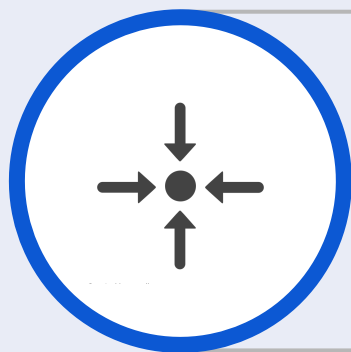


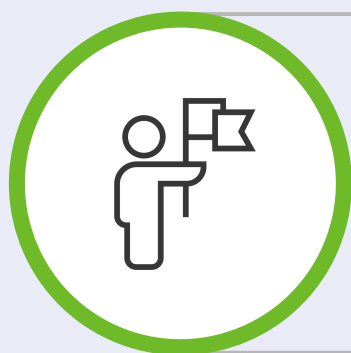
Anchor missions & the unique role of ICSs

All parts of England are now covered by one of 42 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs). Since the start of the Health Anchors Learning Network (HALN) we have heard participants wanting to explore the role of ICSs in relation to anchors. In August 2021, we convened a number of participants from across the network to explore the potential role of ICSs. Participants have identified five unique roles which ICSs can play in developing the anchor agenda.



CONVENOR: ICSs as a convenor of different anchor institutions

ICSs are uniquely placed to bring together NHS anchor institutions with other ICS partners, by facilitating relationships and supporting the creation of anchor partnerships and networks. The value of these relationships are clear - promoting anchor agendas and sharing best practice, whilst facilitating collaboration and culture change. The ICS can connect to other non NHS and local authority anchors such as Voluntary Sector and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations and universities, to look at a particular issues that can be addressed at scale.



CHAMPION: ICSs can champion priorities across the system

Although anchor institutions are able to make significant change locally and within their organisation, they have less scope to drive and set system wide priorities, whereas ICSs can establish and champion priorities at a system level. By doing this, ICSs enable all organisations in that system to collectively tell a story and show their impact. Leadership within and across institutions can support strategic alignment, creating increased action at a system level. Where the whole system is collectively tackling the same issues, there is a higher likelihood that the change can happen at all levels and the impact can be extended.



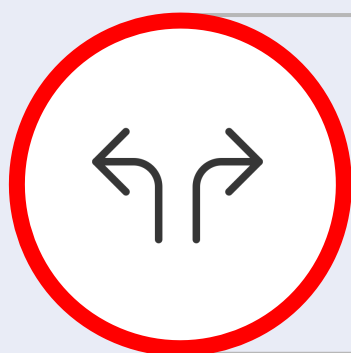
CAPABILITY: ICSs can support the development of organisational capabilities

As NHS anchor institutions engage with new, complex practices, they might require new skills to succeed. ICSs can help anchor institutions to build their capability and share tools, examples and materials across the system. For example, ICSs can support in the development of system leadership, across multiple levels and in various sectors, which will contribute to the success of anchor work. The impact of building anchor leadership capability extends to the full anchor workforce, where team members care about the health of their local community and feel empowered to make a difference by their leadership and the wider system.



COLLABORATION: ICSs can help organisations to collaborate across a system

ICSs have the opportunity to help anchor institutions to collaborate by fostering a culture of shared accountability. They can provide the infrastructure to support collaboration, including the development of charters and frameworks and can support anchors to work together on shared priorities around the local contribution to health, social and economic development to reduce inequalities and prevent future risks to ill-health. They can support anchor institutions to collaborate for the growth and scaling of effective interventions around workforce, employment, environment, estates and procurement across the ICS.



CONTEXT: ICSs can help anchors focus locally and model distributed control

Anchor institutions don't all operate in the same context, what works in one part of the system may not work in another. The ICS has a critical role in helping anchor institutions to work through this complexity and understand what needs to be local and what can be done across a wider footprint. ICSs should be wary of constraining their systems - instead, they can focus on distributing control by allowing action to be locally-driven. Moving to a place where there is greater citizen and needs led delivery will challenge both anchors institutions and the NHS.

Additional resources - these are some examples of how ICSs have gone about supporting local anchor organisations

[North East London's ICS Anchor Charter](#) - a charter which documents the collaborative action to reduce health inequalities and support economic recovery throughout the NEL ICS
[Suffolk & North East Essex ICS Anchor example](#) - a webpage which details the work done by this ICS as part of their primary ambition to enable health equalities for everyone over the next five years
[Cheshire and Merseyside Social Value Charter](#) - a charter to create alignment of social value in all organisations across the partnership, including the changes it can bring about to reduce avoidable inequalities and improve health and wellbeing