

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting:	Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Meeting date:	Monday 6 October 2025
Title:	East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report 2024/25
Responsible Director:	Craig McArthur, Director of East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
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1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Discussion

This paper relates to:

- Legal requirement

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

2. Report Summary

2.1 Situation

This paper presents to Board Members the Annual Performance Report for the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership ('the Partnership' / 'HSCP') for 2024/25 (available at Appendix 1), for discussion and assurance.

The East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report 2024/25 has been produced to meet legal obligations relating to annual performance reporting and to benefit our communities. The Report adheres to national guidance and reflects on local performance regarding our strategic priorities and the national outcomes for health and wellbeing, children and young people, and justice.

The Annual Performance Report 2024/25 was presented to the East Ayrshire Audit and Performance Committee on 5 August 2025, the East Ayrshire Integration Joint Board on 27 August 2025 and East Ayrshire Council on 11 September 2025.

2.2 Background

Section 42 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 specifies that a performance report must be produced by an integration authority every year. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Content of Performance Reports) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 (SSI 2014, No. 326), requires this performance report to cover a number of specific areas.

This includes an assessment of performance relating to the national health and wellbeing outcomes in terms of the extent to which the Strategic Plan and associated resources have contributed to delivering these national outcomes, and performance against key measures in relation to the outcomes. Performance reporting should reflect the integration principles in the delivery of integration functions, financial performance under the direction of the integration authority and significant decisions made by the integration authority (where Section 36 of the 2014 Act applies).

SSI 2014 No. 236 stipulates that performance reports should reference the integration authority's contribution to best value, locality arrangements, inspections, and any review of the Strategic Plan undertaken in the period. The Regulations provide scope for the inclusion of other performance related content as determined by the integration authority. The Scottish Government issued Statutory Guidance for Health and Social Care Partnership Performance Reports in March 2016, with refreshed Guidance being issued in July 2024. The Guidance reaffirms the requirements set out in the 2014 Act and in the SSI, in addition to providing further detail.

The Annual Performance Report for 2024/25 is our tenth substantive Performance Report and is prepared in line with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and subordinate Statutory Instruments and Scottish Government Guidance.

2.3 Assessment

2.3.1 Annual Performance Report 2024/25

The Annual Performance Report 2024/25 addresses all of the requirements set out above. The 'Our Performance' section is structured according to the 15 national outcomes for health and wellbeing, children and young people, and justice, with alignment to our strategic priorities. This section incorporates a range of relevant performance measures and delivery examples to convey personal stories and illustrate the outcomes achieved for people.

Performance information is sourced from the Core Suite of Integration Indicators, measures issued by the Ministerial Strategic Group for Health and Community Care, other national datasets and local recording systems. These have been incorporated into our Performance Framework and are referenced throughout the body of the Report, including a focussed assessment in Section 2.

Addressing inequality is a cross-cutting priority for the Community Planning Partnership in East Ayrshire and is a key focus of the Wellbeing Delivery Plan, which the HSCP leads on. The Annual Performance Report for 2024/25 demonstrates how working collaboratively with our partners supports the Wellbeing Delivery Plan and how our work mitigates the causes and effects of inequality in our communities.

The Annual Performance Report comprises the following sections: measuring performance under integration; our performance in 2024/25; our workforce; governance and decision-making; financial performance; best value; inspections; Caring for Ayrshire; Audit and Performance Committee activity; lead partnership arrangements; locality planning arrangements; and a 'looking ahead' section.

2.3.2 Performance Summary

In 2024/25, two of the six core MSG indicators showed slight improvement in performance when compared to the previous year. During calendar year 2024, unscheduled care occupied bed days decreased by 0.1% and the proportion of the last 6 months of life spent in community settings increased by 0.3 percentage points (pp). When compared to the previous reporting period, unscheduled admissions increased by 1.7%, compliance against the four-hour standard in the emergency department decreased by 1.6pp and the percentage of the 65+ population living at home declined by 0.1pp. The rate of delayed discharge bed days increased by 7.6% in 2024/25, however this still represents an area of sustained strength, being significantly lower than the national level.

East Ayrshire has achieved improved performance across the majority of the 'data' indicators within the CSII when comparing the latest period of reported data to the previous period. The premature mortality rate decreased by 5.8%; the emergency bed day rate declined by 5%; the proportion of care services graded 'Good' or better increased by 10.1pp; the number of days people aged 75+ spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged decreased by 2.8%; and the proportion of last 6 months of life spent at home or in a community setting increased by 0.3pp. Performance against four CSII 'data' indicators regressed in the latest reporting period, including: the emergency admission rate which increased by 0.7%; emergency readmissions to hospital within 28 days of discharge increased by 0.9%; the falls rate for older people increased by 12.1%; and the percentage of adults with intensive care needs receiving care at home decreased by 1.5pp.

Due to definitional changes in the national Health and Care Experience (HACE) Survey, previous years figures are only comparable for CSII 'Outcome' indicators 1, 6, and 8. Of these, the percentage of adults stating that they are able to look after their health either very or quite well has decreased slightly by 0.4pp, and the percentage with positive experiences of care at their GP practice has also decreased slightly (1.2pp). There has been a substantial increase of 8.4pp in the percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role.

It should be noted that the CSII 'Outcome Indicator' figures reported are sourced from the latest HACE survey in 2023/24, which was distributed to GP practice populations across Scotland. Local and national feedback suggests that increased levels of demand and operational pressures has had a negative impact on patients' overall experience of GP services in recent years. It should also be noted that there were a significantly lower number of East Ayrshire responses to the HACE Survey in 2023/24 (1,877) compared to the previous 2021/22 reporting period (2,387), which could mean that the most recent findings are less representative of the wider East Ayrshire population than in previous years.

2.3.3 Our Workforce

The Health and Social Care workforce is our greatest asset, which continues to be demonstrated in the work that we do, with the compassion, commitment and flexibility of our staff being crucial to delivering high quality services. Our workforce planning activity continues to support the implementation of the Partnership's Strategic Plan and to address the challenges of recovery, growth and transformation as identified in the National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland. The Partnership's new Workforce Plan 2025-28 sets out the vision for our workforce and is fundamentally based on the five pillars of the Workforce Journey, namely: Plan; Attract; Train; Employ; and Nurture.

Caring for our workforce is a key strategic priority for the Partnership and we are fully committed to supporting the wellbeing and development of all our staff to enable them to fulfil their roles to the highest standard. We are also committed to meeting staff wellbeing needs through providing a comprehensive and accessible range of wellbeing supports. This has included numerous supports and opportunities in 2024/25, including: regular distribution of employee wellbeing newsletters containing resources and signposting, access to various themed wellbeing courses, free physical health checks, holistic wellbeing and activity sessions delivered at Dumfries House, and access to supports delivered by the HSCP's Health and Wellbeing Coordinator.

2.3.4 Integration Joint Board – Governance and Decision-Making

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 sets out the membership of the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The Voting Members of the IJB are appointed through nomination by NHS Ayrshire and Arran and East Ayrshire Council. The IJB is routinely informed when any NHS Board Executive Member's terms expire and they are reappointed for a further three-year term. The IJB was informed that East Ayrshire Council, at its meeting on 27 February 2025, had reviewed the Council appointed Voting Members and had made one change to these Members.

The IJB continued to develop defined powers within the Public Bodies Act as set out in sections 26 to 28 of the Act, which takes the form of binding (legal) Directions. These Directions clearly outline how the Health Board and Local Authority are required to action Strategic Commissioning Plans and delegated budgets from the Integration Joint Board. It was agreed at the March 2025 IJB meeting to undertake a review of the Directions template to allow for more information to be incorporated. Directions continue to be issued to integration parties by all three Ayrshire IJBs.

Directions given in 2024/25 reflected a number of areas, including: the review of eligibility criteria for care and support, the HSCP's Strategic Plan, commissioning and contracting arrangements, the Care at Home service, and the GP Primary Care service in HMP Kilmarnock.

2.3.5 Financial Performance

The IJB must comply with national financial regulations, codes of practice and guidance. The unaudited Annual Accounts 2024/25 were approved by the IJB on 25 June 2025. Following discussions with Audit Scotland regarding the audit timetable, it has been agreed that the audited Annual Accounts 2024/25, along with the external auditors' ISA260 report on the outcome of the audit, will be submitted to the IJB on 24 September 2025 for formal approval.

The net cost of provision of services in 2024/25 was £323.618m. The net revenue expenditure represents the running costs of the IJB and indicates the significant size and complexity of the organisation. Directly managed expenditure for the 2024/25 financial year is £2.186m greater than the budget delegated to the IJB and increases by an adjustment of £1.695m in respect of the Partnership's share of services managed on a pan-Ayrshire basis on Lead Partnership arrangements, resulting in a population based overspend £3.881m for 2024/25 prior to earmarking. £2.140m has been earmarked for specific commitments in future financial years. Earmarked funding commitments are set out within the Notes to the Annual Accounts. After taking account of earmarked commitments, there is a net overspend for 2024/25 of £6.021m.

Cost pressures and additional demand pressures, as well as under-achievement of approved cash releasing efficiency savings in various budgets, and under-achievement of in-year Financial Recovery Plan savings, have contributed to the Partnership spending more in 2024/25 than originally budgeted. These pressures have been partially offset by non-recurring balances drawn down from the IJB Reserve, as well as cost reductions in certain service areas, including in-year Financial Recovery Plan savings achieved. Additional non-recurring delegated funding contributions from East Ayrshire Council £5.869m and NHS Ayrshire and Arran £0.152m offset the £6.021m overspend, resulting in a balanced position for 2024/25.

2.3.6 Best Value

The Partnership's Strategic Commissioning Board continued to drive forward our transformational change ambitions and activities in 2024/25, with ongoing oversight from the Audit and Performance Committee. The Strategic Commissioning Board adopts a strict evidence-based approach to inform investment and disinvestment decisions and is guided by national advice in relation to important matters. Detail regarding service specific improvement and transformational change work undertaken in this period is set out in our Service Improvement Plans.

The HSCP is committed to securing continuous improvement and sustainability in the delivery of all its services, which are intrinsically linked to delivering positive outcomes for people and to meeting objectives set out within the IJB's Financial Recovery Plan and Strategic Plan. A key mechanism for achieving this is through implementing Best Value Reviews. The Strategic Commissioning Board approved a new programme of HSCP reviews for the 2025-27 period in December 2024, with the aim of securing service improvement and operational sustainability through identifying more effective and efficient methods of delivery. The Partnership will undertake a cross-cutting approach to implementing this review programme, in recognition that changes in one service area will likely impact on other service areas.

2.3.7 Inspections

The Partnership welcomes evaluation and scrutiny from external audit and inspection agencies, recognising that these assessments provide valuable and constructive feedback to build on our internal self-evaluation work, further contributing towards our continuous improvement ambitions. 88.1% of East Ayrshire care services were graded 'Good' (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections in 2024/25, which is a 10.1 percentage point increase from our performance in 2023/24 and is notably higher than the national average (81.9%) in this period.

16 care homes were inspected by the Care Inspectorate during 2024/25, achieving an average grading of 4.3 across the inspection themes, which continues an upward trend in quality grades achieved in recent years. Over this period, requirements were identified for 2 care homes following inspection, no enforcements were issued and a total of 5 complaints were upheld. 9 of our registered services, including: Care at Home services, Adult Day services, Community Reablement and a Children's Residential House, were inspected by the Care Inspectorate during 2024/25, achieving an average grading of 3.8 across the inspection themes. Over this period, requirements were identified for 2 registered services following inspection, no enforcements were issued and a total of 2 complaints were upheld.

A joint inspection of services for children at risk of harm in the East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership area took place between September 2024 and March 2025. The overall evaluation of quality indicator 2.1 was 'good', and a number of local strengths were identified which impacted on children and young people's experiences. Several areas for improvement were also identified to ensure better consistency in experiences and outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm. The findings were reviewed in detail and a comprehensive action plan has been developed with a focus on key areas identified for improvement, with specific priority areas for the Partnership to take forward including work in relation to chronologies, the use of AYRshare and children's plans.

2.3.8 Caring For Ayrshire

The Caring for Ayrshire Programme continues to deliver on its long-term vision of creating a sustainable, person-centred health and care system that supports people to live well, closer to home. Progress has been made during 2024/25 to capture and understand the need for change within our health and care system and to determine the necessary steps to ensure that services can effectively meet future demands. Through comprehensive analysis, key challenges have been identified that shape the rationale for transformation. Fully understanding the need for change has enabled the Programme to scope how demand for services is expected to evolve over time.

The need for change is framed around four key themes, which collectively guide the Programme's approach to transforming health and care services across Ayrshire and Arran: People; Services; Infrastructure; and Communities and partners. In looking ahead, a whole-system plan has been drafted and submitted to the Scottish Government for consideration, outlining the direction of travel for the transformation of services. This plan will provide the foundation for discussions with the Scottish Government, with the aim of securing their support and alignment to ensure that our local plans are shaped by national priorities and frameworks. The Programme's aim remains clear: to ensure that people across Ayrshire and Arran receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time, now and into the future.

2.3.9 Audit and Performance Committee

In 2024/25, the Audit and Performance Committee considered internal audit reports from the IJB Chief Auditor and external auditor reports from Audit Scotland. In respect of financial assurance, the Committee received a clear audit report from Audit Scotland, as the external auditor, having considered four dimensions: financial sustainability, financial management, governance and transparency, and value for money. The Committee considered and provided a view on the governance and assurance arrangements and performance reporting to the IJB. The Committee also received regular reports on performance, management and financial arrangements, including the IJB's Risk Register throughout the reporting period.

The Committee held additional meetings in 2024/25 to review and monitor the progress of the Financial Recovery Plan. The Committee also received regular updates on the progress of Service Improvement Plans for all service portfolio areas. Good progress was noted across all of the Plans and at each alternate meeting, individual services were subject to a detailed progress review. A survey was issued in February 2025 to those who regularly attend or engage with the Audit and Performance Committee to assess the effectiveness of the Committee and to inform improvements going forward.

2.3.10 Locality Planning

A key component of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 is the requirement to plan service delivery at a locality level within the integrated structure to contribute towards improving local outcomes. In 2024, delivery partners agreed to conduct an assessment and review of the HSCP's Locality Planning Arrangements, which was aligned with the Council's work on establishing a place-based approach to the provision of services. The findings indicated that the previous model was ineffectual in addressing community priorities. Partners therefore agreed to design and implement a new shared delivery model for Locality Planning in East Ayrshire to facilitate a more integrated approach between the HSCP and the CPP, focusing on cross organisational delivery of improvements to address local concerns and priorities.

The new shared delivery model will be implemented from April 2026 and will enhance the way we work across organisational boundaries to delivery effective services and achieve best value, while maximising opportunities for collaborative working across the HSCP, the CCP and our communities. The integration of the CPP and HSCP Locality Planning arrangements will also provide an opportunity to establish new individual Locality Plans for each of the three Locality areas. These Plans will provide a holistic view of the areas to inform and direct resources to the people and communities in the greatest need. The Locality Plans will underpin our HSCP Strategic Plan and other Partnership strategies and will also focus on bridging the gap between the high-level strategic direction of the Council and the HSCP and the aspirations and priorities of local people, communities and groups.

The HSCP's three locality-based Communities of Practice (COP) have continued to grow over the last year with an expanding and diverse membership. The COPs meet eight-weekly and are open to anyone working within Health and Social Care services in East Ayrshire, regardless of role or organisation. Each COP has a convenor and co-convenor who undertake 'light-touch' co-ordination roles whilst ensuring that the group meetings are self-facilitating, as members decide how they wish to use their time and the topics they want to explore. The online Knowledge Hub resource continues to be utilised as a digital tool for COP members to share information and resources virtually.

2.3.11 Lead Partnership Arrangements

Lead Partnership arrangements continue to be in place across Ayrshire and Arran. The East Ayrshire HSCP has lead responsibility for Primary and Urgent Care Services. This responsibility relates to: General Medical Services, Community Pharmacies, Community Optometry, Dental Practices, Public Dental Service and the Ayrshire Urgent Care Service. The North Ayrshire HSCP is the lead Partnership in Ayrshire for specialist and in-patient Mental Health services and some Early Years services. The South Ayrshire HSCP is the lead Partnership in Ayrshire for the Integrated Continence Service, the Family Nurse Partnership and the Community Equipment Store.

A number of comprehensive updates are provided in the Annual Performance Report regarding the delivery and development of Primary and Urgent Care Services over the last year. Some highlights include:

- General Practices continued to experience high patient demand in 2024/25, which at times outweighed the clinical capacity available;
- Implementation of the Primary Care Improvement Plan progressed, with additional demonstrator site work undertaken relating to the Primary Care Phased Investment Programme;
- The Ayrshire Urgent Care Service continued to develop models and pathways with key partners to meet the urgent care needs of communities;
- There are 50 Independent Prescribers based within 28 Community Optometry Practices who can manage complex eye issues by prescribing medicines; and
- Community Pharmacies experienced a significant increase in activity during 2024/25, with the number of items dispensed under Pharmacy First having increased to 321,713 from 289,170 in the previous year.

2.3.12 Looking Ahead

The Partnership's Strategic Plan 2024-27 outlines our commitment to meeting the needs of local communities and to deliver the best possible outcomes for people at all stages in life. A number of key enablers are associated with the Strategic Plan, including the HSCP's Workforce Plan 2025-28, Communications Strategy 2024-27, Property and Asset Management Strategy 2024-27, and our Thinking Differently approach. To achieve our ambitions, the Partnership has set out short, medium and long term objectives aligned to six core strategic commissioning intentions: Starting Well, Living Well and Dying Well; Caring for East Ayrshire; People at the Heart of What We Do; Caring for Our Workforce; Safe and Protected; and Digital Connections.

Service Improvement Plans were established in 2016/17 and are a core element of the Partnership's Performance Management and Improvement Framework, setting out the arrangements for delivering targeted improvement activities across the HSCP's five main service portfolios. The current Service Improvement Plans cover the three-year period from 2024-27 across: Locality Health and Care Services, Wellbeing and Recovery Services, Children's Health, Care and Justice Services, Primary and Urgent Care Services and Allied Health Professional Services. The Service Improvement Plans intrinsically align with our Strategic Plan and priorities.

In looking ahead to 2025/26, the HSCP faces significant challenges, stemming from financial pressures, increasing service demands and demographic shifts. These factors, along with ongoing policy reforms, create a complex and evolving landscape for the Partnership to navigate. These financial challenges have been identified in successive annual reports, with Audit Scotland highlighting financial sustainability as a key issue going forward. It is recognised that the financial position will need to be kept under ongoing review and that system and demand pressures will require to be carefully managed within the resources available to the Partnership. Implementing our programme of cross-cutting best value reviews will support this over the next year.

The Care Reform (Scotland) Bill, passed by Scottish Parliament in June 2025, will introduce further social care reforms focusing on targeted improvements. These include introducing: Anne's Law, which gives care home residents the legal right to an essential care supporter; legal rights to breaks for unpaid carers; and schemes for better information and data sharing. The Bill also establishes the National Care Service Advisory Board, which will provide independent advice to Scottish Ministers on the development, improvement and operation of care services in Scotland.

Our approach to digital innovation and technology enabled care has gathered pace over the last year, including the launch of the Total Mobile platform and the Technology Enabled Care programme. These developments align with our ambition to make greater use of digital solutions to better support our workforce and to improve outcomes for people. The continued expansion of technology will support more people through an early intervention and prevention approach, and will provide meaningful, accessible and cost-effective ways for them to manage their own wellbeing in the community.

2.3.13 Quality/Patient Care

The Annual Performance Report assesses local performance in relation to our strategic priorities and the national outcomes for health and wellbeing, children and justice, which relate directly to those who use services. The Report includes key performance indicators and examples of what was delivered in East Ayrshire to illustrate the impact achieved for people during the reporting period.

2.3.14 Workforce

There are no workforce implications arising directly from the Report. The Annual Performance Report includes an 'Our Workforce' section which sets out local actions taken to ensure that the HSCP workforce remains healthy, protected, sustainable and effective. The Partnership's Workforce Plan 2025-28 outlines how we will achieve the national ambitions of Recovery, Growth and Transformation across our workforce.

2.3.15 Financial

The Annual Performance Report aligns with the production of the Annual Accounts for the same period and cross-refers to these. The net cost of provision of services in 2024/25 was £323.618m, illustrating the size and complexity of the organisation.

2.3.16 Risk Assessment/Management

There are no risk implications arising directly from the Report.

2.3.17 Equality and Diversity, Including Health Inequalities

An impact assessment has not been completed as there are no equality implications arising directly from the Report.

2.3.18 Other Impacts

Legal: The Annual Performance Report is prepared to comply with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and associated Regulations and Guidance.

Community Planning: The Annual Performance Report aligns with the East Ayrshire Community Plan: Wellbeing Delivery Plan. It also links to the Economy and Skills and Safer Communities Delivery Plans.

Best Value: The Annual Performance Report illustrates the Partnership's commitments and progress regarding: vision and leadership, partnership working, governance and accountability, use of resources, and performance management in the context of effective and sustainable service delivery.

2.3.19 Communication, Involvement, Engagement and Consultation

The Partnership has carried out its duties to involve and engage stakeholders where appropriate:

- The Annual Performance Report 2024/25 was published on the East Ayrshire HSCP's [‘Our Performance’](#) website on 31 July 2025;
- Audit and Performance Committee, 5 August 2025;
- Strategic Planning Group, 6 August 2025;
- Integration Joint Board Stakeholder Forum, 22 August 2025;
- Integration Joint Board, 27 August 2025; and
- East Ayrshire Council, 11 September 2025.

2.3.20 Route To The Meeting

This has been previously considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report:

- Audit and Performance Committee, 5 August 2025;
- Strategic Planning Group, 6 August 2025;
- Integration Joint Board, 27 August 2025; and
- East Ayrshire Council, 11 September 2025.

2.4 Recommendation

For discussion. The Board is asked to discuss and comment on the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report 2024/25.

3. List of Appendices

The following appendix is available [online](#):

- Appendix 1 - East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Performance Report 2024/25.