



Greater Manchester  
Cancer Alliance

# Cancer Workforce & Education Strategy



Part of Greater Manchester  
Integrated Care Partnership

Image of Susannah Penney on front cover:  
Greater Mancunians Project

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# 1. Introduction

Demand for cancer services increases year on year and the growth of the cancer workforce is not keeping pace with this increasing demand. This challenge was exacerbated by the pandemic and remains the biggest barrier to recovering cancer services and improving the way we provide health and care to our communities.

The first Greater Manchester (GM) Cancer Workforce Strategy was developed in 2020/21 to support the National Cancer Workforce plan, National People plan and Greater Manchester's Covid response and recovery plans. The GM Cancer Alliance Workforce and Education Team led the delivery of the strategy in collaboration with profession-specific workforce groups however, with creation of the NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership, the strategy has been updated to align with the refreshed Greater Manchester [People and Culture strategy](#).

The Greater Manchester Cancer Workforce and Education strategy is not to be taken in isolation, there will also be a separate albeit interlinked Greater Manchester Education Strategy to support our lifelong learning ambition for the Cancer Workforce, a GM Cancer Digital and Innovation strategy, to support workforce digitisation, and a GM Cancer Tackling Health Inequalities strategy to ensure workforce equality, diversity and inclusion is prioritised throughout.

The new strategy will not include activities specific to Diagnostics or Radiotherapy workforce groups due to there being separate complementary system-wide strategies covering these professional groups, see below (list is not exhaustive):

- [Northwest Imaging Workforce Strategy](#)
- GM Endoscopy Workforce Strategy (in development)
- [GM Pathology Workforce Strategy](#)
- Northwest Radiotherapy Workforce strategy (in development)

The GM Cancer Workforce and Education team maintains links with the various diagnostics workforce groups and Operational Delivery Networks (ODN), including Radiotherapy, Teenage and Young Adults, and Children, to support them with their work and ensure cancer remains high on the agenda.



## 2. Our Strategy

### Our Ambition

To develop and grow the cancer workforce in Greater Manchester to ensure the workforce is representative, inclusive, and supported to respond to the needs of people affected by cancer, by adapting to new, improved ways of working, and embrace innovation and technology to deliver the best quality healthcare.

This Cancer Workforce and Education Strategy sets out a shared ambition for our people in Greater Manchester; will align and support organisational and locality workforce plans where possible and support the delivery of the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan, the Greater Manchester People and Culture Strategy, and Greater Manchester Cancer Plan.

The strategy provides a framework for:

- delivering a one workforce ambition
- delivering a range of initiatives / innovations / solutions / interventions to be developed and implemented at system level
- practical and deliverable long-term solutions to ensure GM has the right workforce in place to meet the needs of people affected by cancer
- enabling sustainable and agile cancer workforce solutions to grow skilled practitioners responsive to changes in healthcare requirements, technological developments, new ways of working and new roles

It does not replace the need for organisation level workforce plans. Instead, it provides a set of priorities that stakeholders agree are best addressed in a coordinated way at the GM system level to complement locality plans.

The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains agile and responsive to changes in policy, development of new inter-dependent strategies, opportunities arise, and new challenges emerge.

### Development of the strategy



The strategic activity has been coproduced with key stakeholders including Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) Patient and Carer representatives.

# 3. Strategic Drivers



# 4. Programme Alignment

GM People and Culture Priorities	GM Cancer Programmes of Work
Workforce Integration	Early diagnosis and prevention
Workforce Wellbeing	Personalised care and treatment
Addressing Inequalities	Identifying and addressing Inequalities
Growing and Developing our Workforce	Operational Delivery and Faster Diagnosis
Good Employment*	Research

\* There is currently no separate section for Good Employment however, the addressing workforce inequalities programme includes activity that aligns with the People and Culture strategy: Good employment section e.g. promoting inclusive recruitment and sharing best practice and resources.



# 5. Cancer Workforce Strategy 2021 - Activity Delivered / Progressing

## Workforce Wellbeing

Dedicated GM Cancer Workforce & Education webpage launched with repository of Health & Wellbeing resources  
All relevant health and wellbeing resources are signposted to from this page.

## Workforce Integration

Boundary spanning pilots in progress:

- i. 9 Primary Care Networks (PCN) are currently piloting the role of the Cancer Support Worker to provide seamless personalised care for patients
- ii. collaboration between Oldham Primary Care Network (PCN) and Salford Foundation Trust (FT) to pilot the role of the Physician Associate as a blended role split between working in primary care and within the urology service at Salford FT.

## Addressing Inequalities

Establishment of a the GM Cancer Workforce Addressing Inequalities Expert Advisory Group with co-developed work programme focussing on 'Belonging to the NHS'.

## Growing and Developing our Workforce

### Attract

- led the first National Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Day to raise the profile of the CNS role within the general nursing workforce in 2022.
- aspiring CNS Programme pilot project to attract general nurses to cancer, currently being evaluated.

### Recruit

- physician Associate role piloted across 9 cancer pathways; evaluation available for the initial urology pilot.
- 9 Cancer Support Workers recruited in PCNs

### Develop / Retain

- NW Allied Health Professional (AHP) survey was conducted to identify training gaps
- bespoke Cancer AHP Training Programme (Allies in Cancer Care) has been developed and launched in response to NW AHP Survey findings
- bespoke training webinars hosted for Cancer Support Workers
- e-Learning module for MDT coordinators now live via the Cancer Academy
- supporting the development of four National Acute Oncology Competency Passports
- making Every Contact Count (MECC) for cancer programme piloted
- GM Cancer Support Worker forum established to offer peer to peer support and a platform to share and learn / promote integrated working
- MDT leadership coaching programme pilot

## 6. Cross Cutting Workstreams Delivered / in Progress

NHSE Digital Staff Passport piloted across 4 different professional groups (ACPs, Surgeon, CNS', Radiologists) to enable movement of staff.

[Cancer Academy](#) launched as the cancer education hub for GM to support our lifelong learning ambition.

[Diagnostics workforce review](#) - Imaging and Endoscopy qualitative workforce reviews conducted to inform future workforce models. Recommendations being taken forward by the networks.

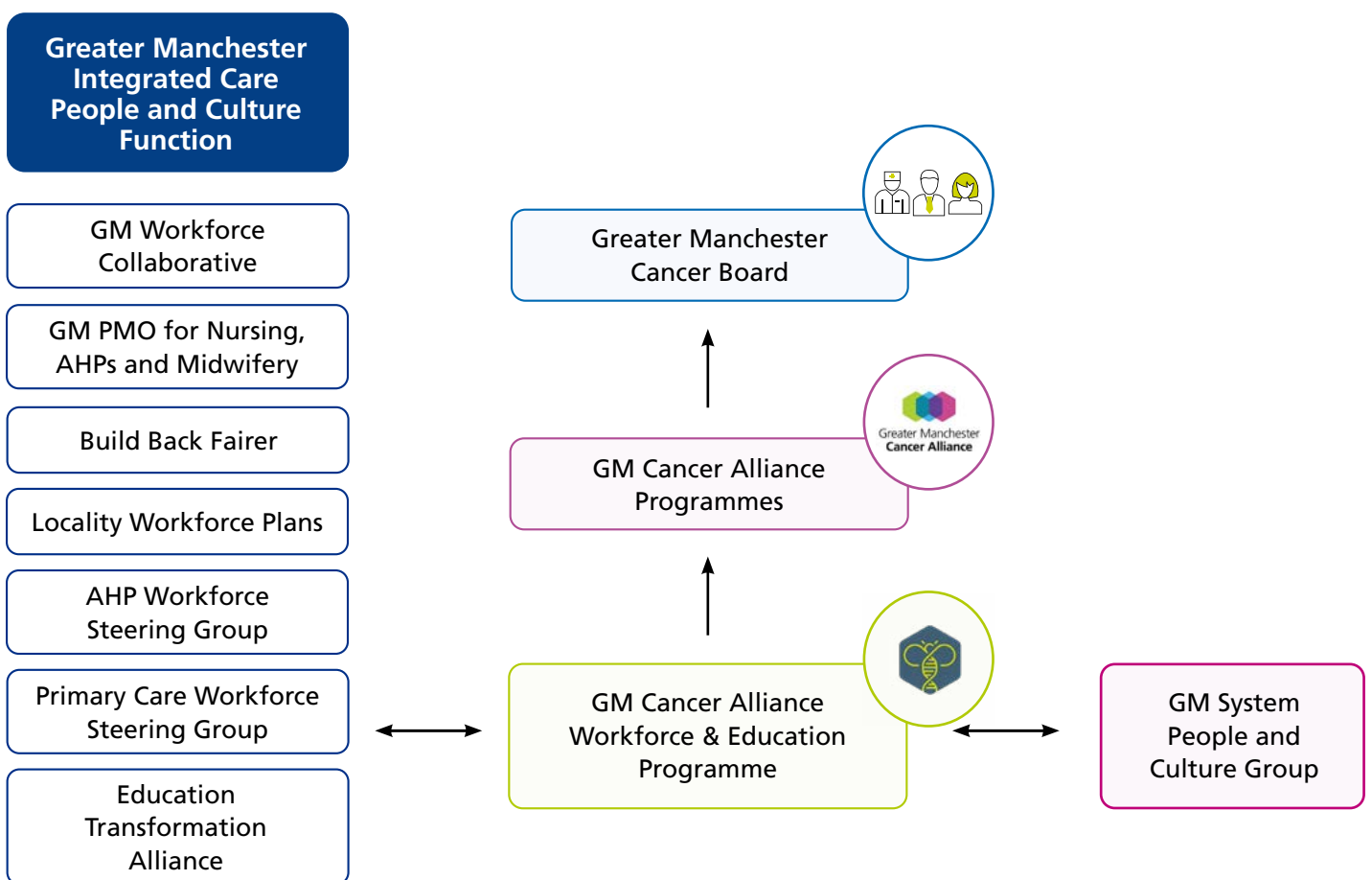
[ACCEND](#) - the National Aspirant Cancer Career Education Development Programme (ACCEND) consists of a National Career and Education Framework for the non-medical workforce to support recruitment and retention. GM Cancer leading the workstream for specialist nurses and AHPs.





# 7. Future Plans for 2023 - 2025

The following section details activity that will be delivered over the next 12 months and beyond. The workforce and education team will work in collaboration with the ICP People and Culture function, system partners, and locality teams to support delivery at a system level.





## 7.1. Workforce Integration

1 in 2 people are predicted to receive a diagnosis of cancer within their lifetime and so there is a need to upskill the whole of the health and care workforce to ensure Greater Manchester achieves the long-term plan ambition of earlier diagnosis and personalised care for cancer patients.

To achieve this one cancer workforce ambition and support the workforce to work both horizontally across place and vertically across the different sectors, the following activity will be prioritised:

- promote the use / integration of the various digital solutions currently on offer to enable the cancer workforce to move around the system:
  - National NHSE Digital Staff Passport
  - Cancer Academy e-portfolio
  - Primary care and social care passports
- explore digital solutions to enable greater connectivity across the system to provide communities of practice, promote peer to peer support / sharing of best practice
- provide a mutually beneficial model for cross system working bringing together generalist and specialist roles, including mentoring and coaching
- explore the role of a neighbourhood cancer lead in line with the People and Culture strategy to work within the community as part of health and wellbeing services
- pilot and evaluate blended roles in cancer care, including blended clinical and operational roles
- pilot Cancer fellowship programmes across primary and secondary care:
  - link in with the Primary Care GP and Nurse Fellowship programmes to support early diagnosis, education, and personalised care for cancer patients,
  - explore fellowship programmes for the medical workforce
- build on existing new roles that have been piloted, to expand to other professional groups or to scale and spread across the system:
  - physician Associates in Cancer
  - primary care extended roles / specialist interest in cancer
  - cancer Care Coordinator pilot in Primary care Networks
- explore innovative / integrated workforce solutions to support the delivery of:
  - best Practice Timed Pathways (BPTP) in order to achieve the Faster Diagnosis Standard
  - seamless personalised care for cancer patients
- support the provision of integrated education available to all sectors through the Cancer Academy, including the development of bespoke early diagnosis development packages for all health and care staff
- expand the Cancer Academy skills lab programme to support staff working across different sectors to support cancer patients including Social Care, and Mental Health professionals
- rollout non-medical referral training for Practice Nurses and other professional groups where appropriate
- use the learning from global workforce initiatives to support better integration





## 7.2. Workforce Wellbeing

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our workforce and is a key factor influencing individuals' decisions to stay. There is a plethora of resources available at an organisation / system level and so the role of the alliance is to promote these resources, promote cancer education offers to the cancer workforce to ensure equity in access, and to identify any gaps.

- promote existing health and wellbeing offers to the cancer workforce through a dedicated directory on the GM Cancer website e.g. the ICB wellbeing toolkit
- share good practice across the system and identify any gaps for specific professional groups
- work with the ICB People and Culture Function to measure the uptake and impact of current wellbeing offers specifically within the cancer workforce
- utilise and expand Cancer Workforce Days to provide an opportunity to celebrate the workforce, promote joint identity, and ensure the workforce feel valued
- ensure equity in access to cancer education through the GM Cancer Academy
- promote a lifelong learning culture through The GM Cancer Academy by influencing the system to ensure all health and care staff have protected time for education and training
- promote the NHSE Digital Staff Passport as a tool to support personal development and working as a network
- promote flexible working resources / toolkits to support sustainability and work life balance
- explore current offers to support staff who are carers, to promote their wellbeing and ensure their needs are being met



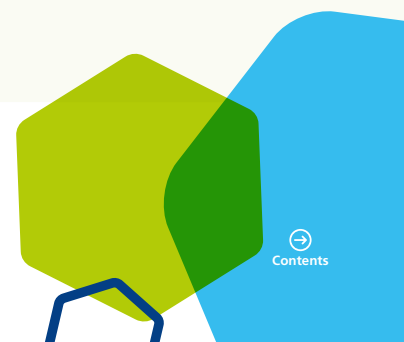
## 7.3. Growing and Developing our Workforce

Growing the workforce to keep pace with the growing demand for cancer services is essential to addressing the cancer workforce crisis, however, ensuring the current workforce has opportunities for personal development is equally as important if we want people to stay. The following priorities will help to:

<b>Attract new health and care staff through innovative ways.</b>	<b>Recruit more people into cancer by developing clear routes into professions and opportunities for generalist roles.</b>	<b>Retain the cancer workforce by providing support / mentorship, investing in education and providing opportunities for lifelong learning.</b>
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### Attract new health and care staff through innovative ways

- work with other professional groups to support promotional campaigns to raise the profile of careers in cancer
- make links with GM Access and Step ahead programmes to promote future careers in cancer
- link in with education providers (Higher Education Institutes, Colleges, and Schools) to:
  - raise the profile of a career in cancer
  - building on the digital clinical placement expansion programme, establish cancer placement pathways for student nurses and AHPs, as part of the Targeted Practice Education Programme
  - influence curriculum development
- explore the use of the digital placement model and digital staff passport to expand post registration placement opportunities across GM
- pilot pathways for cancer volunteers / carers interested in a career in cancer, supported by a training package
- optimise use of the apprenticeship levy to support routes into the cancer workforce
- promote using the ACCEND framework to support the development of generalists who have an interest in a career in cancer
- explore pathways for staff groups to transition into new roles within screening supported by clearly defined training routes
- evaluate and expand the Aspiring CNS programme to attract general nurses into a career in cancer and link outcomes to the ACCEND programme
- explore the development of additional 'Aspiring' Cancer Clinical pathways



## Recruit more people into cancer by developing clear routes into professions and opportunities for generalist roles

- promote using the ACCEND framework to inform / standardise job descriptions for the non-medical workforce
- promote and coordinate the ACCEND training programmes to upskill aspiring cancer support workers / nurses / AHPs to support future recruitment
- promote inclusive recruitment through the Addressing Workforce Inequalities Programme
- promote ICP offers related to good employment
- targeted project to scope and promote the role of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner in cancer
- utilise the NHSE Digital Staff Passport to support recruiting staff to rotational roles where a need has been identified.

## Retain the cancer workforce by providing support / mentorship, investing in education, and providing opportunities for lifelong learning

- align with the GM Retention Framework and support planned activity led by the ICP
- collaborate with the GM NHS Integrated Care Virtual Workforce Information System (VWIS) team to collate system wide cancer workforce data, including retention data, surgical audit, and Medical & Clinical Oncology workforce review
- conduct a gap analysis for research nurses to understand recruitment and retention issues, overlaid with research offer and patient uptake
- support implementation of the ACCEND capability framework to promote retention through continuous professional development
- in alignment with ACCEND, support the implementation of the National Acute Oncology competency passports to upskill all relevant workforce groups working across primary and secondary care
- building on the National Preceptorship and Legacy Mentoring programmes, pilot an approach to retaining the cancer workforce throughout their career trajectory
- work with pathway boards to pilot an approach to defining safe caseloads for the CNS' workforce including a review of current skill mix models, to inform workforce modelling
- expand the GM Cancer Academy - the cancer education hub – to ensure it acts as a single point of access for all cancer education
- establish a Cancer Academy Faculty of subject matter experts to support the development and delivery of education

- support the delivery and sustainability of the Allies in Cancer Care AHP Cancer Training Programme and link this to the ACCEND Programme
- support workforce digitisation including access to online education and development through the Cancer Academy
- ensure equity in access to genomics education for the cancer workforce via the cancer academy
- support the wider rollout of Prehab and rehab through the cancer academy
- build links with the GM Practice Educator Centre for Excellence to support the expansion of Practice Educators in cancer to ensure equitable access to training and education to improve standardisation of practice
- conduct a needs analysis to understand training needs of our senior leaders and future leaders
- explore a leadership development package to support Pathway Board members in their system role
- create development packages for the non-clinical workforce e.g. Cancer Trackers, Cancer Managers etc...

## Cross cutting workstreams

- in line with organisation's social responsibility commitment, promote the importance of protected time within job plans for all to:
  - complete training and education as part of their continuous professional development
  - enable learning and practice across the four pillars of practice in line with the ACCEND framework
- reduce inequity in access to level 3 Psycho-Oncology supervision





## 7.4. Addressing Inequalities

One of the key ambitions in the NHS People Plan is 'Belonging to the NHS' focusing on inclusion and reducing inequalities within the workforce. It cites strong evidence for promoting an NHS workforce representative of the community that it serves, as findings suggest patient care and the overall patient experience is more personalised and patients have better outcomes.

The GM Cancer Alliance Workforce and Education Team has established a system-wide Cancer Workforce Addressing Inequalities Expert Advisory Group, which will work collaboratively with the ICB Health Equity Team, feeds directly into the GM Cancer Health Inequalities Board as an active subgroup and forms part of the GM Cancer Tackling Health Inequalities Strategy.

Inequalities will be a cross cutting theme across all strategic activity, supported through a programme Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in addition to project specific EIAs. There will also be a dedicated EDI workforce programme, which we anticipate will evolve significantly during the next 12 months as the ICP EDI function matures. Initial activity includes:

### Increasing Diversity within the Cancer Workforce

- work with the GM VWIS Team to understand current workforce race equality data as part of the workforce data pilot
- pilot race equality interventions to increase representation of the cancer workforce to:
  - ensure the workforce is representative of the community that it serves
  - promote the good employment charter interventions supported by the ICB
  - inform future recruitment practices
- promote inclusive recruitment practices utilising learning from previous projects outside of cancer
- signpost and promote ICP recruitment guides to cancer workforce recruitment colleagues to ensure fair and equitable chances of success, and exploration of alternative entry routes to attract diverse talent
- work with pathway boards to ensure diverse and inclusive representation from the different professional groups

### GM Cancer Workforce Health Messaging

Work in collaboration with key partners and the GM Cancer Early Diagnosis programme to promote and encourage the cancer workforce to live well and engage with health promotion campaigns / programmes, including but not limited to:

- make Smoking History
- making Every Contact Count (MECC) for Menopause
- cancer Screening Campaigns

## Tackling Inequalities Training

- in collaboration with the LGBT Foundation develop a training module to enable the cancer workforce to have mutually empowering conversations with patients and ask inclusive questions
- support and expand the ConnectEDcare Project to ensure equitable access to EDI training
- work in collaboration with the Cancer Academy to develop a training package; *Understanding and Supporting the role of the Carer*, to enable staff to support carers and their wellbeing.





For more information visit:

<https://www.gmcancer.org.uk/programmes-of-work/workforce-and-education>

Email: [gmcancer.wf\\_ed@nhs.net](mailto:gmcancer.wf_ed@nhs.net)

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