Covid testing wherever possible.

## Nuffield Health's Plymouth Hospital and University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust Derriford NHS Hospital

Nuffield Health's Plymouth Hospital is one of 31 hospitals made available to NHS trusts across the UK by the UK's largest healthcare charity. This supports University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust and Derriford NHS Hospital by hosting its oncology department and treating NHS patients undergoing cancer treatment, freeing up capacity for the NHS Trust to care for people showing covid19 symptoms and shields vulnerable cancer patients during the pandemic.



The Trust's oncology department moved into the Nuffield Health Plymouth Hospital on Monday 6th April after an intensive, fast-paced relocation project. This saw Nuffield Health's Hospital set-up with the essential medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, IT network capabilities and clinical governance collaboration implemented to run the NHS oncology department safely and effectively for cancer patients.

Before the move took place, Nuffield Health's staff, both clinical and non-clinical, received essential oncology training within a week to ensure all staff were upskilled appropriately. The training was successfully achieved through a unique collaboration between Nuffield Health, UHP, Mustard Tree Macmillan Centre and St Luke's Hospice Plymouth.

**Sian Dennison, Head of Nursing Cancer and End of Life, and Sarah Flavell, Cluster Manager Oncology and Haematology, from University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust, said:**

**"In this current pandemic and a time of great challenge, anxiety and stress to patients and staff, it's with great pride we have watched teams of staff come together and united continue to deliver the best care and service to our patients. We have watched them smile, laugh and work incredibly hard to set this service up quickly and efficiently. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen from transport teams, porters, cleaners, to clinical and non-clinical teams across all providers."**

## Phoenix Hospital Group and Mid Essex NHS Trust

Over  
**3000**  
patients  
treated

Phoenix Hospital Group (PHG) includes two fully equipped outpatient and diagnostic centres at 9 Harley Street and 25 Harley Street and two elective surgical hospitals - the Weymouth Street Hospital and Phoenix Hospital Chelmsford. During covid19 the Phoenix Hospital Chelmsford have been working alongside the local Mid Essex NHS Trust to ensure that patients suffering with skin cancer conditions are still able to attend their urgent consultations and have the time critical surgery they need. As part of this initiative, the Trust have seconded medical and nursing teams to work collegiately alongside the Phoenix Hospital team and in 10 weeks, over 3400 patients have been consulted and treated.

**Mr Kevin Beaton, Medical Director at Mid Essex NHS Trust said:**

**"As we struggled in the Mid Essex Hospital Trust to work out how we could operate during the covid19 crisis, Phoenix Hospital Chelmsford has really stepped up to the plate for us. The ability to utilise their excellent facilities to continue with our essential urgent elective work has been invaluable. All the staff at Phoenix have been hugely supportive and the way the teams have come together to a common purpose has been an example of Team GB at its best."**



## Ramsay Blakelands Hospital and Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS FT



Ramsay Healthcare UK has been working in partnership with the NHS during covid19, making available over 1000 beds and 100 operating theatres across its 33 hospitals, with over 4000 urgent NHS referrals treated every month. In Milton Keynes, the teams from Ramsay's Blakelands Hospital and Milton Keynes University Hospital (MKUH) NHS FT have

successfully relocated the urgent breast cancer surgical pathway, including Sentinel Node, across to Blakelands Hospital. As a result, significant number of patients have been treated for a wide variety of complex breast surgery. The positive approach and partnership working between the teams has been recognised by the Trust CEO, impressed by Blakelands team eagerness to learn and develop to ensure an efficient and safe service.

**The leading Consultant Breast and Oncoplastic Surgeon from the MKUH team said:**

**“What a shining example of multidisciplinary team work, clinical drive with managerial facilitation and of course public and private sector collaboration! I just wanted to say how proud I am of all of us for making this happen at a difficult time for the whole hospital, when we faced losing the ability to treat some of our cancer patients altogether.”**

## Schoen Clinic - supporting the NHS Nightingale Hospital

The team at Schoen Clinic London have shown their agility and adaptability during covid19 and within days of being asked they had successfully repurposed their hospital to receive those patients from the NHS who had time critical spinal conditions. However the ever changing landscape brought about by the pandemic saw things change and develop rapidly over the next week. The team effectively recalibrated their services to support neighbouring hospitals including The Nightingale at Excel with the distribution of lifesaving equipment and vital staff resources. As the first independent hospital in London to send ventilators, other urgent equipment and key members of staff we also sent to hospitals in central London where they were most needed.



One member of staff specifically - Theatre Manager, Tom Shrubshall - was invited by UCL Partners to join the team coordinating training at The Nightingale. The ambitious challenge saw the need to ensure anyone working or volunteering at The Nightingale has an appropriate corporate and clinical induction. Training packages were created to upskill, whereby those with an ITU background needed limited upskilling, whereas personnel with a cabin crew background having greater training needs. The learners were graded in to work stream red, amber and green, based on the skill gap that needed support. Tom worked within the faculty, coordinating training content production and delivery. The training covered not just clinical and medical skills, but also psychological support to learners were mentally prepared on what to expect. Tracking learners progress was a mammoth task, with 400-500 learners being trained each day, by a faculty of 300 trainers. A ward simulation was used with hands on skills stations. Today, Schoen Clinic London and the team have once again reshaped and modified their hospital so they can safely receive and treat patients from their neighbouring NHS hospitals as part of the orthopaedic services for NHS England.

## Spire Southampton & University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

A landmark agreement between University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) and Spire Healthcare has enabled hundreds of patients with cancer to receive urgent treatment at Spire's Southampton hospital, allowing UHS to focus on caring for people with covid19. Spire Southampton has been working with staff at UHS to transfer Oncology and Haematology services to Spire. Since mid-March, more than 2500 NHS cancer patients have been treated at the hospital, and around 100 patients are now receiving care every day.



Patients with the following cancers are receiving urgent surgery with the intention of providing a COVID-free environment at Spire Southampton: Gynaecological; Neurological; Ear, nose and throat; Gastrointestinal / colorectal; Urology. In addition, Spire Southampton is supporting time-critical Cardiac and Lung surgery for NHS patients. The work is highly complex and over 70% of the patients requiring surgery need to be treated in Spire Southampton's Critical Care Unit.

**Paul Grundy, Consultant Neurosurgeon and Acting Medical Director at UHS, said:**

**"It became very apparent early on we would not be able to deliver all of the urgent procedures patients required at a time when we were building up to high volumes of patients with covid19 infection. We've been very fortunate in Southampton that we have excellent relationships with our independent sector partners including Spire and that has seen them work very dynamically with us to enable new surgical lists and services at different sites in different locations very quickly.**

**"With Spire in particular we have been very lucky in that they have been able to deliver surgery of high degrees of complexity with six theatres running at this site alone and, without that support, we would not have been able to provide really important clinical work through this challenging period."**

## Transform Hospital Group, NHS Worcester Health and Care Trust & University Hospital Birmingham

Transform Group's Dolan Park Hospital has been proud to partner with the NHS in response to the covid19 pandemic and has completely repurposed its services to help and support the NHS. Dolan Park Hospital provided their ventilator capacity, in excess of their own current requirements, to the NHS for use in the Midlands and North West regions to support management of the infection peak. They also partnered with NHS Worcester Health and Care Trust (WHCT) to take patients from their acute service who would ordinarily have been transferred to a community hospital once medically fit for discharge from the acute setting.

Together with its NHS colleagues, Dolan Park worked to re-purpose the hospital in a matter of days at the beginning of the pandemic to enable the facility to be ready, ensuring that pressure relief mattresses, mobility aids and aids to assist with daily living activities were available to enable patient comfort and safe rehabilitation. In just two weeks, Dolan Park's nursing and ancillary support team accessed essential training using key resources including e-learning for health, as well as engaging with training provided by their WHCT colleagues and experts which included modules on infection prevention and control, use of PPE and care of frail, elderly and end of life care patients.

Dolan Park has been able to offer patients nursing care and accommodation in single rooms, supporting social/physical distancing guidelines at all times. The team has adopted a collaborative approach to adapt to new working processes, with a focus on fast-paced consolidation of learning and cultural change displayed throughout the workforce.

With its NHS medical patients now safely discharged, Dolan Park has been repurposed to become a 'cold site' to accommodate NHS urgent and elective surgical procedures, including cancer surgery, through its collaboration with the plastic surgeons from University Hospital Birmingham. Transform Hospital Group is now working with the Oral Maxillofacial and Orthopaedic surgeons from Worcester Acute Hospital Trust, as well as UHB, to offer general and local anaesthetic procedures.



## 18 Week Support and Medway NHS Trust

Medway NHS Foundation is a single-site hospital based in Gillingham, Medway Maritime Hospital, which serves a population of more than 424,000 across Medway and Swale. Demand for endoscopy services was challenged prior to covid19, with 814 patients waiting to be treated and during the covid19 outbreak the waiting was growing by 60+ patients per week. Medway NHSFT and 18 Week Support had an established working relationship prior to covid19 and following the pandemic a new and innovative partnership with 18 Week Support to provide the clinical staffing and Care UK to provide 'clean' endoscopy facilities in a separate location was created, allowing all to work closely together to address the rising backlog and minimise risk of cross infection by covid19. The partnership enabled each team to provide the different elements needed to build a successful system. From 15th April until 7th May, 38 Endoscopy sessions took place with 159 Patients Treated.

**Paula Tinniswood, Medway NHS Foundation Trust**

**“At the onset of Covid, Medway Foundation Trust was already working collaboratively with 18 Weeks Support and the Will Adams Treatment Centre (Care UK), to manage significant referrals for endoscopy. With the abrupt cessation of all but very urgent endoscopic diagnostics across the NHS, Medway Leadership decided to explore the feasibility of continuing the existing partnership arrangements, which would support patient care at a cold site location. Robust clinical governance was developed by Dr Matt Banks and the Upper and Lower GI consultants at MFT. In the spirit of true partnership working, all Stakeholders were asked to sign and authorise the pathway, which included Covid Swabbing, PPE usage and triage against criteria. Ultimately, this approach ensured that Medway patients, who were on 2ww Cancer pathways, continued to be seen in a safe manner.”**



## Vanguard - providing additional infrastructure and ventilators to the NHS

At the start of the covid19 pandemic, Vanguard Healthcare Solutions, which specialises in delivering mobile clinical infrastructure, identified a number of their ventilators that were not routinely used. These were then serviced and certified by their managed equipment services partner, Avensys, with 17 ventilators in total donated to NHS Liverpool, Norwich & Norfolk, and NHS Cornwall.

Elsewhere, Vanguard have repurposed a number of their operating theatres to increase COVID observation and HDU beds for the NHS, for trauma and urgent surgery, for a delivery suite, and for plastics work all across the country including Surrey & Sussex, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals and Wythenshawe Hospital. Where staff have not been required to work as normal for planned care, they have also been redeployed to support hospitals with their COVID response. A modular 18-bed ward was also installed at Kettering General Hospital just five weeks from the decision being made.



# Working together...

## to deliver care in the community

In responding to the covid19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, independent primary and community providers - who make up a significant proportion of providers in this sector - have quickly adapted during this time to ensure patients can continue to receive treatment in a safe and timely way. This includes switching from face-to-face to virtual consultations in repurposing their services to help support the NHS as "hot" or "cold" sites.

## Capita and Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Over  
**1000**  
testing devices  
deployed

### Capita have supported the NHS in a number of different areas throughout the covid19 pandemic including:

- Expanding the workforce: Onboarding and vetting, including standing up 200 staff in 24hrs, to process 20,000 nurse returners to the NHS; reinstating retired/ returning GPs on to the Performer List, and supporting 91 Capita healthcare professionals applying to return to the NHS
- Managing and co-ordinating: Scheduling, management services and technologies for staff and volunteers, including Workforce Management solutions to ISS at the Nightingale Hospital in London
- Rapid technology enablement services including deploying a remote working solution for GP remote access to Clinical Systems in Birmingham for 150 surgeries to date, and the same solution to 200 London 111 users.
- Provision of existing and new digital applications and technologies including updating and adding to the national clinical triage system Capita deliver for NHS Wales, mass SMS to vulnerable people in Scotland, and reminders re 7th and 14th Day isolation rule via NHS 111
- FERA testing facilities supporting the National Testing Programme, working with PHE, DHSC and Defra/ APHA to provide equipment and lab staff

Capita also supported Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) to organise the first Covid19 testing drive-through in the community healthcare sector, assisted with the rapid response to set up bedded areas (within 48 hrs), organised deep cleans across multiple sites, set up 'hot' and 'cold' sites to control contamination. Capita also rapidly opened and closed sites as needed over a weekend, and supported co-ordination and distribution of PPE equipment, as well as accelerating deployment of over 1000 devices, along with Teams on an NHS platform, and rolled out video conferencing.

#### Elizabeth Hale, Director of Improvement in CLCH added:

**"The partnership is playing a significant role in enabling us to respond to the current crisis" and the Trust IT Director offered particular praise for the work done by a key member of Capita's IT team to support them."**

## Care UK - NHS Buckinghamshire MSK Integrated Care Service

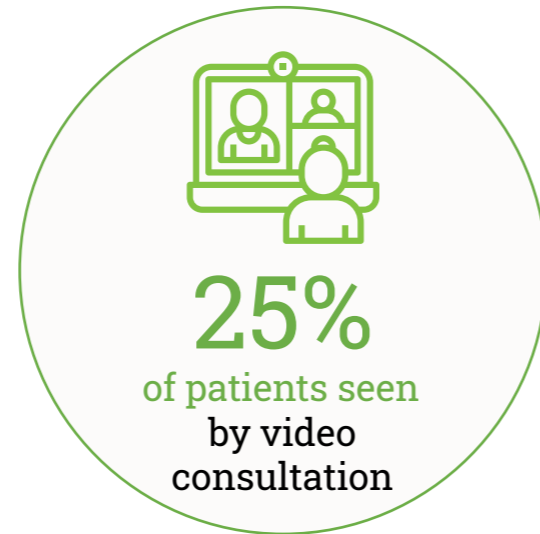
Prior to COVID 19, only a very small part of Care UK's Buckinghamshire MSK services were delivered over the telephone (namely diagnostic results) and all assessments and treatments were 100% face-to-face. Since the end of March, the service has been receiving approximately 350 referrals per week and staff have been using telemedicine to support these new patient referrals, as well as a similar number of telemedicine appointments per week for follow-ups. This means that only patients who absolutely require a face-to-face appointment are invited in for this.

Of the new patients seen, circa 25% were treated by video consultation whereby clinicians can share their screen with the patient if they want to talk the through MRI or X-ray results and show the patient their images. Video consultation enables the clinician to 'observe' the patient, which is a key part of an MSK assessment and use it to view ganglions, lumps and swellings, as well as to support assessment of range of movement, and potential muscle weakness in patients with radiculopathy. It has also been used to demonstrate exercise prescription, which is a large part of the self-management advice required for patients to be able to manage their conditions at home. This type of intervention is so important to enable patients to continue to be active and support/care for loved ones as well as helping to offload GPs in primary care to be able to support more medically unwell patients.

The service has also released seven of its physiotherapists to its local NHS Trust, where they have provided support in the Minor Injuries Unit to enable the nursing team to support on the wards.

**Neil Flint, Head of Commissioning for Planned Care NHS Buckinghamshire CCG, Head of Commissioning for Planned Care and LTCs NHS Oxfordshire CCG, commented:**

"The support of Care UK during COVID is testament to the strong collaboration within Buckinghamshire and its health services. Prior to COVID, commissioners, acute NHS health providers and Care UK have been working collaboratively to develop better care and pathways for our patients. However, those strong foundations enabled a quick and incredible response from Care UK. Mobilising digital and virtual solutions to continue to support patients have been invaluable. With a national pause on elective services, Care UK have been able to support patients until those pathways open again. Furthermore, they have been able to release staff to support our acute NHS services and help our system remain resilient during COVID."



## Connect Health - providing innovative virtual student placements

Connect Health, an independent community provider of musculoskeletal services, accepts around 100 students every year, who carry out their placements with patients in clinic, working alongside a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians. During covid19 around 50% of physiotherapy student placements have been put on hold delaying graduation and affecting progression from year two to three. The Connect Health Virtual Student Placement initiative was the brainchild of Matthew Wyatt, Consultant Physiotherapist, and commenced on the 19 May initially with 25 students from two universities, closely followed by another 160 students who started from June onwards, in partnership with Brunel University, King's College London, and St George's University.



The initiative offers three different elements completely virtually from the student's own home or dorms including:

- **remote consultations** which allow students to shadow/co-deliver patient with clinicians by phone or video;
- **Facebook Live** which enables the delivery of virtual group rehabilitation, exercise and education sessions to patients and the public;
- **Virtual student academy** in Workplace from Facebook which enables access to interactions with over 400 clinicians and a broad range of educational resources provided as part of Connect Health's Clinical Academy.

This offered a lifeline to those students who were unable to progress to the third year of their course and was vital to those students unable to work in Trusts during covid19 due to shielding.

**Dr Claire White, Education Lead for Physiotherapy, King's College London said:**

"We have been working with Connect Health to develop an innovative remote clinical placement for our Physiotherapy students. This ensures that despite a reduction in traditional face to face placements, students can gain essential practice experience and enable them to continue with their studies. The remote placement model is a fantastic learning opportunity with exposure to MSK practitioners right across the Connect network. Students are developing their understanding and clinical reasoning alongside skills in digital healthcare that will be critical for the future delivery of healthcare in line with the NHS Long Term Plan".

## Diagnostic Healthcare - ultrasound services for urgent and DVT patients

As part of the covid19 national response, Diagnostic Healthcare (DHC) is working with a number of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to deliver community-based ultrasound services for urgent and deep vein thrombosis (DVT) patients.

Working in partnership with three CCGs - North East Essex, Cheshire and Walsall - DHC mobilised an ultrasound service at the beginning of April to service the network of GP practices in each area. Upwards of 1,000 appointments were made available to GPs who were able to keep this essential service running. DHC's patient services teams were available every day to field calls, ensuring patients had access to key information prior to their appointments. Clinical staff followed local GP practice protocols around building access, social distancing and the use of personal protective equipment to ensure patient and staff safety.

In the South Cheshire & Vale Royal localities of Cheshire CCG, the local hospital diverted covid19 free DVT patients into this service so they were able to maintain their capacity levels in urgent care. The GPs at Ashfield's Primary Care Centre in Sandbach provide further treatment if needed as part of the community DVT pathway. This created a one-stop shop for patients and further efficiencies in the NHS system at a time of need. In North East Essex, the April figures showed that more than half of patients who were scanned needed further investigation or treatment which wouldn't have been identified if the service had not been available.

**Jamaila Tausif, Deputy Director Strategy and Partnerships, NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group said:**

“During an extremely worrying period for our Cheshire population we have been pleased to work closely with Diagnostic Healthcare to commission a Community DVT service during this unprecedented time. This service has ensured that DVT patients in our South Cheshire and Vale Royal locality have avoided unnecessary hospital attendances and therefore reduced the risks of contracting covid19. This service is a great example of partnership working between multiple organisations which has ultimately improved patient experience for our population in South Cheshire and Vale Royal whilst reducing the pressures on our acute hospital Urgent Care clinicians”.

Over  
**1000**  
ultrasound  
appointments  
made  
available

## HealthHarmonie - supporting ophthalmology patients in Birmingham

HealthHarmonie is an independent healthcare provider specialising in Elective Care provision, with 100% of activity levels generated in partnership with the NHS. HealthHarmonie experienced an expected decline in referrals via their normal referral channels, due to fewer patients presenting to their GP practices. In April 2020 they undertook 50% of usual activity levels, distributed across face to face and virtual consultations, via user-friendly secure video link software, clinically assessed in line with covid19 safety protocols and urgency of patient care needs. Their prompt mobilisation of new operating structures enabled them to undertake over 7000 patient consultations within April 20, ensuring positive treatment outcomes for urgent care needs and ongoing patient condition management, and achieving routine wait times at 4 - 6 weeks.

During the pandemic, HealthHarmonie whilst managing their commissioned activity and wait lists, also provided further support to NHS partners. This includes transferring over 1000 Ophthalmology patients from University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust into their services to aid wait time management and patient safety levels, with 60% having already received their required consultation. In addition, they have supported George Elliott Hospital in a 6200 clinical case review of wait times, ensuring categorisation into required treatment pathways and wait times in line with condition needs. They are now providing insourcing support to ensure the continuation of clinical review and delivery.

**Paul Jolley, Head of Commissioning, South West Commissioning Team said:**

“During this unprecedented time it has been a delight to work with an organisation that has been totally proactive in assisting the CCG and more specifically the Commissioning Team to realign the Community services to deal with the pandemic. Health Harmonie have been very supportive of the change required and have always forwarded and interpreted the constant legislation that has been surging through from the government and NHSE/I sources, proposing how they can adapt to it on a regular basis. This has been a real boon during these hectic times.”

Over  
**7000**  
patient  
consultations  
undertaken



## HomeLink Healthcare - supporting NHS Hospitals in Norfolk

HomeLink Healthcare is supporting their NHS partners in Norfolk through Virtual Ward and Early Supported Discharge services.

During February and March, creating capacity within hospital wards in preparation for the covid19 surge was a major challenge for already busy hospitals. HomeLink Healthcare contributed to the re-configuration process by providing flexible capacity facilitating the early discharge home of patients, including those needing IV antibiotics at home, as well as step down care before they can access social care services in the community.

As covid19 cases grew their services helped hospitals in Norfolk make best use of the limited number of 'non-covid19' beds. Providing home-based care for patients reduced hospital bed nights and avoided admissions, reducing demand on stretched resources and risk of cross infection.

As the recovery process starts there is a focus on the patients waiting for elective procedures. Many hospitals are operating with a reduced bed capacity as some wards have to be reserved for a second surge in covid19 cases. HomeLink's services are helping make best use of available bed capacity by providing care for patients at home as soon as they are medically fit to be discharged.



## InHealth - repurposing community facilities to support the NHS

Very early on in the pandemic, InHealth took the decision to re-orientate their entire organisation to support the NHS to respond to the substantial challenge that is covid19, including:

### NHS 111 service:

At the request of the London Ambulance Service (LAS) InHealth has repurposed their 120-seat Patient Referral Centre in Rochdale to support them in handling covid19 calls to NHS111. The service they are providing to the LAS went live on 2nd April and now operates 16 hours a day, seven days per week and have handled over 200 000 calls.



### Breast screening:

While InHealth's Breast Screening service in Surrey was temporarily suspended, working with local stakeholders, InHealth has repurposed their screening centre to provide a diagnostic service for women in that region with breast cancer symptoms to allow the clinical pathway for those women to continue.

### Hot-hub for covid19 patients:

InHealth's MSK service in Manchester is delivered from a Mobile Clinical Unit (MCU) which unit moves from site-to-site within Greater Manchester providing great accessibility for local MSK patients. At the request of Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale CCG, the unit has been repurposed to be a "hot-hub" for covid19 patients.

## LivingCare - supporting endoscopy patients in Yorkshire

Pre-covid19 Living Care were operating 4 sites undertaking endoscopy procedures across Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield, seeing around 3500 patients per month, of which 800 patients a month of whom are on a 2 week wait pathway for suspected cancer.

LivingCare have been working across Leeds to help improve access to services now that they have restarted post the covid19 peak, enabling up to 70 patients per week as part of the 2WW pathway for endoscopy procedures. To meet the clinical guidelines LivingCare have established a swabbing facility seeing 100 patients per day (established within one week) which is providing capacity across all Endoscopy provision across Leeds providers including other independent sector providers and Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust. This process has seen increased compliance in patients attending appointments and undertaking bowel preparation in advance of procedures.

**Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust Service Manager, Gillian Dennis said:**

**“Across Leeds we work very closely with our AQPs (Any Qualified Providers - such as LivingCare) to ensure all patients we treat receive the same high-quality care, whether this is in a hospital or community setting. We work as a true collaborative to provide an outstanding service to the health economy in Leeds. Monthly governance meetings with the AQPs and quarterly CCG meetings ensure that any issues that may occur are picked up and dealt with quickly. The AQPs follow the same guidelines that we set in the Trust and patient feedback is always positive.”**

Over  
**100**  
patients swabbed  
every day

## Newmedica - supporting the NHS in Teesside

Since opening in October 2019 Newmedica Teesside have been working in conjunction with both the local Tees Valley CCG and South Tees Acute Trust to support the delivery of Ophthalmology services across the locality. The local Newmedica team were already in the process of working in partnership to deliver three individual contracts for both organisations, giving them a strong basis for working even more closely when covid19 changed the way all providers care for patients.

As lockdown started it was clear that Newmedica would have un-utilised space within their Eye Hospital for an extended duration. Across the Newmedica business they reached out to those acute Trusts close to their services to offer any assistance, either with transfer of patients or use of their dedicated Ophthalmology facilities. They offered the use of the Newmedica Teesside Eye Hospital to the Trust as an opportunity for them to decamp some of their critical ophthalmology services & run them out of the acute hospital setting. Newmedica facilities are entirely ambulatory, therefore not part of the wider independent sector contract.

The Trust identified their Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) clinic as a critical service which must be delivered during Covid, this condition can cause rapid severe sight loss therefore it is essential that treatment is started as early as possible and maintained continuously. As a result NewMedica worked with the Trust to scope a partnership contract, using staff predominantly from the Trust with the use of Newmedica facilities and some of their diagnostic capacity.

Patients were able to attend an out of hospital facility for their critical treatment, particularly giving those in the high risk groups more confidence to attend for these appointments. The two teams of staff worked together for a three month period, combining staff and resources to ensure they could deliver care to patients in a safe and timely way.

The two teams of staff worked together for a three month period, combining staff and resources to ensure they could deliver care to patients in a safe and timely way, with over 2000 patients now treated.

  
Ensuring  
**critical eye treatment**  
can continue

## OneMedical Group - supporting the NHS with urgent care

OneMedical Group, a primary and urgent care provider, has been liaising closely with their commissioners, local Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and urgent and emergency care partners to help support patients and share best practice.

In Sheffield, the Minor Injuries Unit co-located within the acute NHS hospital was closing so staff could be deployed into the main hospital to support with covid19 demand. OneMedical Group delivers a walk-in centre in the city centre and liaised with the acute hospital and CCG and offered to staff the MIU so it could remain open and reduce pressure on the emergency department. This offer was accepted and plans were mobilised in 24 hours.

Equally, in Leeds, OneMedical Group's team of Advanced Nurse Practitioners from their walk-in centre have been supporting with pressures in ED at St James' Hospital and Leeds General Infirmary, as well as supporting the OOH (out of hours) services which are experiencing an increase in demand. In Berkshire, the urgent care centre team have been redeployed into primary care to support with system pressures.



## Operose Health - delivering community eye care in Worcester

Operose Health delivers community ophthalmology services (COS) to patients across the country and since the beginning of the covid19 they have been working with many CCGs and acute hospital trusts to ensure that patients are still able to access emergency ophthalmic care. They have also worked with a number of CCGs to establish urgent community ophthalmology clinics to reduce the number of individuals attending A&E for eye related problems and thus reducing the risk of the virus spreading.

Within their Worcestershire COS, Operose Health have been working with the CCG and the local Acute Trust to transfer patients with stable long term conditions to their care with the aim of immediately increasing capacity within the hospital ophthalmology department to support the department in the future. They have also set up a Single Point of Access (SPA) for ophthalmology referrals so that non-urgent referrals can be directed to community rather than secondary care to further increase capacity so that urgent needs can be managed.

### The Acute Trust commented that:

“Working with Operose Health and NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG to direct routine referrals to the community ophthalmology service has meant that we have been able to focus our Acute Trust Ophthalmology department on those patients who require urgent and potentially sight-saving care during this period. We continue to collaborate with Operose Health to help plan for the future so that we can give patients the best possible care across our healthcare economy.”



## Virgin Care - providing innovative online consultations for the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service

Virgin Care delivers adult and children's community services across England on behalf of the NHS and local authorities across England. Virgin Care has been leading the way in bringing online consultations and virtual clinics for many of its vital important services at the start of the pandemic, allowing professionals to continue supporting vulnerable people and families.

These include secure one-to-one video appointments from health visitors and school nurses, therapy services and using the CHAThealth text messaging service to support young people on a range of issues. The virtual support has also enabled community end of life care to continue supporting families and other professionals while minimising unnecessary face to face contact.

In Essex, one of the areas where the services were being used, 97% of families rated the experience of a virtual clinic positively and the organisation even saw attendance rates increasing at clinics when compared with traditional face to face sessions.

**Richard Comerford, Managing Director in Essex said:**

“Virtual consultations, such as those carried out over first-class video technology, are helping guarantee not just safety, but also quality and efficiency of receiving support because one-to-one and group sessions usually require service users to visit Family Hubs or health visitors to enter other people's households. It is so important that we continue our service and create a platform for our service users to talk to other people going through similar experiences which should provide some welcome extra support at this difficult time”

**Rosalind French, Head of Children, Young People & Maternity Commissioning at West Essex CCG, said:**

“It is incredibly positive that virtual consultations have allowed children and young people in West Essex to continue to receive vital support from their community practitioners to address their health care needs throughout this pandemic. The Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service has played a valuable role in keeping our communities safe and well.”

Virtual  
antenatal  
group sessions  
delivered

## Working together... to deliver diagnostics care

Independent diagnostics providers have for many years partnered with the NHS to deliver high tech and efficient testing services such as MRI and CT scans. During covid19 a new partnership between independent sector providers and the NHS was announced to help increase the supply of state of the art scanners and expert radiographers and play a key role in the accurate diagnosis of people with suspected covid19 infection, with 33 CT scanners being made available to the NHS, along with 300 radiographers and clinical assistants who will operate the service across the country 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The computerised tomography (CT) scans are an integral part of the fight against the covid19 virus, alongside oral swab tests using RT-polymerase chain reaction [RT-PCR] test kits. CT scans of the lungs are a reliable way to diagnose covid19, and also monitor disease progression too.

## Alliance Medical

Alliance Medical has mobilised 16 CT scanning units with staff to provide a COVID-19 scanning service across England which have been used by 20 NHS sites, carrying out over 22,000 scans working in partnership with their NHS colleagues. As part of this service Alliance Medical also delivered CT Scanning services at the Nightingales at the London Excel and Harrogate to scan both COVID and more recently non-COVID patients. In order to ensure that there were enough Radiographers to meet this increased demand Alliance Medical set up a rapid CT Training Academy to allow existing Alliance Medical MRI Radiographers to train to deliver CT scans within a 2



week hands-on training course. This resulted in over 50 new CT Radiographers to support the COVID effort with their NHS partners.

## InHealth

InHealth, an independent diagnostic provider, have dedicated 13 scanners to the NHS England's response, which have supported urgent pathways being maintained across approximately 27 different hospital locations. Over the course of this partnership, InHealth have successfully imaged more than 13,000 patients.

### Newham Hospital -

"Huge thanks to NHSEngland and InHealthGroup for supporting us to increase CT capacity at NUH. This will facilitate optimal patient flow and provide the very best possible patient experience"

More than  
**13,000**  
patients  
scanned

## Working together... to support covid19 patients

### Operose Health - providing "hot sites" for covid19 patients

In line with national guidance, Operose Health surgeries have been working with other local surgeries in their PCN and CCGs areas to establish 'hot' and 'cold' sites so that patients with suspected or confirmed covid19 who require face to face clinical assessment can be seen in a safe and timely manner.

One of their GP surgeries within Essex was approached by their CCG who proposed using the site as a 'hot' site for patients across the CCG area to access. As the surgery is not co-located with any other services, eradicating any 'zoning' issues, it was a very good choice to use for the hot site. By working collaboratively with the CCG and another local team, who would be providing the clinical and administrative hot site support, Operose Health were very quickly able to transform the site to be ready to receive patients. This included all soft furnishings, excess furniture and patient posters being removed from the site to assist with deep cleaning processes required within these locations.

### Castle Point and Rochford CCG have said,

"Ensuring our patients with confirmed or suspected covid19 can access primary care is essential in managing the virus and helping to protect the wider healthcare economy. We are very pleased that we've been able to build upon our existing relationship with Operose Health and other local providers to work outside of traditional contractual arrangements to quickly be able to put in place a system to support the patients of Castle Point & Rochford during this difficult time."

Hot  
site  
for covid19  
patients  
introduced

## Trust Plus and London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust, based across the Central Middlesex, Ealing and Northwick Park Hospitals sites, was one of the first to receive high numbers of coronavirus patients.

It transitioned the PPU - TrustPlus St Mark's Private Healthcare - and allowed its staff and single ensuite rooms to be used for NHS patients.

**Business development head David Osborne said:**

“The unit was initially used by patients awaiting the results of covid19 tests prior to being transferred to the appropriate hospital ward.

However, the unit itself quickly became, and currently remains, a covid19 positive ward. The actions taken clearly demonstrate how the PPU has quickly and effectively responded to meet the needs of patients, the NHS and the local community.”



## Working together... with the NHS in Wales

In April, the Welsh Government announced a deal with independent hospitals in Wales whereby the full capacity of all six private hospitals in Wales, which includes an extra 200 inpatient beds as well as ventilators and other vital equipment and personnel, has been made available to the NHS in Wales to help respond to the covid19 pandemic.

## Spire Cardiff and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Over  
**2000**  
patients  
treated

An agreement between Cardiff and Vale UHB and Spire Healthcare has enabled patients with cancer and other urgent conditions to receive treatment at Spire Cardiff, allowing the Health Board's main sites to focus on caring for people with covid19. The agreement began at the start of the pandemic, and Spire Cardiff has passed the milestone of treating its 2000th NHS patient. The Health Board's patients at Spire Cardiff are being treated predominantly for cancer or for time critical health conditions. People with Gynaecological, Breast, Neurological, Colorectal, Gastroenterological, Urological and Haematological cancers have received surgery within a safe environment at Spire Cardiff or been seen in outpatients. NHS patients have also received care at Spire Cardiff for urgent heart conditions and ophthalmic procedures.

Spire Cardiff Hospital also loaned three ventilators to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Rhondda Cynon Taf, at the start of the pandemic, when the demand on ventilators was unknown.

**Len Richards, Chief Executive of Cardiff and Vale UHB, said:**

“covid19 is the most significant challenge the health sector has faced for generations. However, we must remember that people need treatment for other health conditions. Our partnership with Spire has allowed us to deliver non-COVID services to patients with the most urgent need in a safe and timely way.”

## HMT Sancta Maria Hospital and Swansea Bay University Health Board

The HMT Sancta Maria Hospital in Swansea has carried out procedures on more than 60 cancer patients on behalf of Swansea Bay University Health Board (SB UHB). To date, the feedback from all consultants, patients and staff has been universally positive. Staff felt supported and well prepared and played an active part in developing patient pathways, continuing to refine and update these pathways as new guidance emerges.

HMT Sancta Maria Hospital has also been using high tech procedures, including developing a series of regional anaesthetic blocks that can be used to allow melanoma patients to undergo axillary sentinel node surgery without the need for general anaesthesia, of which there is significant risks associated with covid19. At the end of May, the first 3 patients were successfully treated with this new technique. This has meant that melanoma patients can now receive the treatment they need in a safe way in the current covid19 environment.



## BMI Werndale Hospital

The hospital's entire capacity and capability has been made available to the NHS and since the beginning of April 2020 over 600 patients have been seen for time critical treatment. Both BMI Healthcare and NHS staff are working collaboratively together for the benefit of patients in west Wales.

Werndale is supporting the emergency ophthalmology pathway by facilitating eye casualty and ophthalmology urgent follow up clinics. The team is also running urgent urology, gynaecology and colorectal suspected cancer clinics. The hospital's theatre is being used daily for time critical cases in a range of specialties for breast, gynaecology, urology and ENT patients. In July, ophthalmology theatre lists also begin. In addition, the Werndale is running a weekly Clinical Nurse Specialist Urology treatment clinic.



## Next steps

The covid19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a huge impact on the delivery of healthcare in the UK. Until a vaccination is found, healthcare services all around the country will need to adapt - locking in the digital innovations that have emerged during the pandemic, particularly in primary and outpatient care - and also taking key measures to ensure patient safety, including social distancing, the need to deep clean equipment and facilities and the use of PPE, all of which will have any impact on patients' ability to access care.

What the pandemic has shown however, and the case studies in this document demonstrate, is the ability of independent and NHS providers to work together in the national interest and for the benefit of patients. With the health service facing significant challenges in the months and years ahead as it attempts to return to a "new normal", independent healthcare providers will undoubtedly need to be part of the solution in getting the health service back on track. Going forward it is therefore important that this contribution, along with other non-NHS providers such as charities and social enterprises, is recognised and that the mixed model of healthcare provision in the sector is retained.



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