

Quality Account

2024 / 2025

An Overview

See the full document at:
www.whittington.nhs.uk/QualityAccount



What is a Quality Account?

Quality Accounts are annual reports to the public from providers of NHS healthcare that detail information about the quality of services they deliver. They are designed to assure patients, service users, carers, the public and commissioners (purchasers of healthcare), that healthcare providers are regularly scrutinising each and every one of the services they provide to local communities and are concentrating on those areas that require the most improvement or attention.

They look back on the previous year's information regarding quality of service, explaining where an organisation is doing well and where improvement is needed. They also look forward, explaining the areas that have been identified as priorities for improvement over the coming financial year.

This document is a lite version of the complete Quality account available on our website.



Welcome from our CEO



A stylized, handwritten signature of Selina Douglas in white ink, located below her portrait.

Selina Douglas
Chief Executive Officer
Whittington Health NHS Trust

Welcome to the 2024/25 Quality Account for Whittington Health NHS Trust. The opportunity to sign off this year's Quality Account could not have come at a better time as I get to know Whittington health in my new role as Chief Executive Officer.

A year on from the implementation of PSIRF (Patient Safety Incident Response Framework), we have now successfully embedded the framework into our everyday working. This framework supports and prioritises safe service delivery whilst enabling the learning culture we choose as a standard.

Delivering timely care is always a priority, but becomes especially crucial when navigating additional pressures, as we faced during another challenging winter period. Despite navigating challenges our Virtual Ward and Rapid Response Targets (2hr/4hr/24hr) were consistently met, supporting timely care and avoiding inappropriate admission. We fully utilised our 44 Virtual Ward beds across acute and complex pathways, allowing patients to receive care in the least invasive setting, offering remote and flexible models of care to our patients and allowing them to remain at home where appropriate.

Providing accessible care and reducing health inequalities continues to remain a high priority for our Trust. Providing clear and accessible health information is an important part of reducing health inequalities. We have made great

progress with improving the way we communicate with our patients about their appointments. Earlier this year our Transformation team, in consultation with our patients, completed a review of outpatient letters ensuring alignment with physical hospital signage. Updates were made to letters in Urology, Gynaecology and Elderly Care, making it easier for patients to navigate to the right departments and attend their appointments across multiple departments. This project is continuing, and work is underway to improve patient letters in various other services.

By understanding the needs of our local communities, we have been able to provide care that truly improves patient experience. We have enhanced safety and care for patients with mental health needs by developing a range of admission avoidance pathways, enabling access to physical health assessments without the need for hospital admission. These efforts have been part of our wider commitment to reducing health inequalities and improving access to care for all.

Thank you to each and every one of you for the valuable contributions you make to the care we provide every day.

I confirm that this Quality Account has been reviewed by the Trust Board and verify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information here is accurate.

Our 2024/25 Priorities

We set ourselves four quality priorities:

- Ensuring patients are seen by the right person in the right place at the right time and deliver outstanding safe and compassionate care in partnership with patients.
- Reducing health inequalities in our local population.
- Improving access and attendance for appointments & Improving communication with patients.
- Improving the Trust Environment to Improve Patient Experience.



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The virtual ward utilisation goal was revised from 48 to 32 beds, including acute, remote monitoring, and complex care beds, with utilisation data tracked for Haringey and Islington. The urgent response target was successfully met, with the 2-hour response rate increased to 70% and achieved. 25% of patients were streamed to alternative care pathways aimed at improving emergency department flow.



A significant success was seen in reducing falls resulting in moderate or greater harm, with a 27% decrease from the previous year. However, the goal to increase staff compliance with falls training by 20% was not met due to a vacancy in the lead role, though mitigation strategies were implemented, and a new lead was appointed in April 2025 to prioritise training moving forward.



The Trust aimed for a 25% reduction in full-thickness pressure ulcers and a 10% reduction in overall pressure ulcer incidents, but neither target was achieved. However, quality improvement initiatives focusing on staff education, care planning, and communication are in place to support progress.

Reducing health inequalities in our local population.



During 2024–2025, the Trust made significant efforts to reduce health inequalities in the local population through a range of targeted goals. A new co-designed NCL Community Red Cell Service for sickle cell patients was successfully launched in collaboration with North Middlesex University Hospital and University College London Hospital, and the NHS England ‘Sickle Cell Card’ was implemented for patients attending emergency departments.



Maternity services continued to work with the Health Inequalities Steering Group, conducting a health equality audit to assess support for non-English-speaking patients. The Birmingham Symptom Specific Obstetric Triage System (BSOTS) was successfully implemented in maternity care.



The Trust also achieved success in developing accessible information for patients with autism and learning disabilities, now available via a new website.

While 75% of staff completed the Oliver McGowan training, just short of the 80% target, efforts continue. Training on less restrictive practices has begun for adults, with plans to extend to children. Work is ongoing to design a pathway for patients with mental health needs requiring physical care, and training has been delivered to emergency department staff to support such patients.

Improving access and attendance for appointments & improving communication with patients.



During 2024–2025, the Trust focused on improving access to appointments and enhancing communication with patients. Outpatient letters were partially updated with changes implemented in Urology, Gynaecology, and Elderly Care; remaining updates are pending. The establishment of a central administration team is in progress.

A broader wayfinding strategy was not achieved, though future plans include improving signage and numbering systems in outpatient departments.



Accessible information for patients with Learning Disabilities, including leaflets and videos covering various aspects of hospital visits, is in development and set for full implementation by March 2025, with further expansion planned. However, the goal to reduce communication-related complaints by 10% has not been met, with complaint numbers remaining unchanged. Additionally, the plan to offer paediatric blood tests at Wood Green CDC has not been realised and the service continues to review this objective.



Improving the Trust environment to improve patient experience.



During 2024–2025, the Trust focused on improving the hospital environment to enhance patient experience. One key initiative involved collaborating with the estates team to explore opportunities for transforming the emergency department front of house. The goal is to optimise the space to include a comfortable and appropriately sized waiting area, effective triage and streaming cubicles, a suitable rapid assessment area, and improved facilities for patients with mental health needs. This work is currently in progress, with six walk throughs completed by facilities and architects, focusing on key emergency department areas such as waiting, triage, resuscitation, and mental health spaces.



Another goal aimed to improve cleanliness, appearance, and maintenance scores in the 2024 Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) report to over 90%. However, this target was not met, and scores remained below the desired threshold. In response, a Trust PLACE task and finish group has been established to address the identified issues.



Looking ahead: Our 2025/26 Priorities

We set ourselves four quality priorities for the year ahead, these are:

- Ensuring patients receive safe and effective care that is delivered with kindness, compassion and in collaboration with patients and carers.
- Improving the Trust environment to enhance patient experience.
- Reducing health inequalities in our local population by ensuring that when patients need to access our services, they have clear guidance, accessible routes and supported and listened to throughout.
- We will continue to develop services to meet the needs of our population.





Whittington Health

NHS Trust

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