



Wessex
Cancer Alliance

WCA Workforce Programme Papers for WCA Board Dec 10th 2024

Kathy Cooke, Workforce Programme Manager
Email kathy.cooke@wca.uhs.nhs.uk

Report to the Wessex Cancer Alliance Board				
Title:	WCA Workforce Programme Update			
Sponsor	Sally Rickard, WCA Managing Director			
Author	Kathy Cooke, WCA Workforce Programme Manager			
Date:	02/12/2024			
Purpose	Assurance or reassurance Assurance	Approval	Ratification	Information
Summary of paper:	To provide assurance to the WCA Board on progression within the 2024/25 workforce programme supporting the cancer workforce challenges across Wessex through training, retaining and reforming. This is in alignment with the WCA 2022 – 25 Workforce Programme Strategy, NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (2023) and will further support the new Wessex Cancer Strategy.			
Implications: (Clinical, Organisational, Governance, Legal?)	Governance of the Workforce Programme is shown in the papers. The bimonthly WCA Workforce Board has representation from HIOW and Dorset ICB workforce teams, NHSE SE and SW Cancer & Diagnostics Workforce, Training and Education Leads.			
Key risks and mitigations:	Cancer workforce remains a priority challenge not just across Wessex but also nationally. WCA is sighted on the priority challenges for the services and through innovation, reconfiguration and upskilling the workforce we will continue to make improvements across the pathways. Whilst there are short term wins, workforce will continue to be prioritised medium and longer term. There needs to be an increased focus on upskilling within the primary care and community workforce, building on existing WCA workforce project, to support the shift from acute to community and care closer to home.			
Summary: Conclusion and/or recommendation	WCA recognises that challenges within the cancer and diagnostics workforce are part of the wider workforce issue for all providers and HIOW and Dorset ICSs. We recognise our role in the overall systems plans and work closely with workforce leads to align our programme as we provide leadership, support and development for the cancer workforce across Wessex.			



Workforce Programme Governance



WCA Patient and Public Involvement Group

WCA Board

National ACCEND Implementation team

NHSE SW Cancer & Diagnostic WTE - Mark Wilson

Dorset ICB WF: Emma Hallewell

WCA Workforce Programme Board
Chair Sally Rickard

NHSE SE Cancer & Diagnostic WTE: Tess Candy

HIOW ICB WF – Angela Murphy

Imaging Networks and Academies

WCA Service Improvement Team – Diagnostic Pathways

Wessex Cancer Leads including Lead Cancer Nurses RT Managers, Cancer Matrons, AHP Leads

Workforce via e.g. Wessex CNS / AHP / Supportive Workforce Forums

Partner Organisations – Cancer / Ops Managers, WF / Education Leads, Primary and Community Care

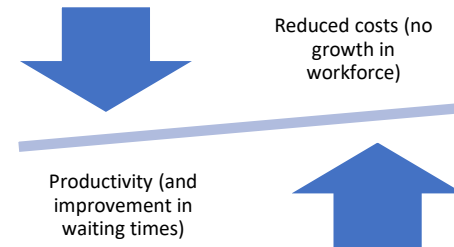


Alignment with national regional and system priorities



To deliver cancer services, reduce the backlog and alleviate pressure on staff, health services must create additional capacity.

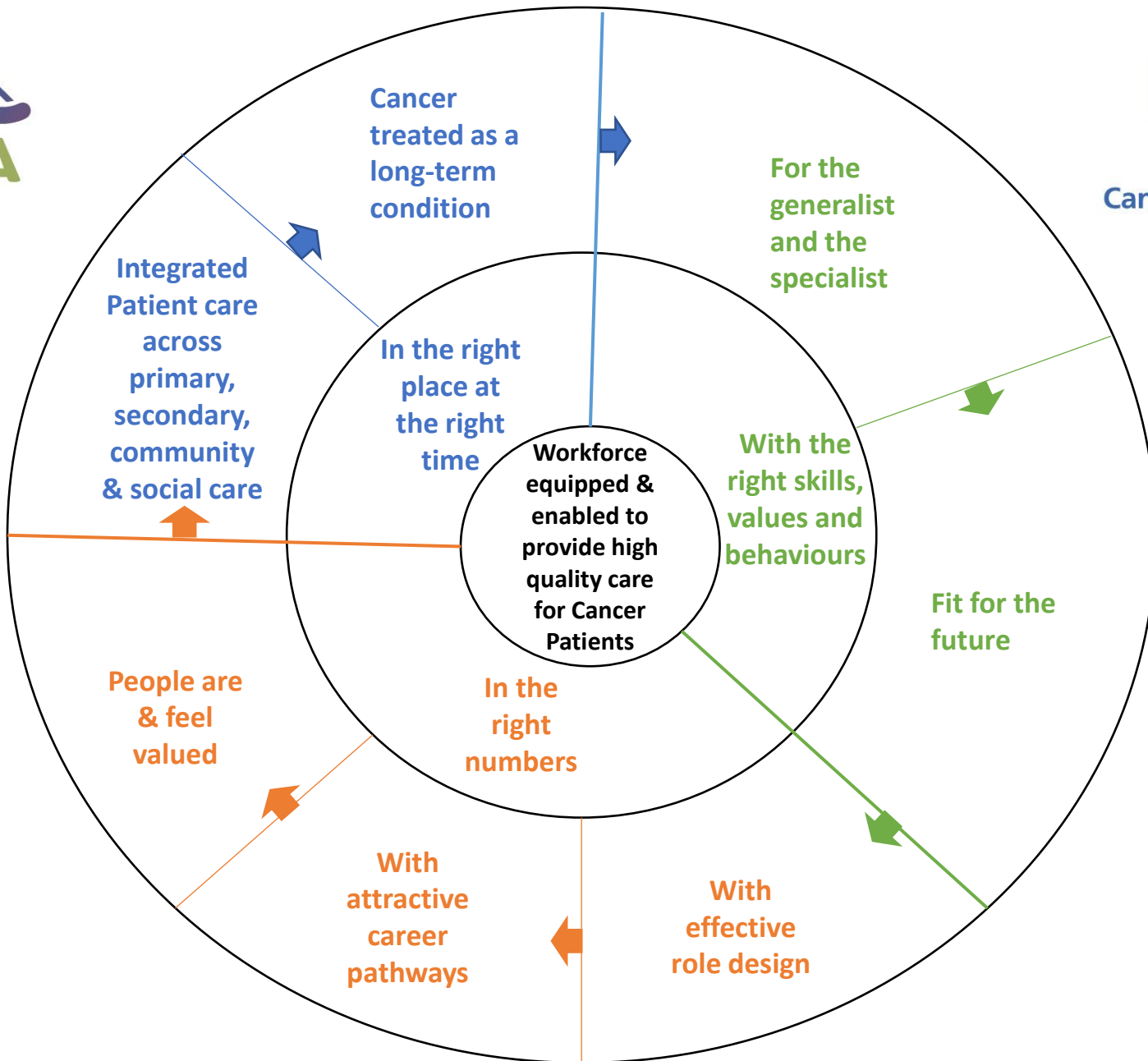
Priority workforce groups identified by NHSE are **oncologists** and **therapeutic radiographers**. This is mirrored at a local level and treatment waiting times at the outset of the year within the 6 acute Trusts highlighted this.



Nationally: NHSE will grow the workforce through increasing training places for the registered workforce and providing training grants to upskill specific roles within cancer and diagnostics workforce. Alliance feeds into other national programmes supporting medical expansion; increased apprenticeships; international recruitment to support therapeutic radiography workforce. Additional requirement and support to operationalise [ACCEND programme](#) including funding opportunities, education offer and communities of practice.

Regionally: Cancer & Diagnostics Programmes support regional working, sharing good practice e.g. SE Cancer Alliance Workforce Forum and funding opportunities including CNS / SACT nurse grants; Practice Educators, Supportive Workforce grants alongside support for diagnostic workforce through networks and academies.

Locally: WCA works in partnership with ICB colleagues, NHSE teams, provider organisations across care sectors to train, retain and reform the workforce in alignment with the 2022-25 workforce strategy. The WCA Workforce Strategy will merge into the new Wessex Cancer Strategy as a key cross cutter across all domains.





2022-25 Workforce Strategy Priority 1 – Programme Highlights
A Cancer workforce in the right place intervening at the right time
Integrated across primary, secondary, community and social care
With cancer treated as a long-term condition



Ambitions	Approach	What we are doing
Influence to promote integrated services	Influence decision makers to fund integrated models of care treating cancer alongside other long-term conditions where appropriate Develop business case toolkits to assist decision makers to adopt integrated workforce solutions	Final evaluation of the pilot project ACP cancer care role in Primary Care has shown the patient and economic benefits of this role. Potential to influence development of further such roles. Evaluation of the impact of the AHP Enhanced Cancer Practitioner roles in primary care underway. All of these primary care roles align with and complement the Right by You projects within the Personalised Care programme of work.
Innovate to develop pathway solutions	Invest in projects to address workforce pressure points in the system and provide innovative pathway solutions that improve the speed of diagnosis and treatment; evaluate and scale as appropriate Fund breakthrough projects that promote different ways of working and break down organisational and professional barriers	Project reports finalised for the pilot projects seeking to develop and integrate the NHSE funded Pathway Navigator and Physician Associate roles in Cancer. Part way through a project seeking to understand the impact of the Advanced Practitioner and Consultant Practitioner roles in Therapeutic Radiography; potential to build capacity within the Clinical Oncology workforce.
Educate to improve pathway referrals	Focus on improving the skills, knowledge and confidence of non-cancer professionals in all health and social care settings to improve accuracy and relevance of patient referrals and provide enhanced support for patient	Recent WCA Frailty in Oncology level 4 module run with HSU upskilling supportive workforce across care sectors. Development and promotion / sharing of national development offers to non-cancer professionals via Education page. Project commenced seeking to embed fundamentals of cancer education within undergraduate health care courses across Wessex.
Partner with professionals to encourage pathway innovation	Locate and convene key communities of practice from across the systems to collaborate on innovative ways of working using a skills mix approach in cancer teams	WCA facilitated communities of practice providing professional peer support include supportive workforce forums, lead cancer nurse forums, oncology AHP forums in addition to the Clinical Advisory groups providing a pathway overview.
Promote and share learning across the pathway	Promote and share the emerging new approaches and workforce models	WCA share information via WCA bulletins (including specific workforce bulletin), WCA website and at local, regional and national forums, meetings. Members of team presented at national conferences in Q3. Opportunities for shared learning.



2022-25 Workforce Strategy Priority 2 – Programme Highlights

A cancer workforce with the right skills For the specialist and the generalist Fit for the future



Ambitions	Approach	What we are doing
<p>Influence to bring in knowledge and resources to upskill</p>	<p>Working with health and social care teams / providers to identify workforce training and development needs and collaborate with regional NHSE teams to influence national funding offer for upskilling cancer workforce Work in partnership with providers to utilise NHSE existing funding streams to upskill professionals</p>	<p>Working in partnership with provider education leads and cancer leads to optimise funding opportunities for cancer teams; alignment of personal development opportunities with need for service driven development. Progressing with ACCEND implementation –using a structured tool to identify workforce skills gaps followed by development plan to match service need. Utilise NHSE education grants to upskill aspiring and existing cancer nurse specialists and SACT nurses.</p>
<p>Innovate through digital transformation to futureproof the workforce</p>	<p>Build confidence in the cancer workforce to utilise new technology (including AI and digital) to provide innovative service solutions</p>	<p>Working through Therapeutic Radiographer project leads to understand the development needs of the TR workforce to match the technological advancements. Scoping the potential to develop a competency based imaging development plan using the ProKnow software.</p>
<p>Educate to embrace new skills and new roles</p>	<p>Support primary care to embrace the Additional Reimbursement Role Scheme (ARRS) through education: evaluation of impact of roles Upskill non-medical workforce to improve early diagnosis of cancer and enhance support for patient throughout the pathway Support the education and development of new roles to the Wessex cancer workforce e.g. Physician Associates</p>	<p>Supported PCNs to utilise the cancer care coordinator ARRS roles through the provision of a i). blueprint for roles in cancer care ii) toolkit to support recruitment to roles iii) shared links to relevant cancer education iv) mentorship and development programme. Improved understanding of the supportive and assistive workforce across Wessex with active forums and a standardised development programme matched to ACCEND to support baseline competency development of this workforce</p>
<p>Partner to share learning and improve effectiveness</p>	<p>Locate and convene learn and share networks of practitioners: providing peer support and sharing of resources</p>	<p>WCA facilitated forums and communities of practice are active and well evaluated.</p>
<p>Promote and share</p>	<p>Promote relevant available and free cancer education resources to the non-cancer workforce across Wessex including non-specialist AHPs, four pillars of primary care (general practice, community pharmacy, dental and optometry services), social care workforce</p>	<p>WCA Education and training pages / ACCEND pages continually updated ensure currency. Shared via bulletins and forums. Plans to develop an Academy approach in 2025/26 enabling development in priority areas not currently supported in Wessex.</p>



2022-25 Workforce Strategy Priority 3 – Programme Highlights
A cancer workforce of the right number
With effective role design
With attractive career pathways
People are and feel valued



Ambitions	Approach	What we are doing
<p>Influence to retain staff and attract people into a career in cancer</p>	<p>Gain on the ground intelligence from partners: local crisis points, workforce gaps and challenges across oncology and share with HEE and NHSE to better inform national responses and local plans Promote opportunities such as return to practice initiatives and apprenticeship schemes, as well as campaigning for increased training and funding from national bodies Develop new thinking and influence system change to develop cancer career pathways and new routes into cancer careers</p>	<p>Workforce data collated for oncology workforce supported by NHSE South Cancer Dashboard (note limitations of ESR). National challenges within oncology workforce mirrored at a local level. Supporting SACT nurses and oncology pharmacist demand and capacity work to better inform workforce gaps. National ACCEND framework – supporting workforce to self- assess against cancer capabilities in practice to improve understanding of the skill set available / gaps within teams – leading to focussed and relevant development work. Launched the Wessex Cancer Careers website.</p>
<p>Innovate for improved efficiency, morale and career development</p>	<p>Listen to the cancer workforce, encourage and value their ideas through monies dedicated for funding locally identified breakthrough projects/posts e.g. piloting enhanced ways of working using skills mix approach.</p>	<p>Supporting through Workforce Transformation Funding (projects ongoing). Supporting local improvement projects through the cancer service focussed Quality Improvement Programme run in partnership with Solent Research and Innovation Academy.</p>
<p>Educate to improve pathway referrals</p>	<p>Support / develop education programmes to upskill and develop leadership skills to bring innovation into front line services. Develop mentoring schemes to build skill and confidence in new recruits and encourage return to practice</p>	<p>Development and delivery of a WCA leadership programme for senior cancer clinical nurse specialists. WCA Legacy mentor pilot project commenced summer 2024. Preliminary evaluation due summer 2025.</p>
<p>Partner with professionals to encourage pathway innovation</p>	<p>Identify those roles at crisis point and convene specialists to encourage them to reframe roles and work differently</p>	<p>Focussed support within the therapy radiographer and oncology pharmacist workforce across Wessex. Support offered within the oncology workforce at UHS following RCR report. Working alongside the Faster Diagnosis Service Improvement team and imaging networks to support diagnostic workforce conversations and initiatives.</p>
<p>Promote and share learning across the pathway</p>	<p>Promote and share innovations and stimulate new thinking; support teams to try out new approaches through education.</p>	<p>Support through the Quality Improvement Programme run in partnership with Solent Research and Innovation Academy. Previous Workforce Transformation Funding (projects ongoing). Facilitation of sharing of innovation through WCA Forums.</p>