



Northern Care Alliance
NHS Foundation Trust

Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust

**September 2026
Key messages**

NCA hospital sites

All our sites have different demand and capacity characteristics



Salford Royal Hospital

Provides NEL and EL tertiary services in addition to DGH services - Type 1 ED, Major Trauma Centre and co-located UTC (Urgent Treatment Centre)



Royal Oldham Hospital

Provides Medical, Surgical, Paediatric and Maternity services and has been significantly affected by NMGH disaggregation – The site accommodates MFT Vascular Surgery on site –Trauma Unit – Type 1 ED but UTC not co-located



Fairfield General Hospital

Is medically dominated and includes Stroke services, whilst also providing EL-IP Orthopaedic and ENT surgery - Type 1 ED with co-located UTC



Rochdale Infirmary

Provides short stay NEL services with pathways to other NES sites and is our main elective surgical hub site (DC and 23 hours), Type 3 UCC ED open 24 x 7 x 365

Stakeholder communications

- **NCA, NHSE and GM ICB will work together to update stakeholders during the second week of every month via the Integrated Care Partnership Board (see separate paper for Edition one – 11th September 2026).**
- **Updates will be aligned to the NCA Board (first Wed of the month) and System Improvement Board cycle (first Thursday of the month).**
- **Focus will be on NHS England undertakings, improvement programme, clinical model, leadership transition, industrial action and legacy inquests.**
- **Supports a "no surprises" approach, providing timely, transparent and consistent information directly from the NCA.**

Safety, quality and governance



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- **Media coverage, regulatory feedback and internal reviews identify common themes.**
- **Patient safety, quality governance, risk, complaints, Freedom to Speak Up, workforce wellbeing and inclusion.**
- **The Trust is tackling quality and safety issues raised through regulatory feedback, internal reviews and concerns from colleagues and patients.**
- **Incident, investigation, learning and escalation are being strengthened.**

Performance



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- **Safe services are being maintained while required improvements are delivered.**
- **Patient flow at Salford is part of the improvement and assurance work.**
- **Workforce pressures and absences are monitored alongside operational risks.**
- **Performance and service risks are reviewed through operational and governance routes.**
- **Patients affected by disruption or delays are contacted directly.**

Regulatory action



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- **NHS England issued formal enforcement undertakings in the summer.**
- **Undertakings cover spinal services, gynaecology services, quality governance and patient flow at Salford.**
- **CQC has issued a Section 29A Warning Notice on quality assurance arrangements.**
- **NHS England has established a System Improvement Board with NCA and NHS Greater Manchester ICB. The first meeting was on Thursday 3rd September.**
- **The Board will publicly oversee undertakings and the wider improvement programme.**

Improvement

- **The Integrated Improvement Plan is our plan improvement.**
- **It brings together NHS England undertakings, the CQC Section 29A notice, Well-Led feedback, internal reviews and other improvement areas.**
- **It will include actions, owners, milestones, success measures and assurance routes.**
- **Delivery will be overseen by the Trust Board, executive team, system partners and System Improvement Board, with partners engaged because improvement will require joint working.**
- **The Trust launched a new Clinical Leadership Model, directly involving clinical leaders in safety, quality and improvement decisions.**

Our Approach to Improvement



How the model works

Listening

Hear openly from clinicians, patients, colleagues and partners to understand what matters most.

Learning

Use evidence, data and experience to adapt quickly and embed lasting change.

Partnerships

Turn learning into action through purposeful collaboration and shared ownership.

Strategic Improvement Themes



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Six themes focus our collective improvement effort

Safe & Effective Care	People & Culture	Governance	Digital, Data & Information	Operational Delivery & Performance	Financial Sustainability & Productivity
Gynaecology Services	Executive & Senior Leadership effectiveness	Risk Management & Assurance	Digital Safety & Infrastructure	UEC and Patient Flow	Financial Recovery
Spinal Services	Clinical Leadership & medical engagement	Integrated Planning, Performance & Improvement Governance	Data Quality & Information Management	Access and waiting time recovery	Underlying deficit / Cost Improvement
Quality Governance	Culture, speaking up & Inclusion				Productivity
Patient Safety, Complaints & Learning	Colleague Health, attendance & wellbeing				

Industrial action

- **The Trust is managing local industrial action within theatres.**
- **The Trust is currently in negotiations with UNISON.**
- **GM bank rates triggered staff concern and UNISON involvement.**
- **Bank rates are outside UNISON's remit and were not part of the ballot.**
- **Critical care agreements were based on the small number of shifts involved and the view that extra overtime would not be needed if sickness is managed.**
- **Overtime is available and paid for shift overruns across NCA.**