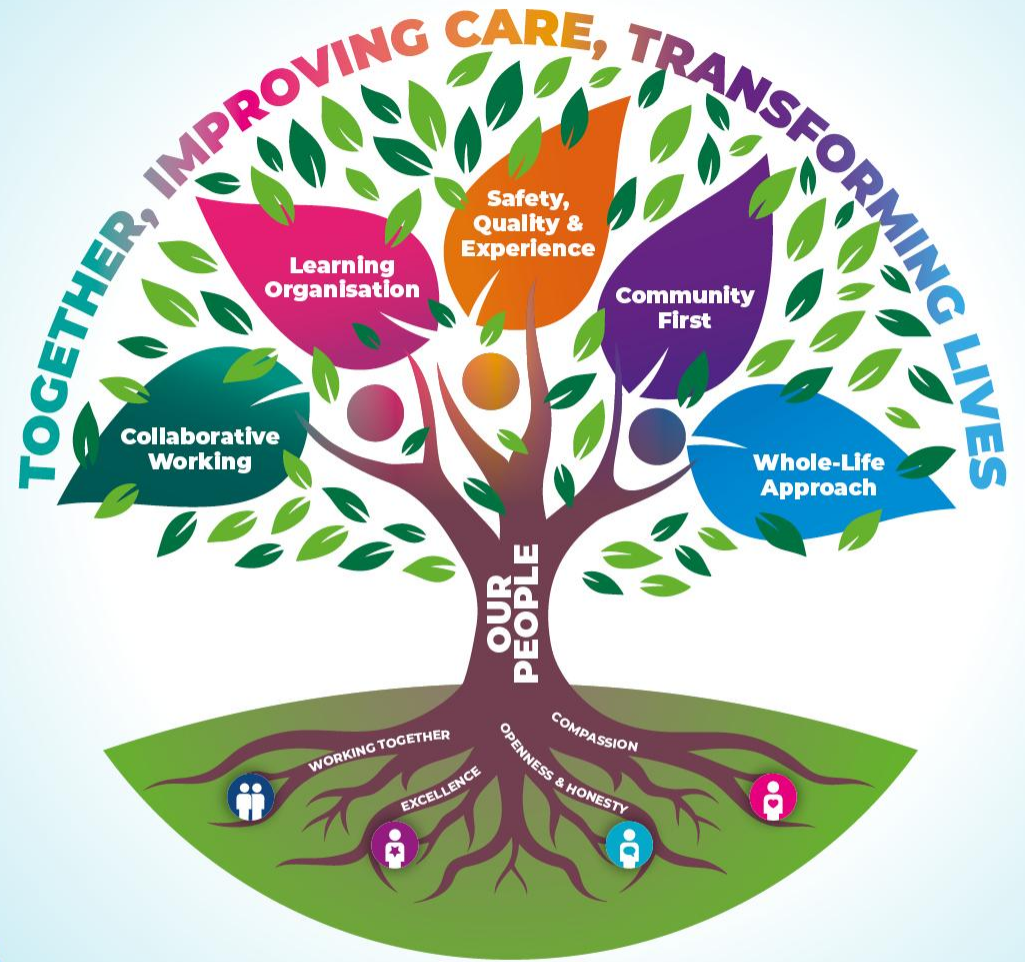


# Timely Care – winter planning and longer term investment



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# Timely Care Programme – longer term investment

- Improving ambulance handovers
- Avoiding unnecessary admissions
- Enhancing ward processes
- Strengthening community capacity
- Reducing hospital bed pressures

Managing Admission

Patient Flow

Timely Discharge

This programme builds a more resilient, year-round system that will work better every winter



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# Managing Admission – longer term

- Enhanced ED triage and early senior decision making
- Ambulatory pathways expanded

## Example: **Frailty Integrated Team (FIT)**

- \* Peak of new 60 referrals accepted in last week of November
- \* Over half of FIT patients are safely discharged home within 48 hours, avoiding unnecessary admission

FIT is preventing avoidable admissions and protecting hospital capacity by turning around frail patients quickly and safely.



# Improving Patient Flow- longer term

- Single Discharge Team (SDT) is single point of coordination for all adults requiring complex discharge and other commissioned services
- Complex discharges completed within 48 hours

CAH  
69%

DHH  
39%

A unified discharge team delivers faster, more consistent discharge planning across all hospital sites



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# Timely Discharge – longer term

- Electronic brokerage system implemented
- Establishing a Single Community Response Team
- Realignment of Packages of Care (POC) to increase capacity
- Early Review Team reassessing new POC within 6-8 weeks



Investing in community capacity allows people to return home sooner and reduces unnecessary hospital st



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# Challenges

- High inpatient and ED demand
- Workforce pressures and sickness absence
- Significant financial constraints
- Seasonal respiratory illness

Despite real challenges, our priority remains safe, sustainable care for the population we serve.



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# Interim Additional Investment for Winter

- Targeted winter investment to protect capacity and safety
- Supports staff wellbeing and service sustainability
- Helps manage predictable seasonal pressures



This investment keeps services as safe and stable as we can during the most challenging months of the year



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# Winter plan – core principles

- Safety – protecting patients and staff
- Responsiveness – reducing waits, improving access
- Innovation- sustainable improvements across the system

Managing  
Admission

Patient  
Flow

Timely  
Discharge

Our winter plan is designed to aid fast, safer care across the whole patient journey



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# Managing Admission – some key initiatives

- Extended Paediatric Short Stay and evening / weekend ED cover
- Urology and ENT: 24/7 in-reach to ED triage (CAH and DHH)
- GP OOH: Increased evening / weekend GP provision
- Home Treatment Crisis Response: service expanded to 24 hours and direct triage referrals
- Christmas and New Year: Additional staffing across the 11 day holiday period

We are strengthening front door, so patients are assessed sooner and unnecessary admissions are avoided

# Improving Patient Flow and Timely Discharge- some key initiatives

- Discharge Lounge – extended hours, including overnight in Craigavon
- Earlier diagnostics – bloods, discharge letters – in Daisy Hill
- Additional weekend pharmacy support
- Faster, safer discharge planning

These improvements create earlier patient movement, allowing patients home safely and freeing beds when they're needed most

# Public support – Choose Well

- Encouraging the public to use the right service



**Selfcare:** To treat an ache, pain, upset stomach, cough or cold, get plenty of rest, take simple pain killers if needed and use over the counter medicines.



**Children's symptom checker:** If your child is feeling unwell, you can use our symptom checker below to gain a better understanding of what might be happening and where to get treatment. [Visit the Children's Symptom Checker here.](#)



**Your local pharmacist:** Can give confidential, expert advice and treat a number of minor ailments such as aches and pains, skin conditions, allergies, eye conditions, upset stomach and emergency contraception.



**Phone First:** 0300 123 3111: Patients can be given an appointment for a minor injury unit or urgent care services, directed to their GP or asked to attend Emergency Department.



**Urgent Care Out of Hours:** For people needing urgent medical treatment but cannot wait until their GP practice opens. Available from 6.00pm during the week until your GP surgery opens the next morning; 24 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.

**Your GP:** Provide expert medical advice and diagnosis, referring you for further care or consultation as needed.



**Primary Eyecare Assessment & Referral Service:** Treats sudden eye conditions such as red eyes, sudden reduction in vision, eye pain or a foreign body in the eye. [Find out more on the HSC website](#)



**Mental healthcare:** If you are experiencing mental health difficulties there are a range of services available to help you. More information is available on the [NI Direct website](#).



**Emergency Dental Treatment:** If patients have an urgent dental need they can follow advice on the [HSC website](#).



**Minor Injuries Unit:** Treats injuries that are not life threatening such as broken bones, sprains, bites and burns.



**Urgent Care Centre:** Treats injuries that are not life threatening such as broken bones, sprains, minor scalp wounds and suturing of minor wounds.



**Emergency Department:** Provides the highest level of emergency care for patients, especially those with acute illnesses or trauma, such as heart attacks, stroke, serious accidents or head injuries.



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