



The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust

Excellence in Neuroscience 

The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust Strategy 2022 to 2025



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Foreword

The Walton Centre is the only specialist hospital trust in the UK providing comprehensive neurology, neurosurgery, spinal, pain management and rehabilitation services. Our three-year strategy sets out how we will continue to deliver excellent clinical outcomes and patient experience with our team of dedicated, specialist staff.

The strategy covers the three years from 2022 to 2025, and reflects the pace of change in the NHS due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the infrastructure changes brought about by the Health and Social Care Bill 2021.

At The Walton Centre, we place our patients and their families at the heart of everything we do. We are a national leader in neurology and neurosurgery, and are rated as 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We have leading specialists and dedicated staff across our site in Liverpool, and offer a world-class service in diagnosing and treating injuries and illnesses affecting the brain, spine and peripheral nerves and muscles, and in supporting people with a wide range of long-term neurological conditions.

We serve an area of 3.5 million people across Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales, the Isle of Man, and parts of Lancashire and Greater Manchester, and have service partnerships with 12 NHS Trusts across 19 hospitals and medical centres. Our 'Walton Clinic' model of care for neurology means that many patients are able to access outpatient consultations and some tests closer to home, through our clinics at these sites. Neurosurgery, highly specialised assessments and inpatient care is carried out at The Walton Centre itself.

Since our last strategy in 2018, we have grown, developed and innovated at pace. This includes being the first neuroscience centre in the region to provide a 24/7 thrombectomy service, and the introduction of the Rapid Access Neurology Assessment (RANA).

We have been recognised for our high-quality service, including achieving Tessa Jowell Centre of Excellence status for the care of patients with brain tumours, and recognition by Eurospine as a centre of excellence for spinal surgery. We have also received Anaesthesia Clinical Services Accreditation from the Royal College of Anaesthetists, Neuromuscular Centre of Clinical Excellence for Adults from the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, and accreditation by UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) for the Neuroscience Laboratories.

This new strategy sets out how we will expand our services further and will continue to innovate, research and develop. We also highlight what the key initiatives will be over the next three years, and how we will further develop our services across our regions, as well as developing national neuroscience services.

We will work in partnership with the emerging Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System (ICS), cementing our unique position as a key specialist partner within that system.

Our strategy aligns with national, regional and local system plans, including acute and primary care services, along with the voluntary and third sector, linking in with the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS' place-based plans and those of One Liverpool, North Wales, and across Merseyside.

In developing this strategy, we involved staff from across the Trust, patients and families, the voluntary sector, support groups, our Governors and members, and representatives from partner trusts, primary care and the ICS. There has been positive engagement from staff and stakeholders, who clearly hold The Walton Centre dear to their hearts. We will continue to listen and engage, and use that feedback to further influence our plans as we implement our strategy.



Jan Ross
Chief Executive



Max Steinberg CBE
Chairman

About us

The Walton Centre is the only specialist neurosciences NHS trust providing a high-quality, integrated and multidisciplinary service to Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales, the Isle of Man and parts of Lancashire and Greater Manchester – a population of 3.5 million people.

We were rated as 'Outstanding' for a second time by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following its inspection in April 2019.

Our 'hub and spoke' clinical model means we have satellite clinics in multiple sites across our region, enabling patients to be seen closer to home by the most appropriate specialist, with an average of 180,000 patients per year seen in clinics. We have one of the busiest neurosurgical units in the country, and are partners in the Merseyside Major Trauma Centre Collaborative with our neighbouring trust, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. We also host the Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network and the Cheshire and Merseyside Adult Critical Care and Major Trauma Operational Delivery Networks.

The hospital is five miles from the centre of Liverpool, in a purpose-built building which opened in 1998. We have 119 acute beds, 30 complex rehabilitation beds, 10 acute rehabilitation beds, and it is one of only a few centres in the UK with a dedicated, 20-bedded Neurocritical Care Unit. We are also one of a small number of trusts that has an intraoperative MRI suite, in addition to six other operating theatres. We have four additional high-resolution MRI scanners and two CT scanners, ensuring our patients have access to the best diagnostic facilities possible. We perform over 40,000 scans per year.

The Sid Watkins Building at The Walton Centre, which opened in 2015, houses the Cheshire and Merseyside Complex Rehabilitation Unit, together with outpatient facilities, the 'Home from Home' centre for use by patients' families, and a dedicated Education Department.

We are proud to be one of the best places to work and have achieved the industry standard Investors in People Gold award for our organisational culture and our health and wellbeing support for staff.

The Walton Centre Charity

The Walton Centre Charity supports the vital work of the Trust by investing charitable funds in areas and projects that enhance patient, family and staff experience, treatment and care.



The Charity focuses on four key areas

Improved environment and facilities for patients and their families

Innovation and new technology

Research and development

Enhanced staff training and wellbeing

Our vision

Excellence in Neuroscience



Our vision at The Walton Centre is underpinned by a shared set of values. These behaviours are encouraged in all we do.

Our mission

Specialist staff working collaboratively to reduce health inequalities and achieve excellent clinical outcomes and patient experience.

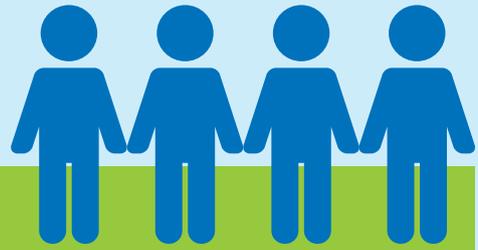
The Walton Way

At The Walton Centre we are guided by clear values which were developed and are upheld by our staff.



These values include a learning culture that empowers staff to make and lead change, be curious and seek continuous improvement.

The Walton Centre
serves an area of
3.5 million people



The Walton Centre is
rated Outstanding by
the CQC



Service partnerships
with 12 NHS Trusts
in the region



Our 'Walton Clinic'
neurology model
provides clinics at 19
hospitals and health
centres in the region



The Walton Centre employs
1,500 members of staff



Walton Centre partnerships:

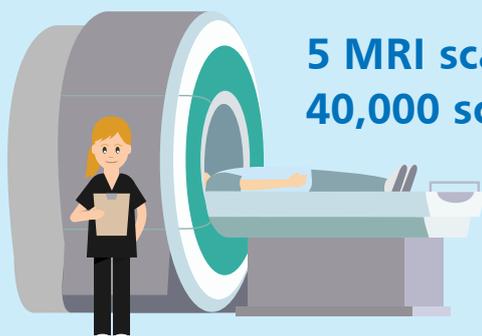
- Host of Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network
- Cheshire and Merseyside Adult Critical Care Network
- Major Trauma Centre Collaborative

**180,000 patients per year
seen across all our clinics**



**25,000 procedures carried
out every year**

**119 acute beds, 30 complex
rehabilitation beds, 10 acute
rehabilitation beds**



**5 MRI scanners and 2 CT scanners, with
40,000 scans per year**



The health landscape

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on healthcare provision since March 2020. As we emerge from the pandemic, there needs to be a sustained focus on the recovery of clinical services and tackling the backlog of patients needing care and treatment. It is therefore more important than ever that the health and social care system works collaboratively, for the benefit of the population as a whole.

The NHS has demonstrated its resilience and adaptability during this unprecedented period. There has been increased collaboration between providers which has focused healthcare delivery to ensure equity of access. IT infrastructure has been significantly developed, such as in enabling remote consultations for patients during COVID restrictions. The benefits from these new ways of working will continue to be built on. We need to be responsive to patient needs and further adapt pathways to allow flexibility where clinically appropriate.

The Health and Social Care Bill 2021 set out the legislative changes needed to enable health and care to work more closely together, setting up Integrated Care Boards (ICB) across England. In our region, the Integrated Care System covers Cheshire and Merseyside, and is one of the largest ICSs in the country. The ICB will be responsible for delivering health and social care for the duration of our strategy.

// The Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership will serve a population of 2.7 million people, across nine boroughs, or 'places'.

One of the main drivers of the development of the ICSs was to address health inequalities. This is a key issue in our region, which contains some of the most deprived boroughs in England and has some of the widest health inequalities.

There is a staffing crisis across the country in health and social care, especially in nursing which has over 40,000 vacancies across England. The Walton Centre is working hard to recruit and retain the best people, to remain an outstanding place to work, and to prioritise the health and wellbeing of our workforce.



Our strategy

The strategy comprises five strategic ambitions which will enable us to continue to deliver world-class care to our patients and their families:



Education, training and learning



Research and innovation



Leadership



Collaboration



Social responsibility

Underpinning these ambitions are seven enabling strategies:



Quality

Ensuring the delivery of the highest quality of care to our patients and their families



People

Committed to a safe, healthy and productive workplace that promotes diversity of thoughts, heritage and social background



Digital

Developing and implementing industry-leading digital solutions for our patients and our people



Estates, facilities and sustainability

Taking a multidisciplinary approach to ensuring that sustainability in estates and facilities is at the heart of our work



Finance and commercial development

Maximising use of resources, improving productivity and developing market opportunities to deliver best value for the Trust and the wider system



Communications and marketing

Promoting our work as the only specialist neurosciences NHS trust and ensuring patients and staff receive the best quality information

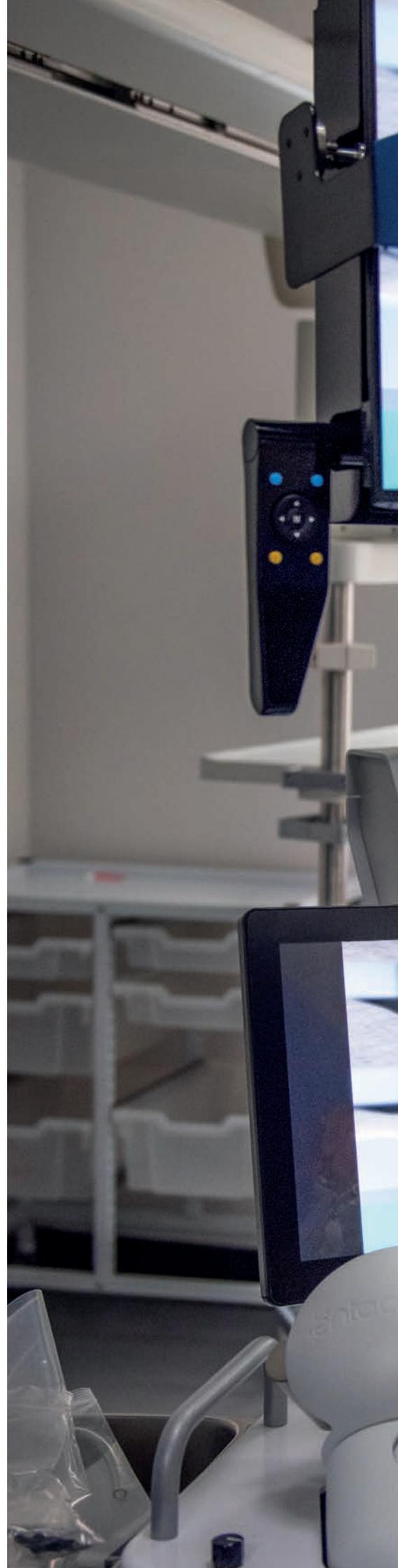


Charity

Supporting the work of the Trust through new opportunities and initiatives, in particular digital fundraising

Strategic ambitions

These five strategic ambitions outline the key direction for The Walton Centre and our focus for delivering the very best patient-centred treatment and care.







Leading the way in neurosciences education and training.

Education, training and learning

We are a national leader in neurosciences education and training, and aim to improve the quality of care for patients with neurological symptoms in all settings. We are one of the leading providers of medical education in neuroscience in the UK and beyond.

We have close links with universities in north west England and North Wales, and deliver training of the highest standard to the next generation of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. Consistently excellent feedback is received from undergraduate medical students and in the General Medical Council (GMC) trainee survey.

Through our system leadership role in neurosciences, we will share our knowledge and expertise, and provide support to our colleagues. We will have closer clinical interaction with colleagues in the ICS, and will provide teaching sessions and learning packages.

We will continue to be involved in regional neuroscience conferences and will share our expertise at national and international teaching courses and conferences.

Our staff are trained to the highest level using the most up-to-date techniques and innovations to enable the best outcomes for patients.

We will expand national training opportunities in neurology including the NeuroPodcasts web resource and the NeuroPACES course for physicians in training.

// Over the coming years, our spinal team will develop a national hub for training in innovative, minimally invasive robotic and endoscopic spinal surgery. We are the first NHS trust to invest in a virtual reality simulator for neurosurgical training. We will expand the training opportunities that this provides to regional neurosurgical trainees and deliver national training courses.

How we will know we have succeeded

Develop advanced training modules for non-medical staff jointly with higher education institutions

Achieve year-on-year improvements in feedback in the GMC trainee survey

Expand delivery of undergraduate medical education

Establish national virtual reality training programme in neurosurgery and develop a national hub for training in robotic and endoscopic spinal surgery

Lead and deliver a national neuroscience conference

Develop non-medical consultant posts

We will continue to provide training and further education opportunities, such as advanced modules in rehabilitation, developed in collaboration with local higher education institutions.

By investing in education and training, we will attract the best staff to work with us and ensure we have a workforce fit for the future.







Delivering high-quality clinical neuroscience research, in collaboration with universities and commercial partners.

Research and innovation

The Walton Centre has a proud tradition of delivering high-quality clinical neuroscience research, in collaboration with our local universities and commercial partners, to improve patient outcomes and experiences.

Our clinicians have research expertise in areas including epilepsy, neuroinflammatory disease, neurological infections, neuro-oncology, spinal disorders, pain and neurodegenerative disease. During the pandemic, clinicians from The Walton Centre led UK research into the neurological manifestations of COVID-19.

// We will continue to focus on research to ensure that patients can benefit from evidence-based treatment and care, and the opportunities that participation in research brings

We will support our staff and provide opportunities for them to undertake research by developing areas of focus, based on the needs of the population we serve. We have excellent links with academic institutions and these will be strengthened further as we recruit to more combined academic posts for both medical and non-medical staff. We will work with universities to expand research in neurosciences and pain, with collaborations between clinicians and scientists.

We want to become a world-leading neurosciences research centre and will do this by developing a business model for research and development, and offering opportunities for reinvestment and growth.

We attract the most highly skilled and motivated people, who want to support our research and innovation ambitions. We will foster and develop a culture of innovation to enable our teams to improve services to patients through advanced technologies. All staff will be empowered to develop innovative solutions to any issue they identify. Our culture will be one of openness, continual learning and curiosity for ways to improve our own practice.

How we will know we have succeeded

Increase the number of active research studies from baseline by year-on-year

Increase the number of research active clinical staff by 20%

Increase the number of our patients offered the opportunity of participation in clinical trials by 20%

Achieve formal recognition as a University Hospital



Developing the right people with the right skills and values to enable sustainable delivery of health services.

Leadership

Clinical leadership is key to the successful delivery of high-quality patient care. Developing the right people with the right skills and the right values is a key priority to enable the sustainable delivery of health services, as leadership is one of the most influential factors in shaping an organisational culture.

Our aim is to develop clinical and non-clinical leaders who embrace change and lead through positivity. Our succession planning and talent management will ensure we have the right staff in the right roles, and that they personally develop as well as improve our services.

Ensuring the necessary leadership behaviours, and personal qualities is fundamental to the organisation. The Trust needs high-quality leaders at every level and in every area to ensure that it is able to deliver outstanding, compassionate care to the people it serves. Leaders come in many different forms and can operate at any level; leadership can bring about positive outcomes for staff and the organisation.

We are the first trust to become an affiliate member of the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM). We will develop this association, with specific input into leadership development, both medical and non-medical, and medical appraisal. We will continue to offer non-clinical leaders opportunities to develop.

// We believe in a consistent and fair approach to leadership, which runs through the organisation and our Walton Way values.

We will lead on developing expertise in neurosciences in the region through our system leadership role and with greater involvement along the whole patient pathway, from the community through to secondary and tertiary care services.

How we will know we have succeeded

Develop a clinical leadership programme with the Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management

Lead on the development of clinical pathways regionally

All staff in leadership roles will have the opportunity to complete a leadership programme

We have developed pathways of care for common conditions such as headache, seizures and back pain. In association with patient groups, primary care and partner trusts, we will work to enhance care so that patients are managed in the correct setting, in a timelier manner, and only access specialist services when needed. Examples of current work in this area include the multiple sclerosis optimum pathway and the Parkinson's Disease Excellence Framework.





Clinical and non-clinical collaborations across and beyond the ICS, building on existing relationships and services.

Collaboration

We have for many years had a wide geographical footprint, which enables care to be given closer to home. Our services cover the whole of the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS, but also beyond into North Wales, the Isle of Man and parts of Lancashire and Greater Manchester. We have therefore always collaborated with partners in the health system to improve patient care. Within the new ICS, we will further develop our clinical and non-clinical collaborations, which will build on existing services.

The Walton Centre plays a pivotal role in the region in addressing the challenge of unwarranted variation and ensuring quality of care. As the sole provider of neurosciences within Cheshire and Merseyside, we are committed to demonstrating to the Integrated Care Board how we can add value to the wider health system through positively impacting patient flow, length of stay and A&E capacity. We will work closely with our acute partners, social care and voluntary groups to achieve this.

Neurology

We currently deliver the highest quality neuroscience services regionally. We will continue to build on our successful 'hub and spoke' model, which provides care closer to home for many patients. We will enhance this further by developing an acute neurology service with our external clinical partners, based on 'Getting It Right First Time' (GIRFT) recommendations.

The newly formed Rapid Access Neurology Assessment (RANA) service will be developed into a one-stop-shop service. This service will contribute to a significant reduction in inpatient bed days in our partner trusts, in addition to a reduction in investigations, both of which will result in savings for the wider system. Most importantly, patients with acute neurological conditions will be assessed and investigated by an appropriate specialist in a timely manner, which will improve patient outcomes and experience.

Stroke

We are the first neuroscience service in the north west to provide a 24/7 thrombectomy service for patients who have had a stroke. We will work with partners on the optimum pathways so that the best outcomes for patients can be achieved, which will be monitored through the regional multidisciplinary team.

We will increase the number of patients treated with this life-saving technique by 20%. We will continue to work to support the development of the North Mersey stroke pathway.

Rehabilitation

The Walton Centre has a unique complex rehabilitation service, supported by state-of-the-art facilities. We host the Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network, an example of an existing collaborative network across providers. We aim to be the lead provider in this network and believe that we can work with our current partners and others to enhance rehabilitation further for all patients and to work in collaboration with the stroke rehabilitation services.

Within the three-year duration of this strategy, by working collaboratively with partner organisations, we will:

Reduce mean length of stay for patients with neurological conditions by two days

Reduce admissions to acute trusts by 10% for patients with neurological symptoms by expanding the acute neurology model

Increase the number of patients with acute stroke treated by thrombectomy by 20%

Enhance care and experience for patients with spinal and neurosurgical conditions across the region by collaboratively developing pathways of best care

Establish a new region-wide pain service with partners, to address equity of access and unwarranted variation

Pain

Chronic pain is a significant issue within our population and it severely impacts patients' quality of life. Spend on prescription medication for pain in the region is high, which has been shown to be closely linked with social deprivation. However, there is significant variation in how easily patients can access pain services across our region.

The Walton Centre has a successful track record of providing specialist pain services and is recognised as the regional service for complex pain. There is an opportunity for our ICS to reconfigure services to greatly improve care for the large proportion of the population who have chronic or complex pain.

In collaboration with our acute partners, we will lead on the Pan-Mersey pain programme to ensure that services are standardised and resources are used effectively. This will mean there is a more equitable service across our region, with a focus on non-medical interventions and subsequent reduction in spend on pain medication and attendances at A&E departments. The aims of this service redesign are to improve patient outcomes and to have health economic benefits.

Neurosurgery/spinal surgery

We provide neurosurgical care for our population and attract referrals from further afield. We work collaboratively with our partners to ensure the highest quality, joined-up pathways for patients with brain conditions such as tumours, vascular abnormalities, infection and trauma.

The Walton Centre is now the only provider of spinal surgery services in Cheshire and Merseyside, following a review of the regional services, with input from GIRFT, to improve quality of care and reduce unwarranted variation. Our service is a joint neurosurgical/orthopaedic service and, for the first time in our region, spinal expertise across specialties has come together to provide a truly integrated service. This shared expertise will be used to improve patient-reported outcomes in degenerative, malignant and infective spinal disease.

Working closely with our community and acute providers on pathway development, will ensure that people with neurosurgical and spinal conditions receive the best care possible when needed, by the appropriate professional.







Supporting our local communities and providing services for patients within and beyond Cheshire and Merseyside.

Social responsibility

Although The Walton Centre provides services for patients within and beyond Cheshire and Merseyside, we are anchored in the Liverpool City Region, and we want to support our local community further. Health and social care is the largest employer across Cheshire and Merseyside. By focusing on the wellbeing of our staff and committing to equality, diversity and inclusion, we are also supporting our local population.

There is significant variation in the population we serve in terms of deprivation and health. The 2020 Marmot Review highlighted that, nationally, health inequalities have grown in the last 10 years, and this particularly impacts the most deprived regions in the north of England. There is an urgent need to ensure all of our population have access to the best quality health and social care services. We will use data based on indices of multiple deprivation to analyse how our communities access our services, which will dictate our focus so that we reach the most vulnerable and those who may not readily access the services they need.

It is well recognised that a number of neurological conditions may exacerbate health inequality as they can impact employment opportunities and independence. It is therefore vital that we understand the specific issues that people with neurological conditions can have by engaging with patient groups and addressing their needs in a personalised, holistic way.

The Cheshire and Merseyside 'Prevention Pledge' is a place-based approach to creating a sustainable and transformational shift in improving population health, exploring interventions and strategies relevant to local communities.

We will work with Liverpool Citizens, an alliance of active citizens and leaders from local institutions who are dedicated to working together for the common good.

In April 2022, the NHS adopted the Government's Social Value Model, which measures the positive impact NHS providers and suppliers have on their local population. Further to signing up to the Cheshire and Merseyside Healthcare Partnership Social Value Charter, we have committed to achieving the Cheshire and Merseyside Healthcare Partnership Award and the Social Value Quality Mark.

How we will know we have succeeded

Achieve the Cheshire and Merseyside Healthcare Partnership Award and the Social Value Quality Mark

Implement Health Coaches for people with long-term conditions

Make progress towards 80% reduction in NHS carbon footprint by 2028

Through our sustainable procurement policy, develop partnerships with local companies

We will support the ICS on ensuring the principles of social value, inclusivity and citizenship are realised by offering opportunities for support and employment. By 2025, through offering opportunities for support and employment we will significantly increase the number of apprenticeships. We will work with local schools to offer work experience to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and to promote the Trust as an employer of choice.

We will continue to prioritise partnership working with Staffside and trade unions, to deliver genuine change that will improve the quality of life for our workforce.

It is imperative that we provide care in a way that also protects our environment. We will develop a sustainability plan which will outline how we will reduce waste, reduce carbon emissions, and use our estate in the most energy efficient way.

Enabling strategies

Underpinning our five strategic ambitions are seven enabling strategies which feed into all aspects of the Trust's work, providing a critical link between our overarching ambitions and their delivery.





SIEMENS

Artis Q
with PURE

THE WALTONS





Quality

Ensuring the delivery of the highest quality of care to our patients and their families.

Providing the highest quality of care is at the heart of all that we do, as recognised by the Care Quality Commission, who rated us as 'Outstanding'.

We pride ourselves on meeting the highest possible standards for patient safety, experience and outcomes. We consistently achieve excellent clinical outcomes, as demonstrated by national benchmarking for:

- Trauma (TARN, as part of the Major Trauma Collaborative with Liverpool University Hospitals)
- Spinal (Spine Tango, British Spine Registry)
- Functional neurosurgery (DBS)
- Critical care (ICNARC)
- Skull base surgery (vestibular schwannoma and pituitary)
- Shunts (National Shunt Registry)
- Vascular (AVM registry)
- Cancer pain (National Cordotomy Registry)
- National Neurosurgical Audit Programme

We believe that it is essential to measure patient outcomes so that we can assure ourselves, our patients and the regulators that we provide the highest standard of care and that we are constantly striving to improve.

// Over the next three years, we will continue to provide excellent care and support to patients with acute and long-term neurological/neurosurgical conditions, and we will build on and improve the current service models.

Our core clinical services are neurology, neurosurgery, spinal surgery, pain, rehabilitation, and interventional radiology. We will engage with patients and families to improve the information they receive at the point of diagnosis of a long-term condition, and after diagnosis when they feel ready to know more about their condition.

We treat patients with any neurological condition, from the very common to the very rare. We provide the same high-quality service for all conditions, to ensure that each of our patients is treated according to their individual needs.

Our services for patients with very rare conditions continue to grow as medical knowledge increases, for example in neurogenetics. We currently provide two national services, and we will further embed and develop these. We are the Centre for the North of England for Neuromyelitis Optica (NMO), which is now a well-established multidisciplinary service for this rare neurological condition. We have recently become the second centre in England to use MRI-guided focused ultrasound thalamotomy for essential tremor. This provides the opportunity for life-changing treatment for many patients with this disabling condition, as part of an integrated multidisciplinary movement disorders service. We will embed this service so that people living in the north of England can access this treatment. Our functional neurosurgery service will further expand the availability of treatment for patients with Parkinson's disease, epilepsy and pain.

Our multidisciplinary vascular service provides unrivalled quality of care for patients with serious vascular conditions such as stroke, brain aneurysms and vascular malformations, and achieves excellent patient outcomes. We will further develop this service to ensure that as many patients as possible will benefit from these innovative treatments.







People

Committed to a safe, healthy and productive workplace that promotes diversity of thought, heritage and social background.

We will recruit and retain the best people, prioritise the health and wellbeing of our workforce, and provide training opportunities for all staff.

Our people are fundamental to the delivery of high-quality healthcare at The Walton Centre. We want our staff to feel valued and supported, and to create the conditions for them to deliver the highest possible standard of healthcare.

We want to attract the very best talent to our centre of excellence and be recognised as being a great place to work. We will build upon our well-established staff health and wellbeing programme, with a renewed focus on psychological support for our staff.

// Our staff will be supported to develop, to have a voice that counts in the organisation, and encouraged by a culture of engagement, listening and action.

We will strive to maintain our industry standard Gold accreditation by Investors in People, and aim to become the first NHS trust to achieve Platinum status.

It is important that we attract, develop and celebrate a diverse workforce. It is essential that all staff feel comfortable to bring their whole selves to work. We will continue to wholeheartedly commit to the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda. We have developed the Strategic Black and Minority Ethnic Group, which reports directly to Trust Board, and have formed a workforce disability group. We will continue to learn and develop in this area and will achieve improved scores in the WRES (Workforce Race Equality Standard) and WDES (Workforce Disability Equality Standard) year on year.

The NHS Staff Survey offers a snapshot in time of how people experience their working lives, gathered at the same time each year. The results help inform improvements in staff experience and wellbeing. The health and wellbeing of staff is front and centre of The Walton Centre’s Staff Survey action plan.

The NHS Staff Survey has nine themes:

Compassionate and inclusive

Recognised and rewarded

A voice that counts

Safe and healthy

Work flexibly

Teamworking

Staff engagement

Morale

Always learning

Our ambition is to continually improve scores across all themes.



Digital

Industry leading digital solutions for our patients and our people.

We will harness the full potential of digital technologies, increase our digital maturity and prioritise digital inclusion.

Technology can support more efficient, user-friendly ways of working. We will work to harness the full potential of digital technologies to modernise operations and drive performance improvements. We will work in collaboration with clinical and support staff to foster an environment that facilitates digital solutions.

The Trust is in the top 20% of NHS organisations in terms of digital maturity, with our recent achievement of Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Stage 5 for Digital Maturity. We will work to achieve an even higher HIMSS level. We are part of the national Digital Aspirant programme, which helps NHS trusts raise their digital maturity by supporting organisations to deliver a set of core capabilities.



We are also committed to the national digital transformation agenda for the NHS, which is underpinned by seven pillars of 'What Good Looks Like':

1. Well-led
2. Ensure smart foundations
3. Safe practice
4. Support people
5. Empower citizens
6. Improve care
7. Healthy populations

We have combined all our portfolios and programmes into a virtual project management office, which enables visible assurance and governance against the digital transformation programme success measures. We will support both our staff and our patients and carers to thoroughly engage with the digitisation of services that can improve outcomes, experience and safety through the introduction of new tools and processes which will improve patient experience and efficiency of services.

The Trust will drive the digital agenda in the region it covers by leading on digital maturity, the green plan and interoperability on behalf of the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS. The Digital Team is actively involved in supporting digital enablement within the Liverpool community to ensure communities can access our digital services and that information is within easy reach of those who require it, be that a patient or carer.

Digital inclusion will be prioritised in all of our digital programmes and initiatives, to ensure either help is given to patients, be that hardware, software or training, or to provide a non-digital equivalent, to enable equity across our population.





Estates, facilities and sustainability

Estates and facilities are fundamental to the operational management of the Trust and form part of a multidisciplinary approach to keep our patients, staff and visitors safe and comfortable within the environment.

The NHS produces approximately 5.4% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions and 40% of UK public sector emissions. On a global level, healthcare generates so much carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) that if it were a country, it would be the world's fifth biggest polluter.

Climate change is the greatest health threat facing the world. However, it also offers the greatest opportunity for us to redefine the social and environmental determinants of health to provide sustainable health services across Cheshire and Merseyside and to deliver the ambitions set out in Delivering a Net Zero National Health Service.

In developing a comprehensive Sustainability Plan, The Walton Centre will strive to exceed the emission reduction targets set by the Government and the NHS.

We will develop an 'Estates, facilities and sustainability sub-strategy' to meet the needs of future developments.

As an organisation, we acknowledge the impact we have on the environment and are therefore committed to continuing the work to actively reduce the Trust's carbon footprint.

We are therefore investing significant funds in plant replacement and the introduction of new technology which will deliver reductions in the organisation's carbon footprint.

As part of the Sustainability Plan, all areas within the Trust will be required to embed carbon reduction into their day-to-day activities and business planning processes.

Our work in sustainability is critical in achieving our ambitions to be an Anchor Institution. The Walton Centre aspires to work with local suppliers and businesses to grow the local economy. The Trust will review all its supply chains with the intention of sourcing locally and sustainably thus reducing our carbon footprint.

The Walton Centre plans to focus on the following initiatives:

Estates and facilities

Travel and transport

Medicines

Theatres/Anaesthetics

Digital systems



The Walton Centre NHS
Business & Communities

Sid
Watkins
Building

Welcome

The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust

The Walton Centre

Excellence in Neuroscience



Welcome



Finance and commercial development

We will maximise use of resources, improve productivity and develop market opportunities to deliver best value for the Trust, the public, and the wider system.

Cheshire and Merseyside and the wider health system are facing unprecedented financial challenges. The Walton Centre has continued to perform well financially, delivering against the targets set by the Health and Care Partnership, and as a result, bringing additional income into the region. The Trust will continue to strive to meet the ongoing financial challenges and to perform well through efficiency to achieve the best value in its use of funding. We aim to maintain the highest rating of level 1 on the System Oversight Framework (SOF).

We will work with our partners in health and social care as a member of the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS to achieve financial stability across the region.

In working to deliver the best value services, we will focus on service transformation and maximising productivity, while ensuring high-quality care and using resources responsibly.

We will review service development opportunities across Cheshire, Merseyside and, beyond that, ensure our services are known and recognised, so that all patients who require our expertise can access this. We will explore non-NHS opportunities to diversify income. All income generated through these areas will be invested directly into patient care. The Trust will look to partner across corporate services to maximise scale and efficiency. For example, through Health Procurement Liverpool, the Trust has partnered with other specialist trusts on procurement services to provide scale and opportunity across purchasing and contract management, which delivers greater benefits across the partners.

Making use of digital initiatives and artificial intelligence within corporate services will help to streamline workflows and generate efficiencies that can help us achieve the savings that will be required to deliver financial stability.

The Trust will ensure it gets maximum return on capital investments, as capital resources become more constrained in the Cheshire and Merseyside system. We will use rigorous business case processes to ensure that investments are prioritised and sound investment decisions are made, that not only make best use of resources, but maximise benefits to our patients and staff.

The implementation of the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board provides The Walton Centre with an opportunity to influence the development of neuroscience care across the region. As the single provider of neuroscience services, the Trust is in an excellent position to help its acute hospital partners to manage some of their ongoing pressures following the pandemic.

Being the clinical leader for neuroscience care in the region, we can have an impact on how patients are cared for in the community and secondary care, and can directly help reduce hospital admissions, length of stay and unnecessary investigations. Through this influence on the wider delivery of neuroscience services, The Walton Centre can help to deliver best value to the health system through our clinical model and ongoing innovative approach to patient care.



Communications and marketing

We will engage with the wider health and care system, raising the profile of The Walton Centre, ensuring that patients, families and staff receive the best quality information.

As a specialist neuroscience hospital, there is a strong clinical focus in our specialties, excellent clinical outcomes and experiences for our patients and a positive working environment for staff. It is essential that The Walton Centre has a strong brand, to ensure maximum recognition locally, regionally and nationally for the benefit of patients, family and friends, staff and our stakeholders.

A strong brand supports research funding and investment, recruitment and retention and the work of The Walton Centre Charity, as well as providing reassurance to patients and the wider community about the Trust's status as the best place to receive treatment and care for neurological, neurosurgical, spinal, pain and rehabilitation services.

We want to raise the profile of The Walton Centre as a nationally leading trust, and as a trusted voice in neuroscience both regionally and nationally. Internally, we will ensure that staff are communicated with effectively and efficiently and are able to participate in two-way communication and engagement, at all levels of the organisation.

We will work to ensure that all interactions with The Walton Centre, whether as a patient, family member, visitor, stakeholder or staff member are of the highest standard, through a focus on the different communication channels including printed staff and patient materials, the hospital environment, patient information, the recruitment process, fundraising, and digital, including the Trust website, social media and staff intranet.

Every contact with The Walton Centre should be professional, accessible, and engaging. We will work with teams across the Trust to improve processes and outputs where possible through communications – for example, the recruitment journey, patient communications, and the in-hospital experience.

Digital communication is an ever-growing and developing channel for patients, staff and stakeholders. The new Walton Centre website launched in September 2021 and has seen increased visitor numbers and accessibility ratings. We will continue to manage and enhance the website in line with the Trust's strategy and objectives, national and local initiatives, and best practice. We will support the production of engaging online content (including exploration of webinars and podcasts) and explore emerging platforms, tools and technologies to ensure a positive and productive user experience.

Our focus on internal communications will ensure effective two-way communications and engagement with Trust staff, on-site partners, and volunteers to sustain an environment where staff feel informed, included and valued. As part of this, we will embed a new email marketing platform to improve the accessibility and engagement of internal emails. This will also feed into the development of alternative staff communications techniques for those staff for whom digital isn't a best practice channel.







Charity

The Walton Centre Charity supports the vital work of the Trust by investing charitable funds in areas and projects that enhance patient, family and staff experience, treatment and care.

New fundraising opportunities and initiatives will focus on digital, social media and virtual platforms, and enable a more focused approach for digital income generation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a very different landscape in terms of how people work and socialise, and most aspects of the economy have been severely affected. The impact on income-generating potential will differ across income streams such as community, corporate and major donor fundraising. The Charity is therefore developing a new Fundraising Strategy that will take this into consideration.

New fundraising opportunities and initiatives will focus on digital, social media and virtual platforms, as well as offering hybrid event opportunities wherever possible. The new strategy will include a proposal for how to grow and develop the Fundraising Team to add skills and enable a more focused approach for digital income generation.

Emphasis will be placed on ensuring that the Charity's positive impact is shared both internally and externally in order to encourage further involvement and support for future fundraising. Working closely with the Communications and Marketing Team, we will develop a plan to improve existing supporter journeys, as well as develop and implement new digital stewardship programmes. In addition, charitable fund application procedures will be reviewed in order to develop a comprehensive Grant Making Policy which will incorporate assessment and prioritisation procedures for new projects, and impact reporting on initiatives funded.

The Fundraising Strategy will ensure the Charity can effectively contribute to the overall income of The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust, supporting and enabling developments, particularly in innovation and research.

The Charity focuses on four key areas:

Improved environment and facilities for patients and their families

Innovation and new technology

Research and development

Enhanced staff training and wellbeing





Developing and delivering our strategy

In developing this strategy, we have created a dynamic and innovative approach for delivery of the leading treatments and care for every patient. Developed in conjunction with our stakeholders, both internal and external, it provides the blueprint to drive our services forward to benefit patients.

Developing and delivering our strategy

We took an inclusive and integrated approach to developing this strategy. The steps taken included:

Trust Board and Executive Team development sessions to agree high-level external drivers and challenges

Communication and involvement of staff, patients, carers and support groups

Communication and involvement of acute, ICS and primary care colleagues



We consulted and communicated with:

Internal stakeholders

Multidisciplinary clinical staff
Medical consultants
Departmental meetings
Clinical staff
Non-clinical meetings/departments
Governors
Trust members
Executive and Non-Executive Directors
The Walton Centre Charity

External stakeholders

Neuro Therapy Centre
The Brain Charity
Parkinson's UK
Epilepsy Action
MS Society
MND Association
Cheshire and Merseyside Neurological Alliance
West Cheshire and North Wales Neurological Alliance
Isle of Man Neurological Alliance
North Wales Neuroscience Board
Health Watch
Integrated care partners
General Practitioners
TIDE
NHS partners
Universities
Cheshire West Partnership
Public Health
Pain Relief Foundation
Social services
Public members

Developing and delivering our strategy

This is a bold but clear and ambitious strategy, developed by our staff, patients, families, carers and support groups.

A series of launch and engagement events will be held. The strategy will be a visible and dynamic framework for our organisation.

We will deliver the ambitions within the strategy using our existing transformational model, which is closely aligned with the operational teams within both our clinical and non-clinical divisions.

Annual priorities will be set which will form our strategic objectives and framework.

This strategy builds on our existing leadership of neurosciences, and our level of treatment and care, and provides a platform to further strengthen patient and family experience, collaboration and transformation.



Credit: khaosproductions







The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust

Excellence in Neuroscience 

**The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust
Lower Lane
Fazakerley
Liverpool
L9 7LJ**

Call
0151 525 3611

Visit
thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk