



## Tower Hamlets GP Care Group CIC

# Celebrating 10 Years of Excellence, Service and Partnership

*In words and pictures 2014 - 2024*





Board members in 2016

## About the GP Care Group

In 2014, Tower Hamlets general practices and networks, with the support of the former Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group, formally incorporated Tower Hamlets GP Care Group as a community interest company.

The Care Group was formed as a GP Federation, a few months prior in November 2013.

### Our purpose is to:

- be the 'voice' of general practices at Borough level
- become financially sustainable by securing the Community Health Services contract and other contracts at Borough level
- support primary care networks and practices in Tower Hamlets to provide high quality primary care services to our local populations.

# In the beginning:

Tower Hamlets GP Care Group CIC

## Celebrating 10 Years of Excellence, Service and Partnership

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**We have the largest hospital trust and some of the best primary care in the country.**

*"Through our practices, our networks, our federation, and our tradition of working together and with partners, we will provide for our community in Tower Hamlets, a truly world-class primary care service that they deserve, and we can be proud of."*



Dr Phillip Bennett-Richards, Chair and Clinical Director GP Care Group - 2014 to 2017

## An exciting and inspiring place

Tower Hamlets is one of the most exciting and most innovative places to deliver health and social care in the country. We have a diverse community. Some of the most affluent and most deprived people in the country call our borough home.

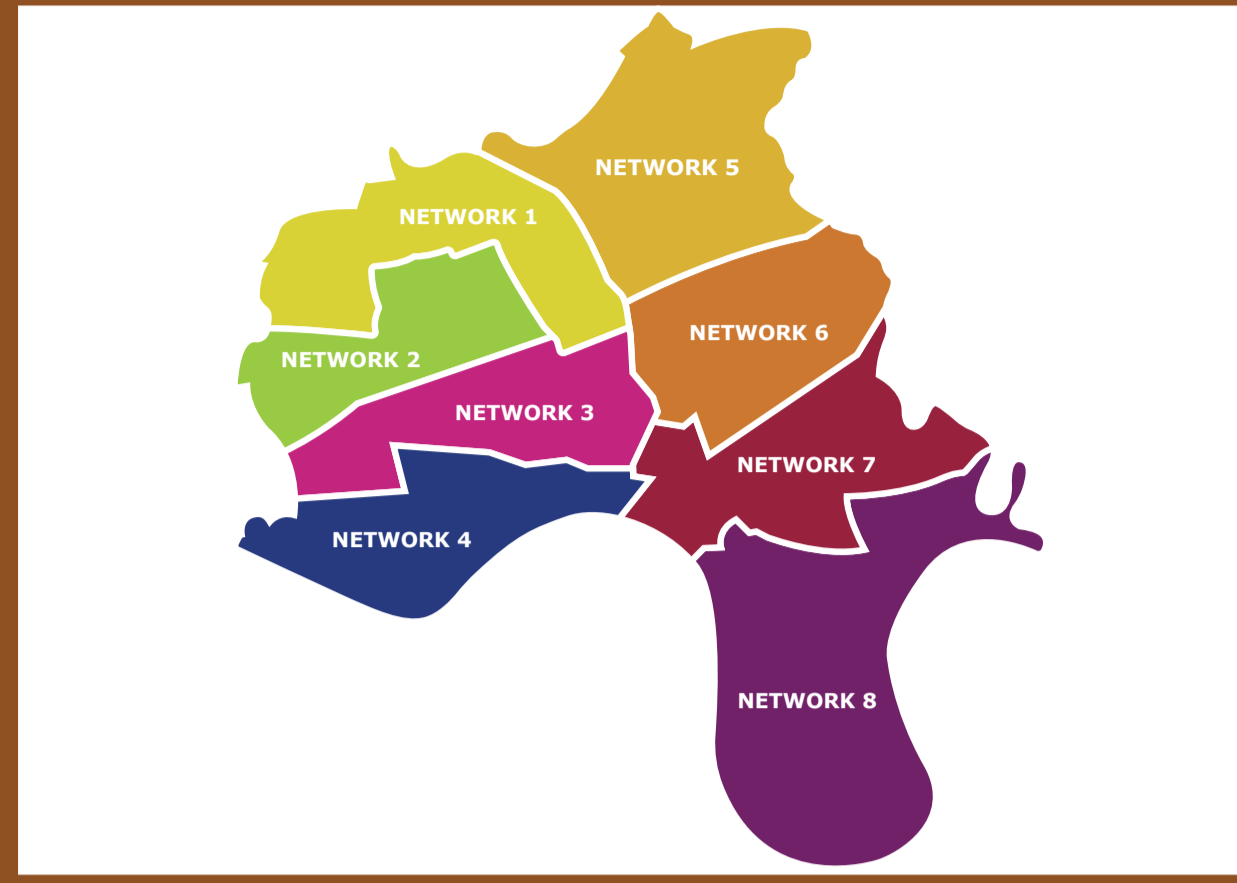
We have the largest hospital trust and some of the best primary care in the country.

TOWER HAMLETS  
**GP CARE GROUP** CIC

LOCAL PEOPLE, LOCAL HEALTH



Network map in 2018



In the early 2000s, primary care in Tower Hamlets struggled to deliver important community-based services. In 2009, the then Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust launched an improvement programme for primary care that would see it move from being one of the poorer performing services in London to one of the best. Key to the transformation was the creation of eight pioneering primary care networks (PCN) comprising four or five neighbouring practices covering populations of around 30,000 within the borough. Tower Hamlets had a 10-year head start on the rest of the country, when the Primary Care Trust, Local Medical Council and GP surgeries in Tower Hamlets set up the PCNs in 2009. The rest of the country followed suit when 7,000 GP surgeries in England formed more than 1,200 PCNs in July 2019.



The eight Tower Hamlets PCNs were each provided with funding for a small management team, in return, the practices agreed to work to a shared "network incentive scheme" (NIS), the success of which was dependent upon all practices within a network delivering agreed outcomes. This revolutionised primary care in the borough, with practices learning to work with their neighbours, providing peer review and support.



Tower Hamlets GP Care Group was formed in late 2013 to further enable the PCNs and practices to participate at scale across local health and care. This brought local service providers around a table to agree ways to join up services more effectively to provide integrated healthcare for the local population.



# Foundation: where the journey started

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# 2014

Highlights of the year

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### Becoming a community interest company

September 2014 was year one of the Care Group being incorporated as a community interest company limited by shares. It is owned by all our practices on a not-for-profit basis.

Through the Care Group, practices in Tower Hamlets could speak with one voice to the larger partners, Tower Hamlets CCG, Barts Health, East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) and London Borough of Tower Hamlets.



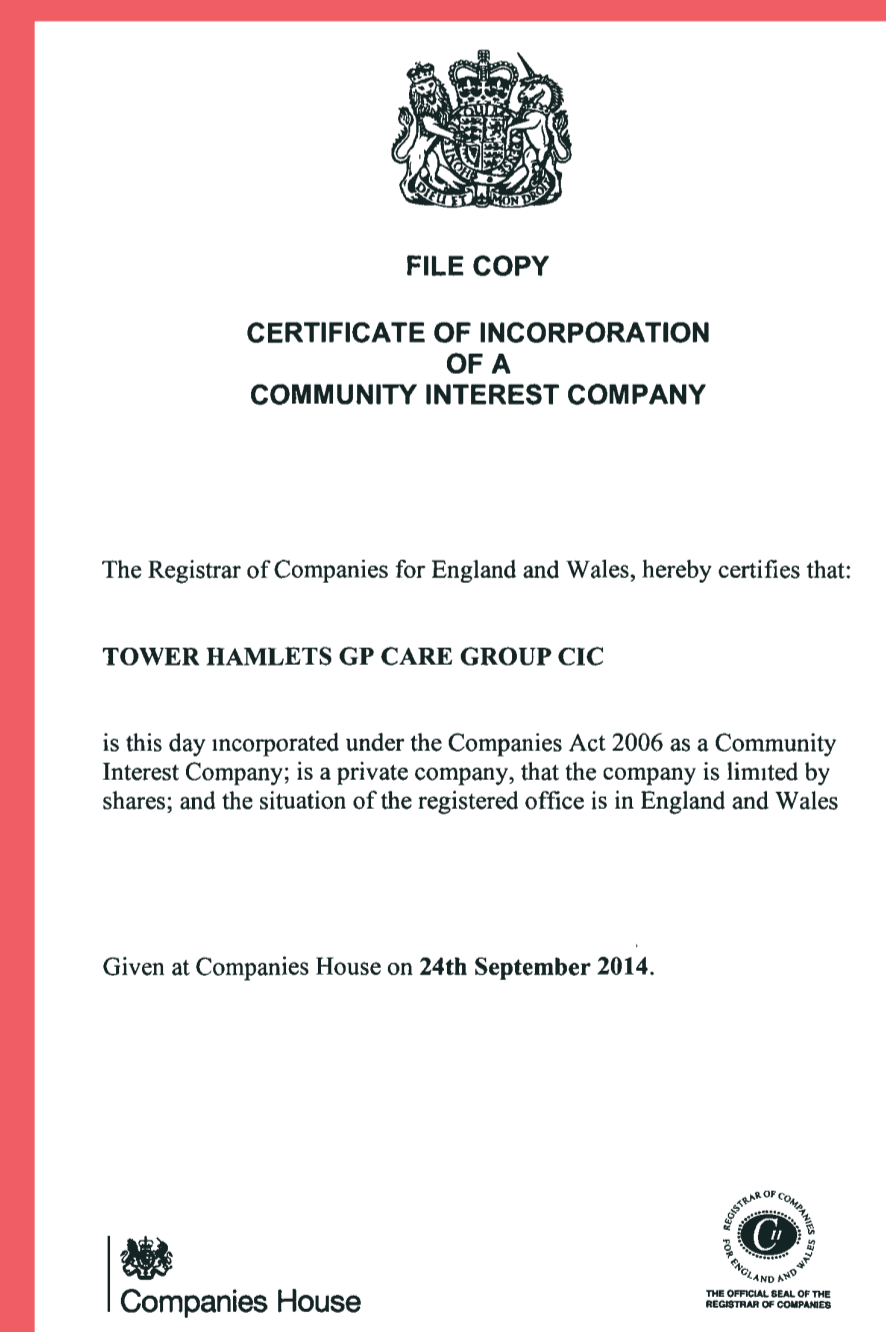
### In numbers

Nearly **346,000** referrals to the service since **January 2018**



### Tower Hamlets Together Vanguard project

The Care Group was part of Tower Hamlets Integrated Provider Partnership (THIPP) and Transforming Services Together (TST) in 2013 and 2014 as part of Tower Hamlets Together; which was Tower Hamlets health and care organisations coming together to think about how to offer integrated care to local residents.



# 2015

Highlights of the year

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### Community Education Provider Network

In autumn 2015, we took responsibility for delivering the Community Education Provider Network (CEPN). CEPN, now also known as the Tower Hamlets Training Hub, is widely regarded as being one of the most successful training hubs in London. The service organises and runs a busy and extremely varied range of training programmes and events for community organisations and practices in Tower Hamlets. In addition, CEPN organises the Protected Learning Time (PLT) events for practices in the borough and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training for Tower Hamlets GP practices and similar for neighbouring boroughs. We have become known for our impactful and innovative mental health and suicide prevention programmes, which have been accessed far beyond Tower Hamlets.



### Open Doors (training practice nurses)

While the Open Doors Programme has been running since 2008, the service officially joined the Care Group family in 2015. This highly regarded service provides education, training and support for practice nurses and health care assistants working for GP surgeries in Tower Hamlets practices and care homes.

The team is made up of qualified and experienced nurses who all have clinical roles in General Practice settings as well as their teaching roles for Open Doors. The team also runs a popular podcast called 'Call the practice nurse!', for general practice nursing teams.

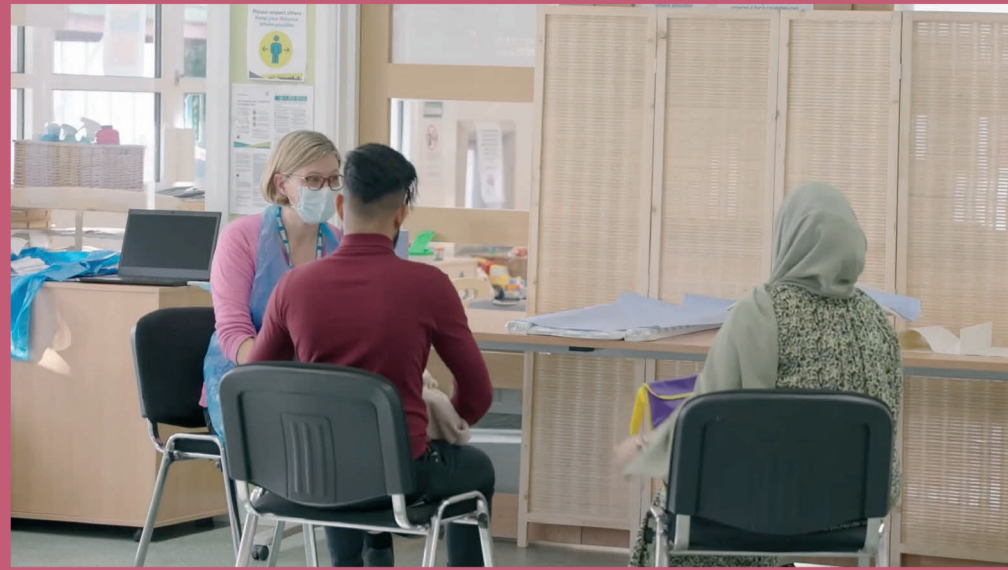


## Health Visiting

On 1 April 2016 we began the contract to provide health visiting services for Tower Hamlets, taking on 140 staff under TUPE transfer from Bart's Health.

Our Health Visiting service fulfils the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme, which supports children and families during the early stage of life. The programme offers families a comprehensive programme of screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews and information and guidance to support them to achieve optimum health and wellbeing.

The team works in partnership with GPs, midwives, social care, children's centres and family hubs, and the voluntary sector to deliver this programme for our local population.



### In numbers (since June 2018)

**5,569** - Antenatal Visits reviews

**24,863** - New Birth Visits reviews

**18,907** - 6-8-week check reviews

**15,259** - 3-4 Months reviews

**19,092** - 15 Months reviews

**18,900** - Two and a half year reviews



# 2016

Highlights of the year

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## Extended Access Hubs

We began delivering the pilot of four locality Extended Access Hubs in 2016 with funding from the Prime Minister's Challenge fund. We won the contract to deliver the substantial service the following year.

Initially, two of the hubs had been established in practices that also provided NHS Walk in Centres. However, with the closure of Walk in Centres in 2018, part of a wider strategy for Urgent Care and the procurement of a new 111 service, the two practices were contracted to provide Extended Access Hubs for their two networks. Subsequently, funding was reallocated from just the hubs to provide Extended Access Hubs to service all Tower Hamlet networks.



### In numbers (since June 2018)

**Extended Hubs**

**212,804** - appointments offered in total

**88,432** - GP appointments offered

**18,447** - Nurse appointments offered

**53,298** - HCA Appointments Offered

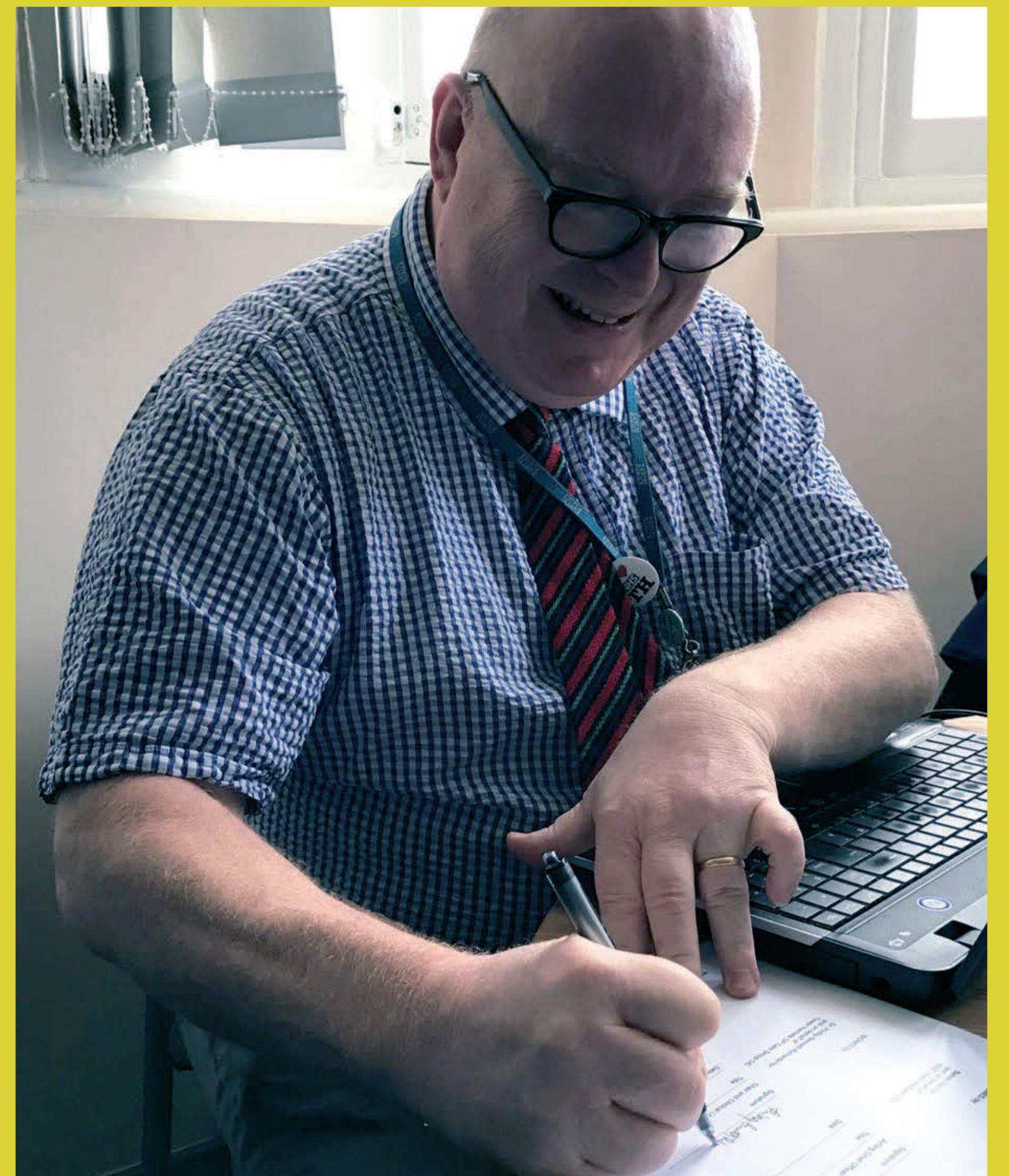




## Community Health Services

We formed an alliance with Barts Health and East London NHS Foundation Trust on 1 April 2017 to manage an initial five-year contract to provide Community Health Services to the borough.

The Care Group is the alliance manager for community services and has direct management responsibility for the Out of Hours (OOH) service, Single Point of Access, Advocacy and Interpreting services, and the Patient Experience Team.



Dr Phillip Bennett-Richards signing the CHS contract

# 2017

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### Out of Hours (OOH) service

The Tower Hamlets GP OOH service transferred back into primary care management and to the Care Group on 1 April 2017. The service is open from 6.30pm until 8am on weekdays, 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.

It supports Tower Hamlets registered patients, residents and visitors to the borough by seeing any urgent medical conditions that cannot wait until the surgery reopens.

In 2018 the Care Quality Commission rated the service GOOD overall.



### Single Point of Access (SPA)

The Single Point of Access contract officially transferred to the Care Group in April 2017. The SPA manages referrals for Tower Hamlets housebound adult patients who require the services of the community health teams.

The service is contactable on an 0300 number and is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### In numbers

Nearly **346,000** referrals to the service since **January 2018**

## Patient Experience Team

Established in 2017, the Patient Experience Team (PET) gather feedback from people of all backgrounds and abilities who receive health, social care and housing support services within Tower Hamlets and neighbouring boroughs. The team uses this information to better understand what is working well and to identify opportunities for potential improvements.

Through in-depth reviews of local experience, the Patient Experience Team captures real-life feedback, through home and group visits, as well as video or telephone calls, to make recommendations for cross-organisational and system improvements. The focus and recommendations of each piece of work is agreed upon and signed off by the local health and care system partnership, Tower Hamlets Together board.



# 2017

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### Advocacy and Interpreting services

Our Advocacy and Interpreting service ensures equal access to Primary and Community Health Services within Tower Hamlets.

Our staff speak a variety of languages and British Sign Language support is also provided. The service supports the needs of our diverse community, of which Bengali/Sylheti is the biggest group at more than 50%.

Our service gives a voice to the patient. The provision of a bilingual health service creates a bridge between ethnic minorities and service providers. Our advocates support people to access the services they need, working in partnership between patient and clinician.







## Network Management Teams

In April 2018, Tower Hamlets networks transferred their Network Management Teams to the Care Group to make best use of their resources in support of the Network Improved Services scheme (NIS).



## Primary care substance misuse service (P-RESET)

We were awarded a further contract to deliver the Primary care substance misuse service (P-RESET) in 2018.

The service works in partnership with RESET Treatment and Recovery services for problem drug and alcohol use. These services are funded through the Integrated Commissioning team in Tower Hamlets and work closely with our local GP practices to deliver drug and alcohol services for the borough. The service is open to all Tower Hamlets residents who are registered with their GP and have been referred to use our service.

## School Health

The Tower Hamlets' School Health and Wellbeing team joined the Care Group family on 1 September 2018 as part of a five-year contract.

The service provides essential specialist nursing care, advice and support to school-aged children and young people.

Taking on this service, along with already providing the borough's Health Visiting service, allowed us the exciting opportunity to grow and fully integrate 0-19 service provision in Tower Hamlets and to strengthen links between general practice, community services and schools in our localities. This was a major step forward in our aim for better joint working between services to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for local children, young people and their family and carers.



## Social Prescribing

We won the contract to continue delivering the Social Prescribing service in 2018. This followed a successful pilot of the service which started in April 2016.

Social Prescribing is a key enabler for residents' health and wellbeing. Our Social Prescribing service is open to everyone registered to a Tower Hamlets GP practice. Each GP practice within the borough has an allocated Social Prescriber who receives referrals from GPs, nurses and other practice staff.

We also accept referrals from other services and organisations (within healthcare or otherwise).



# 2018

Highlights of the year

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## City and Hackney Out Of Hours

We won the contract to provide an Out of Hours Home Visiting service on behalf of NHS City and Hackney from 1 April 2019.



### Integrated Urgent Primary Care service (IUPC)

June 2019 saw the launch of our new Integrated Urgent Primary Care service at the Royal London Hospital. The service combines our Urgent Treatment Centre, Single Point of Access and Out of Hours services. The IUPC service offers urgent care for residents and visitors of Tower Hamlets, simply by calling NHS 111 or being referred from the Emergency Department at the Royal London Hospital.



### In numbers

**427,341** – number of patients seen at the Urgent Treatment Centre since we began the contract in June 2019

Of that number - **240,823 patients** were from Tower Hamlets and the remaining **186,518 from outside the borough**

**2 Hours and 44 Mins** - average length of stay

**220** - average number of patients seen in a day

### Safeguarding Children Team

We were pleased to welcome our Safeguarding Children Team which joined the organisation from Barts Health NHS Trust in October 2019.

The team strengthened our safeguarding children governance processes through the implementation of a Safeguarding subcommittee.



### In numbers

**303** – the number of families we have supported on the Family Nurse Partnership programme



### Family Nurse Partnership

We also began delivering new contracts for both our Health Visiting and the Family Nurse Partnership services from 1 April 2019.



# 2019

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# 2020

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### COVID-19 Home Monitoring Service

The Care Group piloted an innovative COVID-19 Home Monitoring Service in April 2020 to support patients with COVID-19 symptoms.

The service helped patients recover in their homes and reduced the length of hospital stays, the need for face-to-face visits or admission to hospital. Several other boroughs set up their own service based upon our model and we provided details of our arrangements to help them.



### Test and Trace

We also set up the test and trace service; a contract issued by Tower Hamlets council to support local residents. It was set up in a matter of weeks and involved staff contacting people with positive results to give isolation advice and guidance.



### COVID-19 Vaccination programme

December 2020 saw the launch of the national vaccination programme. We supported our local population by delivering the national vaccination programme on behalf of our primary care practices and local Primary Care Networks.

Care Group staff and numerous volunteers answered the call to action resulting in thousands of Tower Hamlets residents, seldom-heard and healthcare employees receiving their COVID-19 vaccination jab. In total we are proud to have delivered more than 200,000 vaccinations to the Tower Hamlets population.

### COVID-19 testing in homes

In early May, following increasing rates of COVID-19 in care homes both nationally and locally, we accepted Tower Hamlets Council's request to develop a service to carry out COVID-19 testing in homes. We formed a nursing team to visit the care homes. The team continued to visit each care home every two weeks, testing both residents and staff. Tests were processed by the Barts Health lab and the result communicated back to the care homes via secure email addresses.

At a time when national testing in care homes was not available, our service was able to identify and isolate COVID-19 positive members of staff and residents, thereby reducing the level of outbreaks and saving many lives.

### Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) clinic

Our LARC clinic in Tower Hamlets was established just before the COVID-19 pandemic for practices to be able to offer more long-acting reversible contraception options.

Patients can use the service to either have fitted or the removal of the contraceptive implant (Nexplanon), a long-acting reversible form of contraception.

# 2021

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### Social Prescribing Supporting Families Pilot

In the aftermath of the pandemic in 2021, our Social Prescribing team embarked on a project to support the most vulnerable children identified by services working with children and young people.

Research suggested that the disruption caused by the pandemic to educational, social, and recreational activities and community services had an impact on children's mental health and heightened the risk of abuse and neglect. It also showed a disproportionately negative impact on children with pre-existing behavioural conditions like Autism or those who rely on community or specialist health services. The service was aware that the socio-economic impact of the pandemic was likely to be felt hardest by marginalised families and children.

During the pilot, the Social Prescribing team worked with 213 families with children waiting for Autism assessment and 412 families with children identified as medically vulnerable.



### Training Hub - "Through the eyes of"

Our Training Hub team introduced their Virtual Reality-based 'Through the Eyes of Programme' which is targeted at empathy-building as a form of improving understanding of various health conditions. The programme which is still ongoing, continues to deliver its objective of building an empathic workforce to support residents with anxiety and psychosis while expanding to other areas of healthcare to meet the needs of the workforce and the community we serve.



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## Waltham Forest's Healthy Child Programme

In March 2022 we won the contract to deliver Waltham Forest's Healthy Child Programme (health visiting, school health and family nurse partnership). The service transferred in July.

This gave us more critical mass and allowed us to grow and improve our 0-19 services in both Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.



# 2022

Highlights of the year

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### In numbers

5,710 - 6-8-week visit reviews

7,964 - children and parents seen for New Birth Visit reviews

3,228 - 15 months reviews

3,572 - 2.5 year reviews

### Immunisations team

Since launching in August 2022, the Adult Immunisation Screening team has made a big impact in increasing screening uptake among the local population. The team prioritises flu, shingles, pneumococcal, pertussis, and cervical cancer screening.

Historically, Tower Hamlets performs lower than the national average when it comes to vaccinations. This may be due to increased population mobility, higher areas of deprivation, a higher proportion of people who have English as a second language, all of which likely impact on vaccination uptake levels.



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### A growing and financially stable organisation

Our 2022/23 financial accounts are the first year that we have submitted Large Company accounts. The indicators for which are:

- Annual Revenue above £36 million
- Number of employees above 250

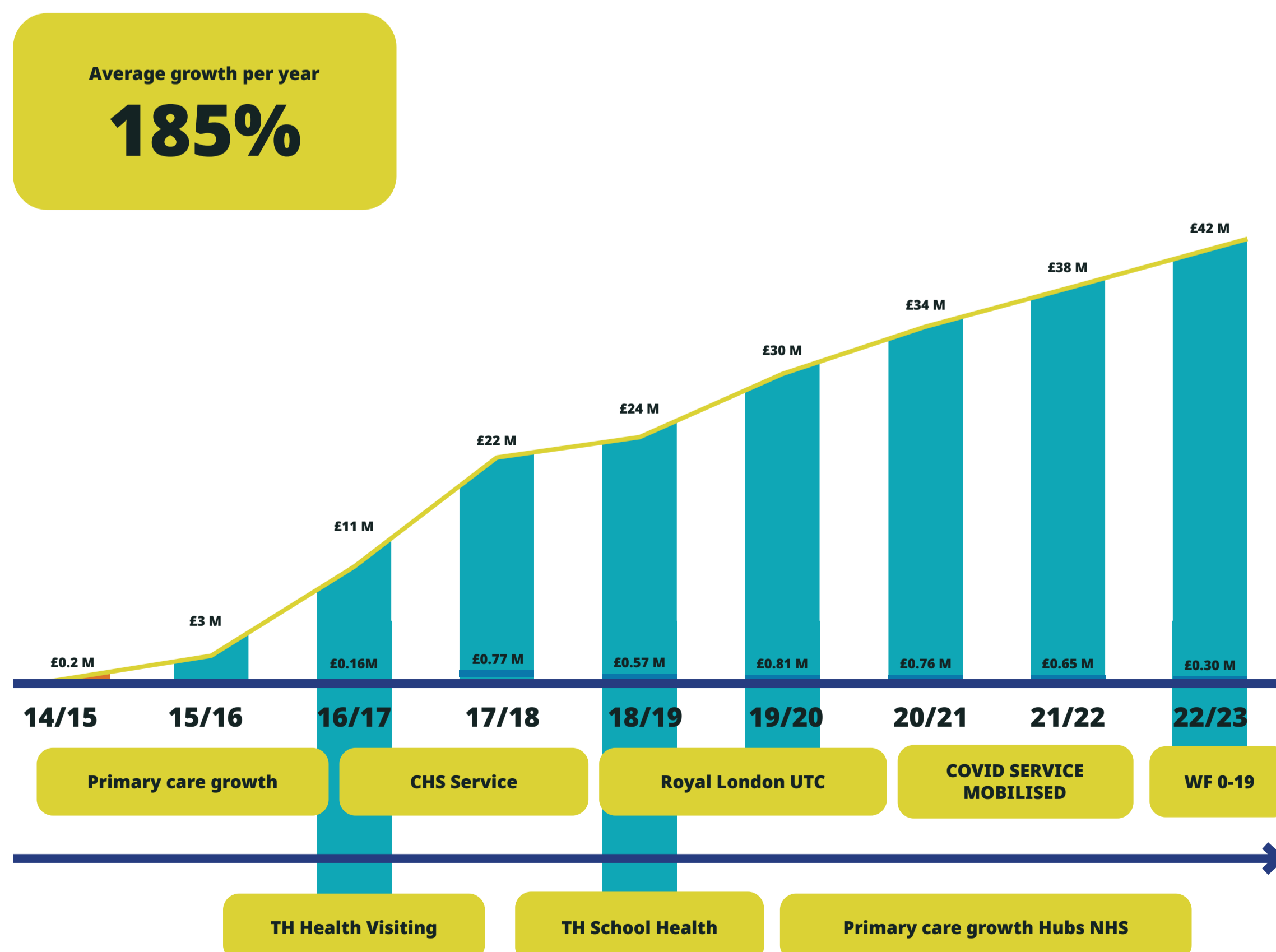
# 2023

Highlights of the year

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## Looking to the future: Five-year plan

Our 10 years of service milestone offers the opportunity to reflect on and plan for our future with renewed vigour. Our five-year organisational plan, launched at the 2023 Annual General Meeting by Care Group Chief Executive Officer, Zainab Arian, confirmed our commitment to the original purpose of the Care Group, under a refreshed new framework, outlined below.



## Federated support

We continue to enhance our engagement with practices, working collaboratively to build a sustainable model for primary care focusing on practice support and using our primary care voice at local and system levels.



## Preferred provider

The Care Group will expand our offer around primary and community services across our locations, and the wider system, including expanding outside of north east London. We will do this in collaboration with our commissioners and our patients to deliver the best services possible.

# Looking to the future: Five-year plan

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## Anchor organisation

We are committed to increasing ethical and environmental activities, developing the skills of our local population starting with our workforce, and working with our schools and community groups to recruit from our local areas. We will explore increasing our social investment including charitable donations.



“In addition to these, we aim to be at the forefront of developments in technology and artificial intelligence for primary care and roll out our corporate support offer to health and educational services, practices and beyond.”

**Zainab Arian,  
Care Group Chief  
Executive Officer**

