



Whittington Health Library Strategy 2026-28



April 2026





Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a strategic framework for the future development of Whittington Health Library (WHL), and detail how we will help our parent Trust and Partners deliver outstanding safe compassionate care to patients, and achieve our strategic goals.

The policies and approaches described in this strategy will inform decision-making in the coming years, and will be reviewed in the context of developments with our Partners, and feedback from our users annually. Since the last review of our “living document” strategy in July 2024, North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT) has formed from a merger of Camden & Islington and Barnet Enfield & Haringey Trusts. It also acquired Tavistock and Portman by merger on the same day, 1/4/26, as North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) merged with North West London ICB to form NHS West & North London ICB. NHS England is now on the road to be abolished by April 2027, though its national library strategy *Knowledge for Healthcare* is still set to be refreshed in the coming year. Our HE Partners remain fixed, and throughout all the reorganisations in our region the objectives and missions of all our Partners remain broadly aligned, with improving patient care at their heart.





Our Strategic Objectives

These priorities are aligned to our Partners', and the following pages detail how we will deliver them to help our Partners meet their goals.

1. Services to users

- Contribute to clinical, educational, and research excellence for all users and our Partners
- Evaluate provision and increase usage of resources by all Partners' users
- Improve provision of resources and uptake of services by underserved groups within our NHS Partners

2. People

- Develop the profile and skill mix of the Library team to meet organisational priorities of all the Library Partners and *Knowledge for Healthcare*
- Pursue the goals of our Service Improvement Plan as agreed with NHS England, with Library representation on the Whittington Health Board

3. Environment

- Improve the environment of the Library to best meet the needs of all Library users
- Make the Library greener and more energy efficient
- Update the IT Library infrastructure (software and hardware) to provide modern, fast services that meet our users' requirements

4. Management, innovation & finance

- Develop services and new areas of work to meet the evolving needs of Library Partners
- Explore and support the development of library services in West & North London to support the changing Integrated Care System
- Provide robust costings so Partners contribute correct amounts for Library services
- Ensure most effective spend of Partners' funding



1. Services to users

Patient care drives everything we do in the library. Our services are designed to give clinicians the gift of time to spend with their patients, and provide access to the evidence base so all staff are making decisions based on the best current evidence.



- **Our contribution to clinical, education, and research excellence for all our users and Partners will grow**
 - Through participation in Whittington Health's Clinical Guidelines Group, Policy Assurance Group, Education Strategy Steering Group and Research Oversight Group, Librarians will be consulted for evidence searches when Whittington Health clinical guidelines and policies are produced/reviewed
 - Via embedded library teaching in educational programmes across Partners
 - By building research capacity amongst NHS Partners via our Noclor programme
 - By promoting the UCL Discovery Plus repository amongst Whittington Health staff, increasing Whittington Health publications on the platform
 - We will provide support to patient-facing staff amongst our NHS Partners. Our current awareness provision was vital to Whittington Health during the pandemic and we will continue to demonstrate our clinical utility through current awareness services (new bulletins scheduled as part of our Noclor programme) and mediated evidence searching service.
- **We will evaluate provision - and increase usage of - resources by all Partners**
 - While a digital-first, just-in-time rather than just-in-case policy will govern decisions in terms of our resource provision, our service will continue to be shaped and directed according to our users and their needs. We will gauge these via our library survey, new usage-recording methods, and established feedback mechanisms.
 - Our Marketing and Communication Strategy, Collection Development Policy, and Library Charter will be made publicly available, and reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the latest data we have on usage and user requirements
- **We will improve the provision of resources and uptake of services by underserved groups within our NHS Partners, including nurses and AHPs, and primary care staff based in the community**
 - While a digital-first, just-in-time rather than just-in-case policy will govern decisions in terms of our resource provision, our service will continue to be shaped and directed according to our users and their needs. We will gauge these via our survey, new usage-recording methods, and established feedback mechanisms.



2. People



WHL's team (pictured below) has over 40 years of experience, the majority of those spent in the local area. As the Library's greatest asset, developing this team in the years ahead is key to us helping our Partners achieve all their strategic objectives.

- **We will develop the profile and skill mix of the Library team to meet *Knowledge for Healthcare* and organisational priorities for all the Library Partners by:**
 - Working to increase our staffing levels so they are in line with NHS England's [staffing ratio](#) and [Education Tariff funding recommendations](#)
 - Profiling the team using CILIP's Professional Knowledge Skills Base tool to identify weaknesses/gaps
 - Establishing a regular programme of CPD activity for staff to develop professional skills. All staff will record their CPD activities and share their learnings with the whole team. Staff appraisal is an active and on-going process, not a "once a year event".
- **We will pursue the goals of our Service Improvement Plan as agreed with NHS England, and ensure the Library has a Whittington Health Board member representing us**
 - Regular meetings with our identified Board member will ensure Library issues are discussed at Board level
 - The Library Team will address our Service Improvement Plan's areas requiring further development; providing more categorisation, signposting and even offering AI-assisted summaries in our Evidence Search Reports



The Library team at the Whittington Health Staff Awards, 2025 (left to right: Senior Library Assistant Graeme, Librarian Anita, Librarian Catherine, Library Manager Adam). Catherine was nominated for an award for her outstanding work in the field of health literacy, and in particular with patient information.



3. Environment

As signatories of CILIP's Green Libraries Manifesto and members of the Whittington Green Group, our commitment to meeting the NHS's Net-Zero goals are at the front of our minds. Our working environment will continue to reflect this, while providing an even better experience for our users via improved utilisation of the highly-valued existing space.



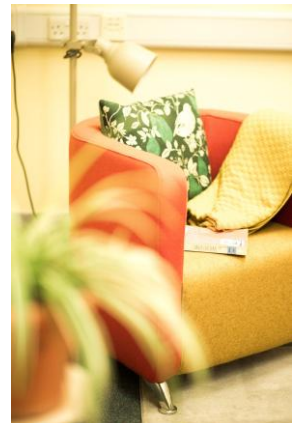
- **We will improve the environment of the Library to best meet the needs of all users via:**

- Analysis of Library usage patterns to consider if the Library is providing the space and facilities and opening hours (access) that users require
- Promotion of spaces available in the Library including our Mike Clift Wellbeing Room and meeting rooms
- Review of the Library's estate, including its furnishings, fixtures, and fittings



- **Our Library will be greener, more energy efficient**

- A green approach to energy use and materials it to be taken, to include user education and collaboration with Estates. Improved (re)use of materials; reduction of waste, and more recycling in the Library will be reflected in smaller expenditure on office supplies and energy bills. The Highgate Wing Building Users Group we established will collectively bargain for green improvements to our Estate.



- **Our IT infrastructure (software and hardware) will provide modern, fast services that meet our users' requirements**

- Without contradicting our green goals above. Reviews of hardware provision with all Partners (PCs and laptops, wi-fi and MFDs) will be conducted.
- We continue to monitor artificial intelligence's (AI's) application to Library work and healthcare more generally for our users. AI will be used judiciously where appropriate within Library workstreams (i.e., AskTrip) according to Whittington Health's Acceptable usage policy. New training sessions on using AI in healthcare will be designed and delivered.



A new outdoor space, pictured above, will be made available to all users following sign-off from the Trust's Estates dept.

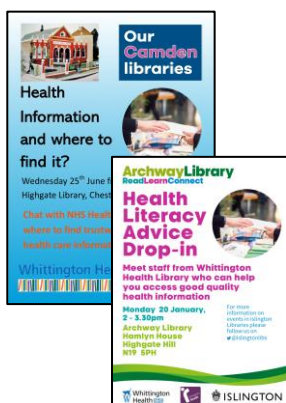


4. Management, innovation & finance



Whittington Health Library has been a progressive, innovative Library service since our foundation in 2013; and we will continue to serve our users and our Partners through the institutional mergers and reorganisations that occur throughout our area by:

- **Developing services and new areas of work to meet the evolving needs of Library Partners**



- We have developed the Library's role in relation to patient information and healthcare inequalities via our award-nominated health literacy training and our leading role in Whittington Health's Patient Information Leaflet Group (PILG). We support high quality patient information, and aim to further build on this. Our health literacy offer will be provided in a number of different contexts across West & North London, including in public libraries in Camden, Islington, and Haringey councils (posters for recent sessions pictured) and in online sessions for GP staff.

- **Exploring and supporting the development of library services in West & North London for the changing Integrated Care System**

- Continue to support Primary Care Training Hubs via our Librarian, who was formerly embedded at North Central London's Hub as their first point-of-contact
- We will take a leading role in West & North London via actively participating in regional libraries group(s) to share examples of good practice with the wider professional community; and in London more widely by Chairing the well-established London Searching and Training Forum (LSTF).

- **Providing robust costings so Partners contribute correct amounts for Library services**

- Revised Library costings to convey accurate information for Library Partners, and up-to-date figures to be supplied ahead of renewed Service Level Agreements

- **Ensuring the most effective spend of Partners' funding**

- Regular reporting to demonstrate value and return on investment for all Library Partners
- New mechanisms for monitoring service standards and measuring impact to allow easy monitoring of Library activity





We look forward to working alongside our Partners and collaborators in 2026 and beyond

