

Dear readers / colleagues,

From April 1 health and social care in Greater Manchester changes for the better.

As part of this, we write to you collectively as the leading organisations involved in Greater Manchester Health and Care Devolution.

We wanted to take this unusual move, because Greater Manchester is on the brink on an extraordinary new era as it starts to take full control of the entire budget and decisions for health and social care from April 1.

Together, we are poised to take charge of a huge opportunity - where we will have the freedom to move away from previous ways of working, so that we can make the improvements needed to the health and wellbeing of the 2.8m people who live here.

It's also a time to make the connection between better health and wellbeing and how that helps with all other areas of life including work opportunities, better family life and the prosperity of the region.

The potential is great - and so is the challenge ahead. People who live in some parts of Greater Manchester are out of work longer, die younger and suffer far more illness than other parts of the area and the rest of the country. This cannot and must not continue.

We also face a £2billion shortfall in funding for health and social care in Greater Manchester by 2021 if we don't start to change outcomes and how we work. But that change isn't just about systems and services - it's a wider call for action starting in our homes, schools, workplace and communities so that there is more emphasis on keeping well, staying independent and looking after each other.

The people of Greater Manchester are known for their innovation, loyalty and pride in where they live. We are appealing to all those qualities as we ask everyone to work together in considering how we can change health outcomes.

Some of the proposed new ways of working together across Greater Manchester are contained within a draft five-year plan for the area. We'd invite everyone to read this on this link ([here](#)) and give feedback on what you think could be done to improve health and wellbeing.

The plan also highlights some key facts about Greater Manchester, which we are looking to improve. For example:

- More than two thirds of early deaths are caused by behaviours that could be changed;
- On any day there are 2,500 people in a hospital bed who could be treated at home or in the community;
- More than a fifth of the area's 50-64 age group are out of work and on benefits, many because of ill health;
- Nearly a quarter of the population have a mental health or wellbeing issue which can affect everything from health to employment, parenting and housing.

By 2021 we want to see major improvements including fewer people dying from cancer or heart disease; more children getting off to a better start in life and more people able to work. More of the targets and goals can be seen in detailed plan.

There is a role for everyone in this work, from the individual to the family, the community, the voluntary sector and the public bodies to work together.

Finally, as we approach this historic moment, we as the organisations involved in the devolution want to work beyond individual, organisational interest - so that we too focus on working together where we can, sharing expertise and focusing on united goal of improving the health and wellbeing of the whole of Greater Manchester.

April 1 is a date in diaries and possibly even the history books.

Signed by:

Association of Optometrists
Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Greater Manchester Community and Voluntary Sector
Greater Manchester Federation of Local Dental Committees
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue
Greater Manchester Healthwatches
Greater Manchester Interim Mayor
Greater Manchester Local Medical Committee
Community Pharmacy Greater Manchester
Greater Manchester Police

Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
Bolton CCG
Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Bury CCG

Manchester City Council
Central Manchester CCG
Central Manchester NHS Foundation Trust
North Manchester CCG
South Manchester CCG
University Hospitals of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care NHS Trust

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Oldham CCG

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale CCG

Salford City Council
Salford CCG
Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Stockport CCG
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Tameside and Glossop CCG
Tameside Hospital Foundation Trust

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Trafford CCG

Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
Wigan CCG
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust
Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
Pennine Acute NHS Hospitals Trust
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust
Greater Manchester West Mental Health Foundation Trust

NHS England

ENDS