



Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

TOGETHER, IMPROVING CARE, TRANSFORMING LIVES



NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

STRATEGY 2030



Working together



Excellence



Openness & Honesty



Compassion

Supporting the Southern Health and Social Care Trust Vision & Strategy 2030



This is Our Southern Trust Nursing and Midwifery Strategy

Shaped by the voices, experiences and ambitions of our nurses and midwives, it reflects the diverse communities, services and settings in which we provide care.

While aligned with regional and professional priorities, it is rooted in our local context and builds on the strengths of our people, services and communities.

It reflects who we are today and our shared ambition for Nursing and Midwifery across the Southern Trust to 2030.

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Together

Honouring our past. Listening to our people. Investing in our profession. Shaping the future.

Foreword from Chair and Chief Executive

It is our pleasure to introduce the Southern Health and Social Care Trust Nursing and Midwifery Strategy.

Nursing and midwifery are at the heart of our organisation. Every day, our nurses and midwives provide expert, compassionate and person-centred care, making a lasting difference to the lives of the people, families and communities we serve. Their professionalism, commitment and expertise are fundamental to the success of our Trust and to delivering safe, high-quality care.

As health and social care continues to evolve, investing in our nursing and midwifery workforce is fundamental to our future. This strategy reflects that commitment. It provides a clear direction for the future, strengthening professional practice, leadership, learning and innovation while supporting the ambitions of our Trust Vision and Strategy.

We are particularly proud that this strategy has been shaped by the voices of our nurses and midwives. Their experience, insight and ambition have helped create a strategy that is grounded in the realities of practice while looking confidently to the future.

To every nurse and midwife across the Southern Trust, thank you. Thank you for your professionalism, compassion and unwavering commitment to those you care for each day. You are central to the success of our organisation, and we are proud of the contribution you make to improving the health and wellbeing of our population.

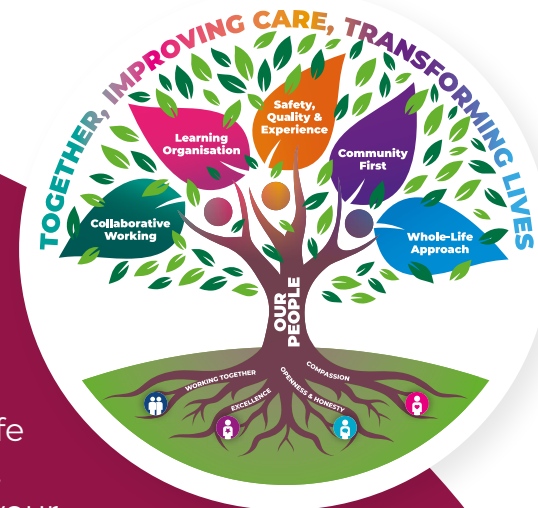
We commend this strategy to you and look forward to working together to turn its ambitions into meaningful action for our workforce, our services and the people and communities we are privileged to serve.



Eileen Mullan
Chair



Steve Spoerry
Chief Executive



Foreword from the Executive Director of Nursing

Honouring our past. Listening to our people. Investing in our profession. Shaping the future.

These words reflect not only the ambition of this strategy, but also the journey we have taken together to create it.

Every day, I have the privilege of witnessing the extraordinary contribution that nurses and midwives make across the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. Whether caring for people in our hospitals, community services, mental health services, learning disability services, maternity services or in people's own homes, our nurses and midwives combine compassion, professionalism and expertise to make a lasting difference.

I am incredibly proud of our profession and of the people who represent it.

From the outset, we committed to developing this strategy with our nurses and midwives, not simply for them. Through engagement across every Directorate, colleagues shared their experiences, challenged our thinking and helped shape the vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities contained within these pages.

One message came through consistently.

Our nurses and midwives were not asking for a different strategy—they were asking for a strategy that delivers.

One that values and supports its workforce.

One that strengthens professional practice and leadership.

One that invests in learning, development and innovation.

One that empowers nurses and midwives to provide the very best care for the people and communities we serve.

This strategy is our collective commitment to delivering that future.

It belongs to every nurse and midwife across the Southern Trust, and its success will be measured not by the publication of this document, but by the difference it makes in practice.

Thank you for everything you do, every day. Together, we will continue to strengthen our profession, support one another and shape the future of nursing and midwifery within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.



Grace Hamilton
Executive Director
of Nursing



PART ONE

Our Story

INTRODUCTION

Why We Need a Nursing & Midwifery Strategy

Nursing and midwifery have never been more important. Every day, across hospitals, community settings and people's homes, nurses and midwives provide safe, effective and compassionate care to individuals, families and communities. Their contribution is fundamental to delivering high-quality care and experience and to achieving the ambitions of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

Health and social care continues to evolve at pace. Changing population needs, increasing demand, workforce challenges and advances in treatment and technology require us to continually adapt and improve how we deliver care. Nurses and midwives are working across traditional boundaries, taking on increasingly complex roles and leading improvements in practice, quality and outcomes.

This strategy has been developed in recognition of these challenges and opportunities. It sets out our shared vision, strategic priorities and commitments for Nursing and Midwifery through to 2030, providing clear direction for the continued development of our professions and ensuring they remain central to the delivery of safe, high-quality, person-centred care.

This strategy is not simply about responding to current pressures. It is about creating the conditions in which Nursing and Midwifery can thrive — supporting our workforce, strengthening professional practice and leadership, and enabling learning, innovation and continuous improvement.

The development of this strategy has been informed by extensive engagement with nurses and midwives across all Directorates and services within the Trust. Their experiences, aspirations and priorities have directly shaped our vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities, and will continue to inform how the strategy is delivered.

The Context for Nursing and Midwifery

The Changing Health and Social Care Landscape

Health and social care services are experiencing increasing demand. An ageing population, a growing prevalence of long-term conditions, increasingly complex care needs and rising public expectations continue to place significant pressure on services across Northern Ireland.

At the same time, advances in treatment, technology and digital innovation are transforming how care is delivered. Increasingly, care is being provided closer to home, with a greater emphasis on prevention, early intervention, partnership working and integrated models of care.

As the largest professional workforce within health and social care, nurses and midwives have a critical role in responding to this changing landscape. Their contribution extends across direct care, professional leadership, service improvement, quality assurance, education, research and innovation.

Meeting future needs will require Nursing and Midwifery to continue to evolve, embrace new ways of working and ensure our workforce has the skills, knowledge and support required to deliver high-quality care.

Nursing and Midwifery in the Southern Trust

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust provides a wide range of acute, community, mental health, learning disability, maternity and children's services across the Southern Trust area.

Nurses and midwives work across the organisation and throughout the care journey, providing care, support, advocacy and professional leadership to patients, service users, families and communities. Their reach across services and settings places Nursing and Midwifery in a unique position to influence experience, improve outcomes and lead positive change.



Regional Professional Direction

This strategy has been developed within the context of the regional professional direction for Nursing and Midwifery in Northern Ireland, including the Chief Nursing Officer's Shaping Our Future.

It reflects regional priorities while responding to the particular needs of our population, workforce and services within the Southern Trust.



***Leadership
should be visible,
supportive and
compassionate.”***

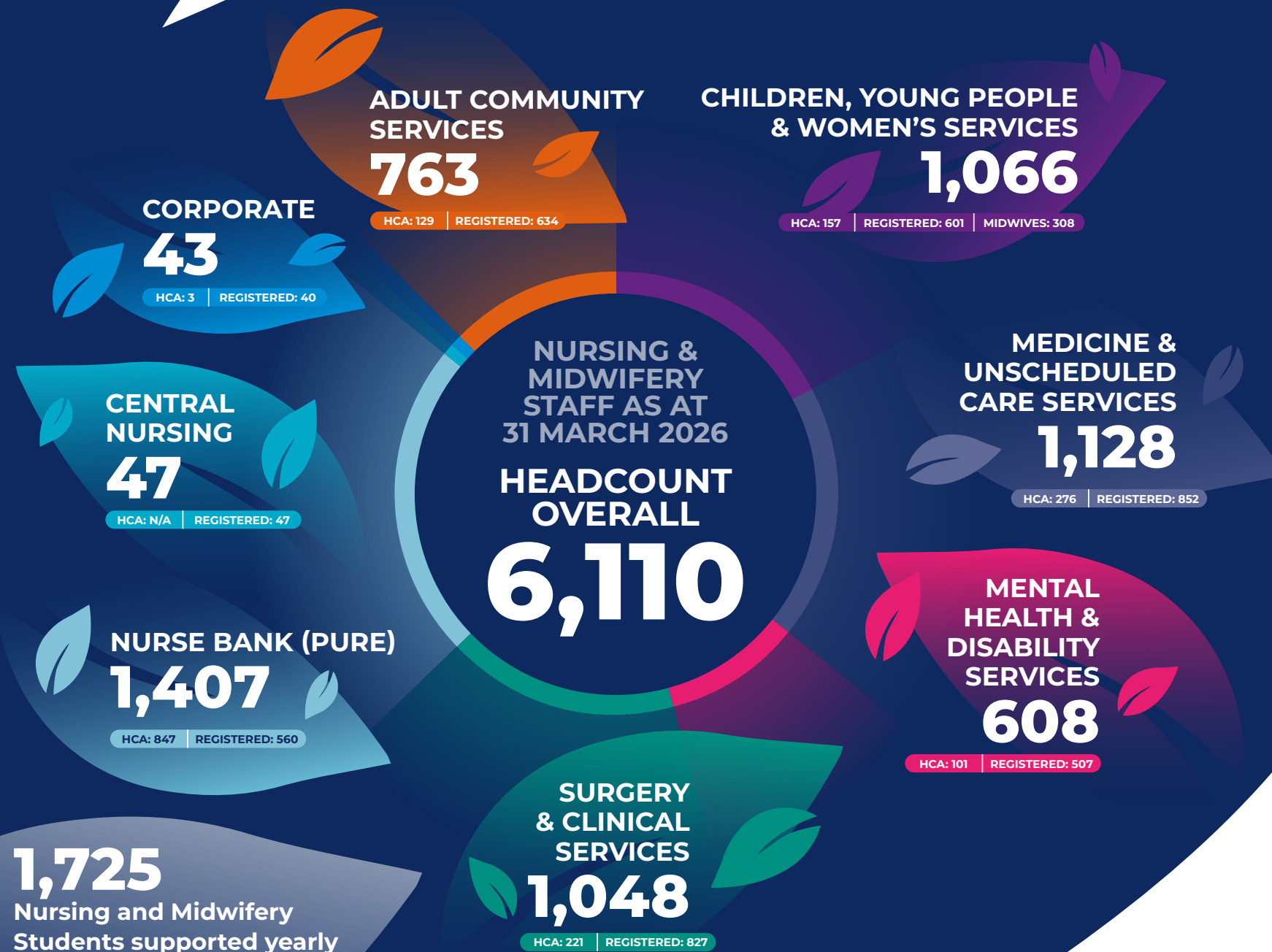
Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

The engagement undertaken during the development of this strategy highlighted a number of opportunities and challenges for nursing and midwifery within the Trust.

Key themes included recruitment and retention, staff wellbeing, leadership development, learning and career development, quality improvement and patient safety, professional empowerment, digital innovation and multidisciplinary collaboration.

These themes have informed the strategic priorities contained within this document and will shape our actions over the lifetime of the strategy.

Through this strategy, we are committing to investing in our people, supporting professional excellence and ensuring nursing and midwifery continue to lead the delivery and transformation of care across the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.



Honouring Our Past, Shaping Our Future

Nursing and Midwifery have evolved significantly over generations, responding to changing population needs, advances in knowledge and technology, and developments in professional education and practice. From traditional models of training and care, our professions have grown in scope, autonomy and influence, with nurses and midwives now working across an increasingly diverse range of roles, services and settings.

Today, nurses and midwives work across an extraordinary breadth of practice. They lead services, deliver advanced and specialist practice, contribute to research and innovation, influence policy and service development, drive quality improvement and play a vital role in shaping the future of health and social care.

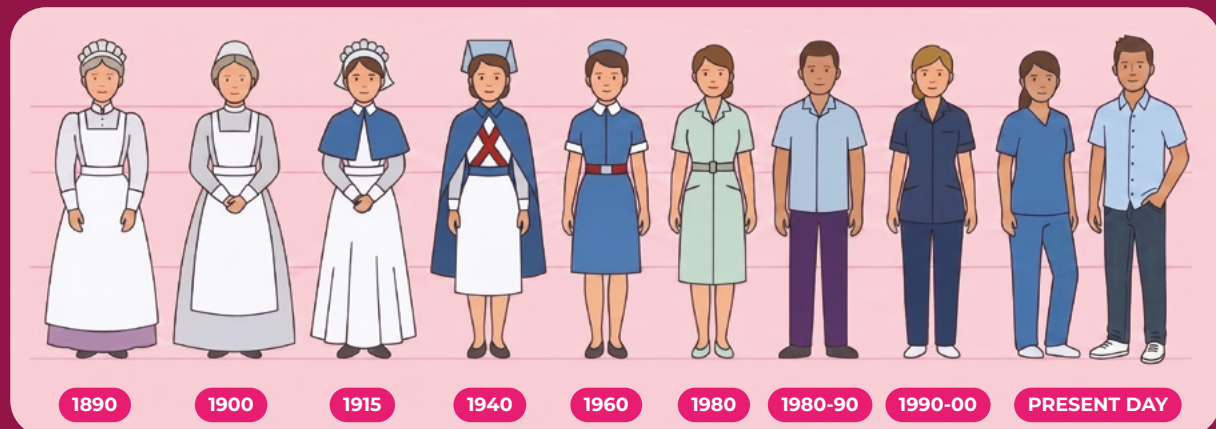
As we look ahead, we build on the achievements, values and professional legacy of those who came before us. Honouring how our professions have developed gives us confidence to continue shaping Nursing and Midwifery as compassionate, skilled, innovative and influential professions for the future.

Our Foundations

Our professions have been shaped by generations of nurses and midwives whose commitment established strong foundations for the care we provide today.

- A proud tradition of compassionate, hands-on care
- Strong professional identity and commitment to service
- Learning grounded in clinical practice and experience
- Leadership close to patients, families and communities
- Deep relationships with the people and communities we serve
- Professional values that continue to underpin Nursing and Midwifery today

The compassion, commitment and professionalism of those who came before us laid the foundations for the professions we know today.



Where We Are Today – A Diverse and Highly Skilled Profession

Nursing and Midwifery have changed significantly over generations. While the pressures facing health and social care today are considerable, it is important that we also recognise how far our professions have come — in education, opportunity, scope of practice, professional autonomy, leadership and influence.

Today, nurses and midwives work across an extraordinary breadth of roles, services and settings. They provide and lead care in hospitals, communities and people's homes; work in specialist, advanced and consultant practice; lead services and teams; educate and develop others; contribute to research and innovation; influence policy and service development; and lead improvements in quality, safety and experience.

Our professions continue to evolve. Nurses and midwives have greater opportunities to develop their careers, extend their practice, lead change and use their knowledge, skills and professional judgement to influence care than generations before them. This progress has been built on the contribution of those who came before us and provides strong foundations for what comes next.

Where We Are Going – Shaping the Future

Our responsibility now is to build on that progress. Through this strategy, we will continue to strengthen our professions, create opportunities for nurses and midwives to develop and lead, and ensure Nursing and Midwifery has a strong voice in shaping the future of care.

Our four strategic priorities set out how we will do this through to 2030.

Our Commitment

While the challenges facing health and social care are significant, so too are the opportunities.

Nursing and midwifery have continually evolved to meet the changing needs of the population. This strategy honours the achievements of the past, recognises the contribution of today's workforce and sets out our ambition for the future.

By investing in our people, strengthening professional practice and leadership, and embracing learning and innovation, we will continue to shape the future of nursing and midwifery across the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

**Honouring our past. Listening to our people.
Investing in our profession. Shaping the future.**

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Working together to improve care and transform lives

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust Nursing and Midwifery Strategy aligns with local, regional and national priorities and supports the delivery of our Trust Vision and Strategic Priorities to 2030.

TRUST PEOPLE STRATEGY



Our nursing and midwifery workforce is our greatest asset. We will:

- ✓ Attract, recruit and retain the best people
- ✓ Support wellbeing, health and resilience
- ✓ Foster inclusion, belonging and compassionate leadership
- ✓ Develop skills, careers and leadership potential
- ✓ Create a great place to work and grow

TRUST VISION & STRATEGY 2030



Our Strategy is underpinned by five strategic priorities:

- ✓ Collaborative Working
- ✓ Learning Organisation
- ✓ Safety, Quality & Experience
- ✓ Community First
- ✓ Whole Life Approach

SHAPING OUR FUTURE 2023–2028



We will support the Chief Nursing Officer's vision for nursing and midwifery in Northern Ireland by:



WORKFORCE

Building a sustainable, skilled and supported nursing and midwifery workforce



LEADERSHIP

Strengthening leadership at every level



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Growing expertise, education and career opportunities



QUALITY ASSURANCE

Embedding excellence, safety and continuous improvement

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 2024–2027



Our Strategy contributes to government priorities by supporting:

- ✓ Improved wellbeing and better outcomes
- ✓ Reducing health inequalities
- ✓ Reforming and transforming health and social care
- ✓ Reducing waiting times
- ✓ Building a sustainable health and social care system

SOUTHERN TRUST NURSING & MIDWIFERY STRATEGY 2030

Professional leadership

Compassionate care

Better outcomes for all

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE RESET PLAN



We will lead and influence the move towards care closer to home by supporting:

- ✓ Prevention-focused and community-based care
- ✓ Early intervention, anticipatory and proactive support
- ✓ Integrated working across health and social care
- ✓ Partnership working with people, communities, carers and the voluntary and community sector
- ✓ Digital innovation and new models of care.

Listening to Our People

Shaping Our Strategy Together

“This strategy has been shaped by the voices of the nurses and midwives who deliver care every day across the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.”

Introduction

From the outset, our ambition was to develop a strategy that reflected the experiences, aspirations and expertise of our nursing and midwifery workforce.

We wanted to understand what matters most to those delivering care every day — the challenges they face, the opportunities they see and their ambitions for the future of Nursing and Midwifery within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

Through an extensive programme of engagement, nurses and midwives from across our Directorates, services and professional roles shared their views openly and honestly. While experiences differed across services and settings, there was remarkable consistency in what mattered most.

Those voices have directly shaped our vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities.

We Listened

Our engagement included:

- Nursing and Midwifery Strategy Workshop
- Directorate Focus Groups
- Professional Forums
- Learning As We Go sessions
- Governance Forums
- Trade Union engagement
- Trust-wide staff communication and opportunities to contribute
- Conversations with nurses and midwives across hospital, community, mental health, learning disability, maternity, children's and corporate services

We Heard

Across our engagement, six clear and consistent themes emerged.



THEME 1: Person-Centred, Compassionate Care

Nurses and midwives consistently reinforced that compassionate, person-centred care must remain at the heart of everything we do. Working in partnership with people, families and communities should continue to define our professions and shape how care is delivered.



THEME 2: Our Workforce

A supported, valued and sustainable workforce was seen as fundamental to delivering high-quality care. Recruitment, retention, safe staffing, wellbeing, work-life balance and succession planning were consistently identified as priorities.



THEME 3: Leadership

Visible, compassionate leadership emerged as one of the strongest themes. Staff emphasised leadership at every level, positive workplace cultures, support and development for future leaders, and a stronger professional voice for Nursing and Midwifery.



THEME 4: Learning and Development

There was a strong desire for lifelong learning and professional growth. Staff highlighted protected learning time, education, career pathways, advanced practice and access to leadership development.



THEME 5: Quality, Safety and Improvement

Quality improvement, patient safety and strong clinical governance were central to professional practice. Staff wanted opportunities to lead improvement, learn from practice and continually improve the care and experiences of people using our services.



THEME 6: Professional Voice

Staff wanted Nursing and Midwifery to be recognised, valued and meaningfully involved in shaping health and social care. Professional autonomy, empowerment and opportunities to influence decisions affecting practice were important themes.



PART TWO

Our Future

Our Vision

Together, nursing and midwifery will deliver safe, effective and compassionate care, working in partnership with people, families and communities through professionalism, leadership, innovation and a commitment to excellence

Our Guiding Principles

Our Nursing and Midwifery Strategy is underpinned by a set of guiding principles that shape how we will work together to deliver our vision and strategic priorities. These principles inform our decisions, behaviours and actions, reflecting our professional values, the feedback received through engagement and our shared commitment to improving care, experience and outcomes for the communities we serve.

Person-Centred

We will place patients, service users, families and carers at the centre of care and decision-making, while recognising that supporting and valuing our staff is fundamental to delivering safe, compassionate and person-centred care.

We will listen to what matters, value individual experiences and work in partnership to deliver compassionate, personalised and responsive care that improves outcomes and experiences for all.

Professionally Led

We will value and trust the knowledge, skills and professional judgement of nurses and midwives, strengthening leadership at every level and empowering them to influence decisions, lead improvements and practise to the full scope of their professional roles.

Safe and Compassionate

We will promote a culture where safety, compassion, dignity and respect are at the heart of everything we do, supporting staff to raise concerns, learn openly and deliver consistently safe, high-quality care.

Evidence-Informed

We will use research, data, professional standards and the experiences of people who use our services and staff to inform practice and decision-making. We will encourage reflective practice, professional curiosity and the application of evidence to continually improve care.

Inclusive and Respectful

We will value diversity, promote equality of opportunity, challenge discrimination and create inclusive environments where everyone feels respected, valued and able to contribute.

Collaborative

We will work in partnership across professional, organisational and system boundaries, involving people who use our services, families, carers, staff and stakeholders in shaping services and improving care.

Learning and Improvement Focused

We will foster a culture of continuous learning, innovation and improvement, using feedback, incidents, research, service evaluation and shared learning to drive meaningful and sustainable change across the Trust.



Digitally Enabled

We will maximise the opportunities presented by **Encompass** and emerging digital technologies to support safer, more connected and effective care, building the confidence and capability of nurses and midwives to use digital tools to enhance professional practice and improve patient outcomes.

Sustainable and Future-Focused

We will support the long-term sustainability of our workforce, services and environment, anticipating future health and social care needs while ensuring nursing and midwifery remain adaptable, resilient and influential through to 2030.

Our Shared Approach

These guiding principles underpin each of our strategic priorities and will shape how we work, lead and deliver care throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

Together, they provide the foundation for a nursing and midwifery workforce that is **professionally led, person-centred, evidence-informed, compassionate and committed to continuous improvement**, ensuring we deliver the highest standards of care for the people and communities we serve.

Honouring our past.
Listening to our people.
Investing in our profession.
Shaping the future.

Strategic Priority One

Delivering Safe, High-Quality Care and Experience

Our Ambition

Every person who receives care from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust should experience care that is safe, effective, compassionate and consistently of the highest quality.

Safe, high-quality care is the foundation of nursing and midwifery practice. Every interaction, decision and intervention provides an opportunity to improve outcomes and the experience of people who use our services, their families and carers.

As the largest professional workforce within the Trust, nurses and midwives have a unique responsibility and opportunity to lead improvements in safety, quality and experience across every service and setting.

Our ambition is to enable nurses and midwives to deliver professional, evidence-informed care, supported by strong clinical governance, digital innovation and a culture of continuous learning and improvement.



Our Strategic Commitment

We are committed to creating the conditions in which nurses and midwives can consistently deliver safe, high-quality and person-centred care, supported by strong clinical governance, continuous improvement, innovation and professional leadership.

How We Will Deliver This

Strengthen our culture of safety

- ✓ Promote a culture of openness, learning and continuous improvement.
- ✓ Support staff to raise concerns and ensure concerns are heard, acted upon and learning is shared.
- ✓ Embed patient safety principles across all nursing and midwifery services.
- ✓ Embed a Just Culture that promotes learning, accountability, fairness and improvement.

Deliver safe, high-quality and person-centred care

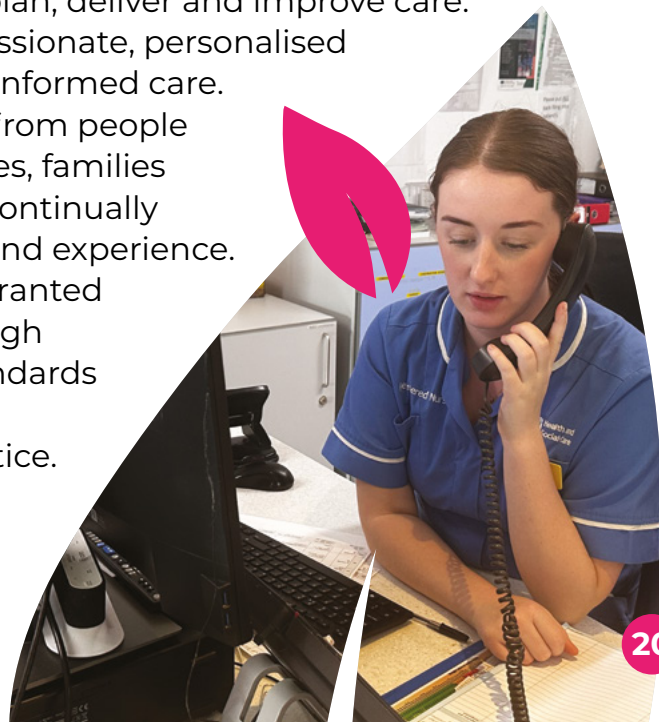
- ✓ Work in partnership with people, families and carers to plan, deliver and improve care.
- ✓ Deliver compassionate, personalised and evidence-informed care.
- ✓ Use feedback from people use our services, families and carers to continually improve care and experience.
- ✓ Reduce unwarranted variation through consistent standards and evidence-informed practice.

Strengthen Quality Improvement

- ✓ Enable nurses and midwives to identify opportunities for improvement, test change and share learning to improve outcomes.
- ✓ Learn from incidents, complaints, compliments, feedback and experience.
- ✓ Share innovation, learning and best practice across the Trust.

Advance Digital Nursing and Midwifery Practice

- ✓ Maximise the opportunities presented by Encompass and emerging digital technologies to strengthen clinical decision-making, improve the quality of information, reduce unwarranted variation and enable safer, more connected care.
- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to develop the digital confidence and capability required for contemporary practice.
- ✓ Use high-quality clinical information and data to support professional decision-making, assurance and improvement.
- ✓ Embrace innovation that improves safety, quality, care and experience.



Strengthen Professional Practice

- ✓ Strengthen professional practice through evidence-informed care, professional leadership, innovation and continuous development.
- ✓ Support professional judgement and clinical decision-making.
- ✓ Enable nurses and midwives to practise to the full scope of their professional role and expertise.
- ✓ Foster professional curiosity, reflection and lifelong learning.

Strengthen Clinical Governance

- ✓ Promote strong professional and clinical governance across all nursing and midwifery services.
- ✓ Use audit, assurance, data and quality indicators to identify variation and drive improvement.
- ✓ Learn from incidents and implement improvements to reduce future risk.
- ✓ Support a culture where governance provides assurance while enabling innovation and improvement.

What Success Will Look Like

By 2030 we will have:

- ✓ A strong and sustainable culture of safety, learning and continuous improvement.
- ✓ Nurses and midwives who feel trusted, supported and enabled to deliver consistently safe, high-quality and compassionate care.
- ✓ Greater consistency in the quality and experience of care across our services.
- ✓ A workforce confident to speak up, exercise professional judgement and contribute to improvement.
- ✓ Quality improvement embedded within everyday nursing and midwifery practice.
- ✓ A digitally confident workforce making effective use of Encompass, data and emerging technologies to improve care.
- ✓ People, families and carers who feel listened to, involved and able to participate meaningfully in decisions about their care.
- ✓ Strong professional and clinical governance that provides assurance, supports learning and drives improvement.

How We Will Measure Success

Success will be demonstrated through improvements in:

- ✓ Patient safety and quality indicators.
- ✓ Patient, service user, family and carer experience measures.
- ✓ Clinical audit and nursing and midwifery assurance outcomes.
- ✓ Nursing and midwifery-led quality improvement activity and demonstrable impact.
- ✓ Patient safety reporting, learning and evidence of improvement.
- ✓ Complaints, compliments and other sources of experience feedback.
- ✓ Staff experience, speaking-up and safety culture measures.
- ✓ Use of Encompass, digital capability and relevant digital quality measures.
- ✓ Regulatory and professional assurance outcomes.



Strategic Priority Two

Building a Highly Skilled, Supported and Sustainable Workforce

Our Ambition

Our nurses and midwives are at the heart of everything we do. Every day, they make a difference to the lives of individuals, families and communities. Supporting, developing and sustaining our workforce is fundamental to delivering safe, effective and compassionate care.

We are committed to creating an environment where nurses and midwives feel valued, respected and supported to thrive throughout their careers. We recognise that supporting our workforce extends beyond wellbeing alone; it is about creating compassionate, inclusive and empowering workplaces where people feel safe, listened to, valued and equipped to deliver the highest standards of care.

As health and social care continues to evolve, so too must our workforce. We will invest in the knowledge, skills and capabilities of our nurses and midwives, ensuring they are equipped to meet changing population needs, embrace innovation and deliver care within increasingly complex health and social care environments.



Our Strategic Commitment

We are committed to developing a highly skilled, supported and sustainable nursing and midwifery workforce, equipped to meet the changing needs of our population. We will invest in our people, create positive working environments and support professional development throughout careers. In doing so, we will strengthen recruitment and retention, foster professional pride and enable nurses and midwives to deliver safe, compassionate and high-quality care now and for future generations.

How We Will Deliver This

Build a Highly Skilled and Competent Workforce

We will:

- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to maintain and continually develop professional competence.
- ✓ Promote evidence-informed practice, lifelong learning and reflective practice.
- ✓ Ensure our workforce has the knowledge, skills and confidence to respond to changing models of care.
- ✓ Develop the capabilities required to deliver safe, effective and innovative practice.
- ✓ Promote access to learning and development opportunities, including protected learning time where appropriate.

Promote Workforce Wellbeing and Support

We will:

- ✓ Foster a culture where health, wellbeing and psychological safety are prioritised.
- ✓ Promote compassionate leadership and working environments where colleagues feel valued, respected, included and supported.
- ✓ Support staff to access appropriate wellbeing resources and support services.
- ✓ Promote approaches that support a sustainable work-life balance wherever possible.

Strengthen Workforce Planning and Safe Staffing

We will:

- ✓ Support workforce planning that enables safe, effective and sustainable care.
- ✓ Promote appropriate staffing, skill mix and workforce deployment.
- ✓ Use workforce intelligence and evidence to inform future planning.
- ✓ Develop sustainable workforce models that respond to changing population health needs.

Develop Advanced, Specialist and Enhanced Practice

We will:

- ✓ Support development opportunities at every career stage, from foundation practice through to advanced and consultant-level roles.
- ✓ Support the continued development of advanced, specialist and enhanced practice roles across nursing and midwifery.
- ✓ Promote opportunities for consultant-level practice where appropriate.
- ✓ Develop career pathways that retain expertise, build capability and support succession planning.

Grow and Retain Our Future Workforce

We will:

- ✓ Support students, newly qualified staff and internationally educated colleagues to transition successfully into practice.
- ✓ Strengthen preceptorship, Reflective Supervision, professional support and mentorship.
- ✓ Promote clear and accessible career pathways throughout every stage of a nursing and midwifery career.
- ✓ Enable career development across clinical practice, leadership, education, research and quality improvement.

Promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will:

- ✓ Create an inclusive culture where everyone feels they belong.
- ✓ Value diversity and promote equality of opportunity.
- ✓ Foster workplaces where every individual is treated with dignity, fairness and respect.
- ✓ Challenge behaviours that undermine inclusion, civility and professional respect.

Strengthen Workforce Engagement

We will:

- ✓ Ensure nurses and midwives have a meaningful voice in shaping services, workforce decisions and professional practice.
- ✓ Act on staff feedback and demonstrate how it has influenced decisions and improvements.
- ✓ Strengthen communication between frontline teams and nursing and midwifery leadership.
- ✓ Promote shared decision-making and collective leadership.





What Success Will Look Like

By 2030 we will have:

- ✓ A highly skilled, confident and compassionate nursing and midwifery workforce.
- ✓ Improved recruitment, retention and workforce stability.
- ✓ Sustainable workforce models that support safe, effective care.
- ✓ Expanded advanced, specialist, enhanced and consultant nursing and midwifery practice.
- ✓ Clear and accessible career pathways supporting professional development and progression.
- ✓ Strong succession planning that prepares future nursing and midwifery leaders.
- ✓ Positive workplace cultures where staff feel valued, respected, included and supported.
- ✓ Improved staff wellbeing, engagement and professional satisfaction.
- ✓ A workforce with a strong professional voice, supported to learn, develop, reflect and contribute to improvement.

How We Will Measure Success

Success will be demonstrated through improvements in:

- ✓ Recruitment, retention, vacancy and turnover.
- ✓ Workforce planning and safe staffing indicators.
- ✓ Staff wellbeing, engagement and workforce experience.
- ✓ Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging measures.
- ✓ Access to learning, development and protected learning opportunities.
- ✓ Participation in Reflective Supervision.
- ✓ Career progression and development across clinical, operational, educational, research and leadership pathways.
- ✓ Development of advanced, specialist, enhanced and consultant practice roles.
- ✓ Student recruitment, transition, preceptorship and retention.
- ✓ Staff feedback and evidence that the professional voice of nurses and midwives influences decisions and improvement.

Strategic Priority Three

Driving Learning, Innovation and Improvement

Our Ambition

Healthcare continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. Advances in clinical practice, digital technology, research and service transformation require nurses and midwives to continually develop their knowledge, skills and capabilities throughout their careers.

We are committed to fostering a culture of lifelong learning, Reflective Supervision, innovation, research and continuous improvement, where every nurse and midwife is empowered to question practice, embrace change and contribute to improving outcomes for patients, service users and communities.

We will create a culture where learning never stops, Reflective Supervision is valued, research and evidence inform practice, and innovation and quality improvement drive better outcomes.

By investing in education, research, digital capability and quality improvement, we will strengthen professional practice, support professional growth and prepare our nursing and midwifery workforce to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.



Our Strategic Commitment

We are committed to creating a culture where lifelong learning, Reflective Supervision, innovation, research and continuous improvement are embedded within everyday nursing and midwifery practice. By investing in education, professional development, research, digital capability and quality improvement, we will support nurses and midwives to maintain professional competence, deliver evidence-informed care, embrace innovation and shape the future of our profession.

How We Will Deliver This

Promote Lifelong Learning, Reflective Supervision and Professional Development

We will:

- ✓ Promote a culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development.
- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to meet the requirements of professional revalidation.
- ✓ Embed Reflective Supervision as a key component of professional development, wellbeing and safe, effective practice.
- ✓ Encourage reflective practice, professional curiosity and lifelong learning.
- ✓ Increase opportunities to access education, training and postgraduate development, including protected learning time where appropriate.

“We want opportunities to develop throughout our careers.”

Strengthen Research and Evidence-Informed Practice

We will:

- ✓ Foster a culture where research is recognised as an integral part of nursing and midwifery practice.
- ✓ Increase opportunities for nurses and midwives to participate in research, service evaluation and quality improvement.
- ✓ Develop research capability and confidence across all career stages.
- ✓ Strengthen partnerships with universities, academic institutions and regional networks.
- ✓ Promote the translation of research and evidence into everyday clinical practice.
- ✓ Support publication, presentation and dissemination of nursing and midwifery research, innovation and learning.



Build Improvement Capability

We will:

- ✓ Build knowledge and confidence in quality improvement approaches across nursing and midwifery.
- ✓ Enable nurses and midwives to lead and participate in improvement initiatives.
- ✓ Use learning from incidents, patient and service user experience, audit, research and service evaluation to drive improvement.
- ✓ Share learning, innovation and best practice across the Trust.

Develop Digital Capability and Innovation

We will:

- ✓ Maximise the opportunities presented through Encompass and future digital technologies.
- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to develop digital confidence and capability.
- ✓ Use digital information and data to support clinical decision-making and improve outcomes.
- ✓ Embrace innovation and emerging technologies that enhance the quality, safety and experience of care.

Encourage Innovation

We will:

- ✓ Foster a culture where innovation is encouraged and celebrated.
- ✓ Support staff to test new ideas and develop new ways of working.
- ✓ Promote collaborative working across services, professions and organisations.
- ✓ Share innovation and learning across the Trust and beyond.

Strengthen Education Partnerships

We will:

- ✓ Work collaboratively with universities and education providers to support the future nursing and midwifery workforce.
- ✓ Support Practice Supervisors, Practice Assessors and Clinical Educators in delivering high-quality learning experiences.
- ✓ Strengthen student learning environments across all care settings.
- ✓ Promote opportunities for shared learning across professions and organisations.



What Success Will Look Like

By 2030 we will have:

- ✓ A culture where lifelong learning is embedded across nursing and midwifery.
- ✓ Reflective Supervision embedded as a routine element of professional practice, with all nurses and midwives supported to participate in a minimum of two Reflective Supervision sessions each year.
- ✓ Increased participation in research, service evaluation and quality improvement.
- ✓ Greater digital confidence and effective use of Encompass and future digital technologies to support care.
- ✓ Innovation embedded within everyday nursing and midwifery practice.
- ✓ Strong partnerships with universities and education providers.
- ✓ Increased publication, presentation and dissemination of nursing and midwifery learning, research and innovation.
- ✓ Nurses and midwives leading improvements in practice and influencing the future of health and social care.

How We Will Measure Success

Success will be demonstrated through improvements in:

- ✓ Participation in education and continuing professional development.
- ✓ Professional revalidation compliance.
- ✓ Compliance with the Trust's Reflective Supervision standard, ensuring all nurses and midwives are supported to participate in a minimum of two Reflective Supervision sessions each year.
- ✓ Research, service evaluation and quality improvement activity.
- ✓ Digital capability and effective utilisation of Encompass.
- ✓ Student placement quality and learner feedback.
- ✓ Academic partnerships and collaborative projects.
- ✓ Publications, presentations and dissemination of learning.
- ✓ Staff confidence in learning, innovation and professional development.

"Don't write another strategy that sits on a shelf."

Strategic Priority Four

Leading with Professionalism, Influence and Compassion

Our Ambition

Nursing and Midwifery are among the largest, most trusted and influential professions within health and social care. Every nurse and midwife leads every day through the care they provide, the decisions they make, the standards they uphold and the influence they have on patients, service users, families, carers, colleagues and services.

We are committed to fostering a culture where leadership is compassionate, inclusive and visible, and where professionalism, integrity and accountability are at the heart of everything we do.

Leadership is not defined by job title, but by behaviours, influence and professional accountability. Every nurse and midwife should have the opportunity to lead, improve care and influence the experiences of the people and communities we serve.

Our ambition is to create a culture where professional judgement is trusted, leadership is enabled and every individual feels empowered to make a difference. By strengthening professional leadership, promoting collective responsibility, investing in future leaders and strengthening our professional voice, we will create the conditions that enable nurses and midwives to lead with confidence, compassion and professional autonomy.

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST



Our Strategic Commitment

We are committed to strengthening nursing and midwifery leadership at every level of the organisation. We will promote professionalism, compassion, inclusion and empowerment, enabling nurses and midwives to exercise professional judgement, influence decisions, shape services and lead improvements that benefit patients, service users, families, carers and communities.

How We Will Deliver This

Strengthen Compassionate and Inclusive Leadership

We will:

- ✓ Promote compassionate, visible, accessible and values-based leadership.
- ✓ Support leaders to create inclusive and psychologically safe working environments.
- ✓ Foster cultures of openness, respect and collaboration.
- ✓ Develop leadership behaviours that inspire trust, confidence and continuous improvement.
- ✓ Strengthen visible leadership across clinical and community settings through regular engagement with frontline teams.

Empower Professional Leadership and Decision-Making

We will:

- ✓ Foster a culture where nurses and midwives are empowered to lead within their own sphere of practice.
- ✓ Enable Ward Sisters, Charge Nurses, Team Leaders, Community Nurses, Midwifery Leaders and Clinical Leaders to exercise professional autonomy and lead their teams with confidence.

- ✓ Promote decision-making at the appropriate level, recognising the expertise and professional judgement of those delivering care.
- ✓ Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy where possible, enabling leaders to focus on patients, staff and service improvement.
- ✓ Build a culture of trust, accountability and professional empowerment.
- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to advocate for patients, service users, families and carers and to speak up when improvements are needed.

Develop Future Nursing and Midwifery Leaders

We will:

- ✓ Identify and nurture leadership potential across the nursing and midwifery profession.
- ✓ Strengthen succession planning across all levels of the profession.
- ✓ Promote equitable access to leadership development opportunities.
- ✓ Strengthen coaching, mentoring and development support for current and future leaders.
- ✓ Support career progression into senior clinical, operational, educational and strategic leadership roles.

Strengthen the Professional Voice of Nursing and Midwifery

We will:

- ✓ Ensure nursing and midwifery perspectives inform strategic and operational decision-making across the Trust.
- ✓ Strengthen opportunities for nurses and midwives to influence clinical practice, service redesign and organisational development.
- ✓ Promote collective leadership and shared decision-making.
- ✓ Create meaningful opportunities for nurses and midwives at every level to contribute their ideas, experience and expertise and demonstrate how those contributions influence decisions.
- ✓ Strengthen engagement with regional and national nursing and midwifery networks, ensuring our profession continues to influence the future of health and social care.

Promote Professionalism and Professional Accountability

We will:

- ✓ Uphold the highest standards of professional practice and conduct.
- ✓ Support nurses and midwives to practice in accordance with the NMC Code.

- ✓ Promote ethical leadership, reflective practice, professional curiosity and accountability.
- ✓ Foster professional pride and strengthen the identity of Nursing and Midwifery across the Trust.

Champion Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will:

- ✓ Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within nursing and midwifery leadership.
- ✓ Create equitable opportunities for staff to develop and succeed.
- ✓ Foster a culture where every individual feels respected, valued and able to contribute.
- ✓ Celebrate the diversity of our workforce and the communities we serve.

Celebrate Excellence

We will:

- ✓ Recognise and celebrate the everyday contributions, kindness, innovation and dedication demonstrated by nurses and midwives across all settings.
- ✓ Share examples of outstanding leadership, innovation and compassionate care.
- ✓ Promote awards, recognition programmes and professional achievement.
- ✓ Celebrate the contribution nurses and midwives make every day to improving the lives of the people and communities we serve.

What Success Will Look Like

By 2030 we will have:

- ✓ Compassionate, inclusive and visible leadership embedded at every level of nursing and midwifery.
- ✓ Nurses and midwives who feel empowered and trusted to exercise professional judgement and influence decision-making.
- ✓ Frontline nursing and midwifery leaders confident to lead their teams and improve services.
- ✓ A strong professional voice that routinely influences strategic and operational decision-making.
- ✓ Leadership recognised as everyone's responsibility, regardless of role or grade.
- ✓ Strong succession planning supporting the future of Nursing and Midwifery leadership.
- ✓ Greater recognition of nursing and midwifery excellence locally, regionally and nationally.
- ✓ A culture of professionalism, inclusion, accountability and professional pride.
- ✓ A Nursing and Midwifery profession that is confident, influential and respected, shaping the future of health and social care and improving outcomes for the people and communities we serve.



How We Will Measure Success

Success will be demonstrated through improvements in:

- ✓ Participation in nursing and midwifery leadership development programmes.
- ✓ Succession planning across nursing and midwifery services.
- ✓ Representation of nurses and midwives in Trust-wide strategic groups, programmes and decision-making forums.
- ✓ Participation in regional and national leadership, professional and advisory networks.
- ✓ Staff engagement relating to leadership, visibility, empowerment and professional voice.
- ✓ Equality, diversity and inclusion indicators within leadership development.
- ✓ Recognition of nursing and midwifery excellence through local, regional and national awards and professional recognition.
- ✓ Career development into clinical, operational, educational, research and strategic leadership roles.
- ✓ Staff survey feedback relating to compassionate leadership, organisational culture and opportunities to influence.
- ✓ Evidence of nursing and midwifery-led service improvement and transformation.

Delivering Our Strategy

From Vision to Everyday Practice

This strategy sets out our shared vision and direction for Nursing and Midwifery within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust for 2030. Delivering this vision will require collective leadership, shared ownership and a sustained commitment to continuous improvement across every service, setting and level of the organisation.

This strategy is intended to be a living document. As health and social care continues to evolve, we will remain responsive to emerging evidence, changes in regional policy, professional standards, regulatory requirements and the changing needs of the population we serve.

Delivery of the strategy will support the ambitions set out within the Chief Nursing Officer for Northern Ireland's Shaping Our Future agenda, while remaining aligned with evolving regional priorities, Trust strategies and the standards and requirements of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

Our Delivery Framework

The strategic priorities within this strategy will be translated into meaningful action at Directorate, Division and Team / Ward / Department level.

Each area will identify the actions that matter most for its services and communities, while contributing to all four strategic priorities. This will create a clear line of sight from our shared vision to everyday nursing and midwifery practice.

Delivery will be supported by clear governance, accountability and reporting arrangements, ongoing engagement with nurses and midwives, and regular review of progress.



“Recognition matters.”

Leadership and Accountability

Overall strategic leadership for implementation will be provided by the Executive Director of Nursing, supported by the Central Nursing Team.

Successful delivery will depend on the collective leadership and commitment of nurses and midwives at every level of the organisation. Everyone has a role to play in translating the ambitions of this strategy into everyday practice and improvement.

Progress will be monitored through the Senior Nurse and Midwifery Governance Forum, providing oversight, check and challenge and a mechanism to share learning, celebrate progress and identify areas requiring further support.

Measuring Our Progress

Progress will be reviewed throughout the lifetime of the strategy using a balanced range of qualitative and quantitative measures that reflect both the quality of care delivered and the experience and development of our workforce.

Measures will draw from the success measures set out under each strategic priority and from Directorate, Divisional and local delivery plans. Detailed baselines, trajectories and key performance indicators will sit within the supporting implementation and delivery arrangements rather than within the strategy itself.

Monitoring will enable us to celebrate success, identify opportunities for improvement and continually strengthen Nursing and Midwifery practice across the Trust.

Bringing the Strategy to Life

The success of this strategy will be determined not by the words within it, but by how it is translated into everyday practice.

Every Directorate, Division and Team / Ward / Department will translate the four strategic priorities into meaningful local action, reflecting the needs of their services, workforce and the people and communities they serve.

Our delivery framework will connect our shared vision and strategic priorities with action at every level of the organisation, ensuring that every nurse and midwife can see how they contribute to making our ambition a reality.

DELIVERING OUR STRATEGY

From Vision to
Everyday Practice

OUR VISION

Together, nursing and midwifery will deliver safe, effective and compassionate care, working in partnership with people, families and communities through professionalism, leadership, innovation and a commitment to excellence.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Person Centred
- ✓ Professionally Led
- ✓ Safe and Compassionate
- ✓ Evidence Informed
- ✓ Inclusive and Respectful
- ✓ Collaborative
- ✓ Learning and Improvement Focused
- ✓ Digitally Enabled
- ✓ Sustainable and Future Focused

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1 Delivering Safe, High Quality Care and Experience
- 2 Building a Highly Skilled, Supported and Sustainable Workforce
- 3 Driving Learning, Innovation and Improvement
- 4 Leading with Professionalism, Influence and Compassion

DIRECTORATE IMPLEMENTATION

Each Directorate implements the strategy through local plans and actions.

-  Medicine and Unscheduled Care
-  Surgery and Clinical Services
-  Mental Health and Learning Disability
-  Adult Community Services
-  Children, Young People and Women's Health
-  Corporate

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

-  Safe, effective and compassionate care
-  Better experiences for patients, service users, families and carers
-  A thriving workforce
-  Continuous learning, innovation and improvement
-  Professional leadership
-  Better outcomes for the people and communities we serve

One vision. One team. Every action counts.

Nursing and Midwifery in 2030

Looking Ahead

As we look towards 2030, we see a Nursing and Midwifery workforce that is confident, compassionate and recognised for the difference it makes every day.

This strategy is about more than delivering objectives or programmes of work. It is about creating the conditions in which nurses and midwives can flourish professionally, lead with confidence and continue to deliver safe, high-quality and compassionate care for the people and communities we serve.

By working together and remaining true to our shared vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities, we will strengthen our profession, improve experiences and outcomes, and help shape a sustainable future for health and social care across the Southern Trust.

By 2030...

By 2030, Nursing and Midwifery will be valued, visible and influential in shaping the future of health and social care across the Southern Trust.

Our workforce will feel supported, empowered and proud to be part of Nursing and Midwifery. Nurses and midwives at every stage of their career will have opportunities to learn, develop and lead, supported by a culture that values wellbeing, professional development, innovation and continuous improvement.

People who use our services, together with their families and carers, will experience safe, effective, compassionate and person-centred care, delivered with professionalism, kindness and respect. They will feel listened to, involved in decisions about their care and confident in the quality of the services we provide.

Our teams will work collaboratively across professions, services and organisational boundaries, embracing innovation, digital technologies and evidence-informed practice to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities.



Learning, research, Reflective Supervision and quality improvement will be embedded within everyday practice, enabling our workforce to continually develop, improve care and respond to the changing needs of our population.

We will continue to attract, develop and retain talented nurses and midwives who are proud to build their careers within the Southern Trust, creating a sustainable workforce equipped to meet the changing needs of our population and the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Above all, Nursing and Midwifery will continue to be recognised as a compassionate, skilled and trusted profession, making a meaningful difference to the lives of people, families and communities every day.

Together Towards 2030

Together, we will deliver safe, effective, high-quality and compassionate care.

Together, we will support, develop and value one another.

Together, we will lead with professionalism, confidence and compassion.

Together, we will embrace learning, innovation and continuous improvement.

Together, we will strengthen the voice and influence of Nursing and Midwifery.

Together, we will make a lasting difference for the people and communities we serve.



Together, we will shape the future of Nursing and Midwifery in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.





Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

TOGETHER, IMPROVING CARE, TRANSFORMING LIVES

Together

This strategy has been shaped by the voices, experiences and aspirations of our nurses and midwives.

Its success will be measured not by the words on these pages, but by the difference we make together for the people and communities we serve.

Honouring our past. Listening to our people.

Investing in our profession. Shaping the future.

Together, we will make this vision a reality.