Safer Salford 2025/2026 year-end report

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Salford Integrated Care Partnership

Safer Salford

Advancing Quality Alliance

25/26 Overview

Safer Salford

- System improvement partner
- QI Fellows 24/25 cohort
- Strategy and comms
- Frailty perfect fortnight

System improvement

- Adult social care provider excellence programme
- Health and wellbeing partnerships
- Care Home Medical Practice review

System Integration

- Mental Health high intensity users ethnography
- Care Homes: least restrictive practice
- Learning disabilties in primary care: medicines optimisation
- Psychological safety in Salford Care Organisation

Safety

- Front Door redesign
- Financial assessment and charging
- Homecare demand
- Blended care
- Care home oversight group
- Care home urgent care activity

Adult Social Care transformation

Safer Salford is a multi-year collaboration between Greater Manchester ICB Salford locality (NHS GM Salford) and the Advancing Quality Alliance (Aqua).

The programme supports multi-agency complex system improvement.

The 2025/26 Safer Salford programme was co-designed by Aqua, NHS GM Salford and relevant system partners across health, care and the voluntary sector.

The 25/26 workstreams are described in the image. For each workstream, this report describes:

- The ask
- Key activities and actions
- The impact of our work
- Our next steps

“As the Safer Salford programme enters it's tenth year, it continues to drive continuous improvement in the quality and safety of health and social care - underpinned by collaboration, co-production with staff and residents, and quality improvement.

Aqua as an improvement partner continue to flex their offer to meet the evolving needs of the Salford system, ensuring that our work remains relevant and impactful.

I look forward to the next phase of our improvement together as we develop the place partnership model.”

Claire Vaughan, Associate Director Clinical Leadership and System Integration (Salford)

Safer Salford

System Improvement

System Improvement Partner

- Aqua is an improvement partner to the Salford system. Each year we hold a portion of our capacity aside to respond in an agile way to facilitation support requests and improvement coaching. In 25/26 this included:
  - **Facilitation support** to Skills and Work session and Cancer Screening Ops Group in May.
  - Using **OD expertise** to support planning for the June NHS GM Salford away day.
  - Development of the **highlight report**: *Salford's Learning Disability Services: Greater than the sum of our parts, how collaboration enhances continuous improvement.*
  - Undertaking a **desktop neighbourhood mapping review**, to assist development of a consistent strategic direction for neighbourhoods.
- Next steps: Aqua will maintain our system improvement offer in 26/27.

Strategy and communications

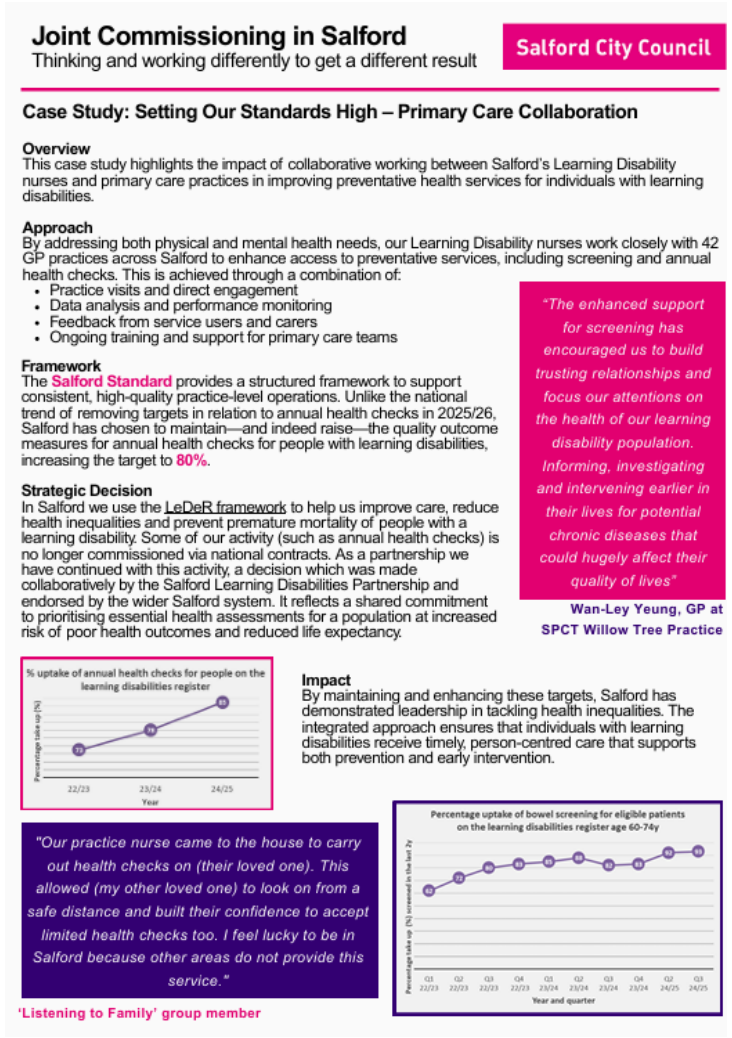
- A portion of the Safer Salford programme resource supports programme oversight, coordination and reporting.
- This includes the proactive management of the Safer Salford website and case study development with system partners.

Safer Salford

- The strategic objectives of the transformation are very well aligned
- At their heart, all resources aim to visually describe a complex system inter-connection with partners, but from their own organisational lens or understanding.
- Organisational lens is driven by the organisation's strategic drivers for transformation.

Strategic objectives

Document	Author	Prevention	Cost efficiency	Wellbeing & resilience	Care closer to home	System connection	Inequality
Community Solutions	Salford City Council	X	X		X	X	
Neighbourhood & Citywide networks map	Public Health	X		X	X		
Salford health and social care neighbourhood model	Neighbourhood Working Group	X	X	X	X	X	X
Innovate	Salford City Council	X	X	X			
Live Well	Greater Manchester ICB; Salford CVS	X	X	X	X	X	X
GMMH Transformation	Greater Manchester Mental Health	X	X	X			
TOTAL		6	5	5	4	3	2



Joint Commissioning in Salford
Thinking and working differently to get a different result

Salford City Council

Case Study: Setting Our Standards High – Primary Care Collaboration

Overview
This case study highlights the impact of collaborative working between Salford's Learning Disability nurses and primary care practices in improving preventative health services for individuals with learning disabilities.

Approach
By addressing both physical and mental health needs, our Learning Disability nurses work closely with 42 GP practices across Salford to enhance access to preventative services, including screening and annual health checks. This is achieved through a combination of:
- Practice visits and direct engagement
- Data analysis and performance monitoring
- Feedback from service users and carers
- Ongoing training and support for primary care teams

"The enhanced support for screening has encouraged us to build trusting relationships and focus our attentions on the health of our learning disability population. Informing, investigating and intervening earlier in their lives for potential chronic diseases that could hugely affect their quality of lives"

Wan-Ley Yeung, GP at SPCT Willow Tree Practice

Framework
The Salford Standard provides a structured framework to support consistent, high-quality practice-level operations. Unlike the national trend of removing targets in relation to annual health checks in 2025/26, Salford has chosen to maintain—and indeed raise—the quality outcome measures for annual health checks for people with learning disabilities, increasing the target to 80%.

Strategic Decision
In Salford we use the LeDeR framework to help us improve care, reduce health inequalities and prevent premature mortality of people with a learning disability. Some of our activity (such as annual health checks) is no longer commissioned via national contracts. As a partnership we have continued with this activity, a decision which was made collaboratively by the Salford Learning Disabilities Partnership and endorsed by the wider Salford system. It reflects a shared commitment to prioritising essential health assessments for a population at increased risk of poor health outcomes and reduced life expectancy.

Impact
By maintaining and enhancing these targets, Salford has demonstrated leadership in tackling health inequalities. The integrated approach ensures that individuals with learning disabilities receive timely, person-centred care that supports both prevention and early intervention.

"Our practice nurse came to the house to carry out health checks on (their loved one). This allowed (my other loved one) to look on from a safe distance and built their confidence to accept limited health checks too. I feel lucky to be in Salford because other areas do not provide this service."

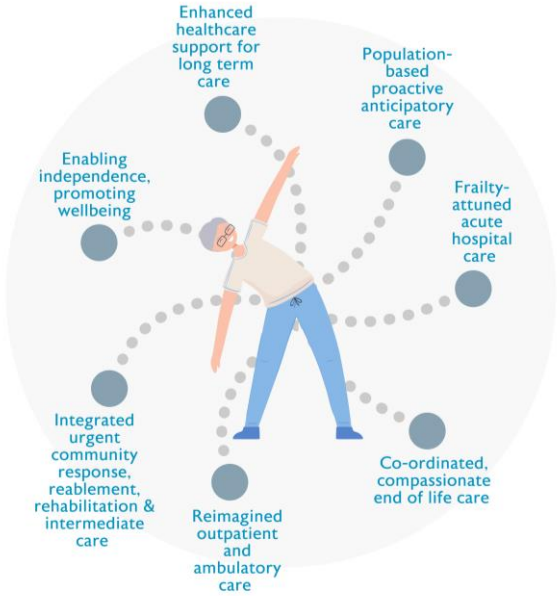
'Listening to Family' group member

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System Improvement

Frailty improvement support

- Aqua was asked to help measure the impact of additional geriatrician clinical sessions in urgent community response (UCR).
- Aqua devised a measurement framework and provided 2 on-site observation sessions and data capture, working alongside the NCA project management office (PMO) team.



- The change programme did not progress as originally intended, but Aqua was able to join several discussions with public health, UCR, geriatrician and PMO stakeholders to reflect on shared learning.
- There was collective agreement that a whole-system approach was needed to maximise assets and develop a frailty-attuned culture in Salford.
- Next steps: Aqua will align resource to support a whole system approach to frailty design in 26/27.

QI Fellows 24/25 Cohort

- The well-established, NHS GM Salford led QI Fellows programme builds improvement capacity in Salford.
- Aqua held two coaching sessions with a participant of the 24/25 cohort, plus attended and presented at the QI Fellows graduation event in October.
- Aqua and NHS GM Salford also held prospective discussions about bespoke, joint delivery of a future cohort.
- Next steps: Subject to ICB direction, Aqua can work with Salford to co-design a fully face to face Fellows' programme, using our shared expertise and resource.

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System Integration

Provider Excellence Programme

- For the fourth consecutive year, Aqua delivered 4 events for the popular Safer Salford Provider Excellence programme for adult social care (ASC) providers (care homes, home care and assisted living). The aim of the events is to build capability in adult social care providers and strengthen relationships between all system partners. All events were delivered in partnership with the Northern Care Alliance Procurement and Market Management Team.
- Care providers and system partners were engaged prior to each event to ensure we selected the topics that would add most value.
- Aqua led on event planning and briefing of expert speakers from the Salford system and beyond.
- Speakers said the events helped to expand their professional networks and strengthen connections with ASC providers.
- Care providers appreciated the opportunity to network with other providers and system partners and used their learning from the events to inform improvements to ways of working.
- The events are very well received, consistently being rated an average of 9/10 by participants.
- Next steps: The programme will deliver quarterly events in 26/27, ensuring areas of focus are chosen in line with system priorities.

36 ASC Providers

96 delegates

7 system partners

"Thank you for the day and as always it improves our practice and in turn has improved our service."

Delegate feedback



"All the speakers were informative in their own individual areas. I took away some new information today, which is what the objective was, for myself. I am soon going to implement the advice into my own plan."

Delegate feedback

- **Workforce (July):** led by Aqua, Ward Hadaway LLP, The Growth Company.
- **Business Continuity (Sept):** led by Salford City Council, GM Resilience Unit, GM Fire and Rescue Service.
- **Medicines Safety, Falls and Frailty (Feb):** led by NCA Pharmacy team, CQC, NCA Falls Service, NCA urgent community response team.
- **Care Planning and Risk Analysis (April):** led by Aqua and Salford Adult Social Care team.

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System Integration

Health and Wellbeing Partnerships

- Aqua supported 4 emerging neighbourhood health and wellbeing partnership groups in 2025/26, by:
  - Coaching working groups in stakeholder mapping and targeted engagement
  - Facilitating the partnership groups to articulate their shared purpose
  - Guiding the partnership groups through improvement approaches, underpinned by neighbourhood inequality data, to identify priority, short-term projects that respond to identified health inequalities (see box on right).
  - Facilitating two change delivery groups in Eccles and Irlam.
- As neutral facilitators, Aqua was able to adapt to and develop each groups' maturity. With our support all groups were able to:
  - Take a pragmatic approach to identifying action, triangulating data and professional insight
  - Identify and progress change ideas
  - Build and use connection to progress plans.
- Next steps: Aqua will work with NHS GM Salford to agree targeted improvement support to emerging neighbourhood teams in 26/27, building on this programme's foundations.

Ongoing change programmes

Broughton

- CVD preventable death and high intensity users – improvement ideas in development

Eccles and Irlam

- Health improvement attending district nurse clinics to increase referrals
- Targeted intervention to increase physical activity led by Kickstart at Barton Moss primary school
- 'Train the trainer' NHS App awareness training to priority system stakeholders

Swinton

- Obesity and Physical Inactivity, using mini health check approaches

Walkden and Little Hulton

- Obesity and Physical Inactivity – improvement ideas in development



"Aqua helped deliver strong partnership working. They were efficient, effective and demonstrated good leadership. As a result of your input, we now have got work off the ground and clearly mapped out what happens next."

Dr Tom Tasker, Chair, Eccles and Irlam Health And Wellbeing Partnership Group

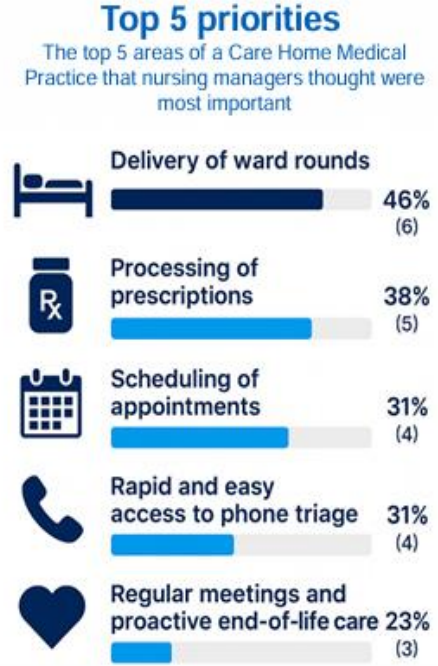
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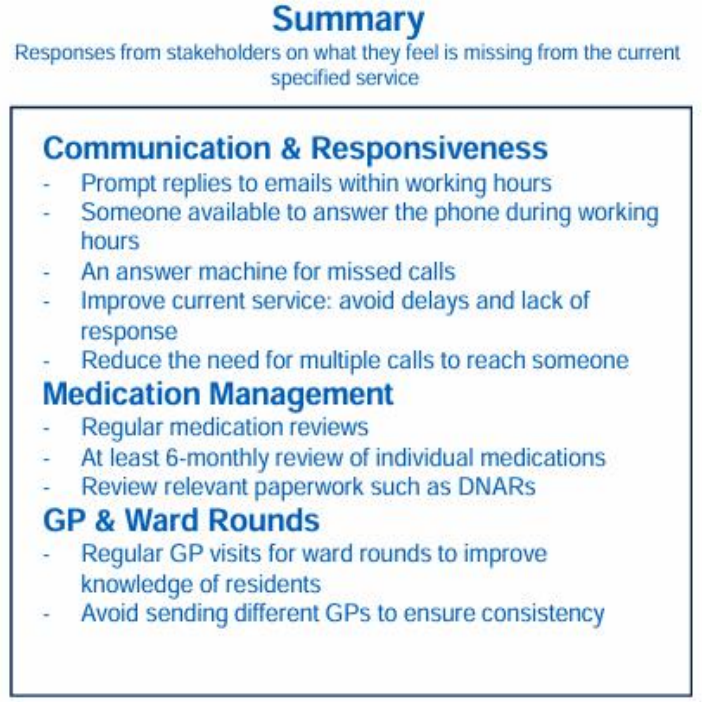
System Integration

Care Home Medical Practice Review

- At NHS GM Salford's request, Aqua provided rapid evaluation support to a commissioning review of the Care Home Medical Practice during December. This included:
  - Analysis of publicly available data to help evidence the decade-long impact of the practice on ED attendance and admission.
  - Facilitating a structured survey with care home managers, underpinned by the ICB service specification and national standards. The survey was designed to measure the most important aspects of service delivery for managers, relative to recent and historic delivery.
- The analysis assisted the Primary Care Commissioning Committee decision making in January, as well as identifying priority areas for service development.







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Safety

Mental Health High Intensity Users (HIU) ethnography

- Aqua was asked to support the HIU group to use lived experience intelligence for improvement.
- Aqua acted as a conduit between the group and Salford CVS were commissioned to conduct ethnographic research with three service users identified by the HIU team. Aqua facilitated an August workshop to present the key themes and co-design improvement plans
- Next steps: Named colleagues are progressing the action plan.

"Aqua have been extremely supportive in ensuring the HIU services at Salford are optimised, and the structure is sound… They have recognised how improvements can be made and offered constructive strategies."

Helen Metcalfe, Emergency Department High Intensity and Behaviour Lead, Salford Care Organisation, Northern Care Alliance

Themes

- Lack of autism-informed care environments
- ED as default crisis pathway due to lack of alternative provision
- Need for more appropriate, community-based crisis support
- Staff/patient relationships as cornerstones of effective care

Co-created improvement ideas

- Increase utilisation of the Listening Lounge
- Mental health training offer to ED staff
- Changes to the ED environment

Psychological safety in Salford Care Organisation

- Aqua was asked to lead a pre-operative diagnostic intervention with the surgery division and provide coaching to surgery leaders in priority specialities.
- Throughout Aqua provided informal coaching support to the Salford Care Organisation psychological safety programme lead and programme delivery group, and proactively linked with wider OD and leadership colleagues to help shape targeted improvement support in this area.
- In January, Aqua led a face-to-face workshop with the pre-op team and urology, underpinned by patient safety work system principles. The outcomes were incorporated into relevant GIRFT and NCA pillar action plans.
- Next steps: Owing to significant internal restructure in the NCA, surgery triumvirate / ward coaching has been postponed for delivery in Q1.

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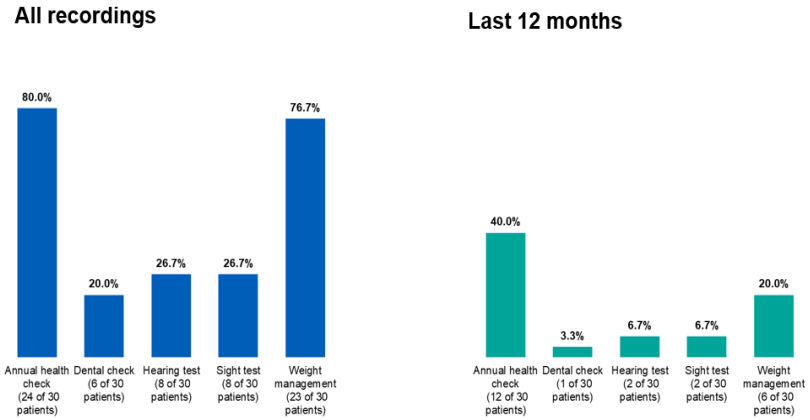
Safety

Learning disabilities in primary care: medicines optimisation

- Salford learning disability partners asked for support in collecting and analysing safety and health inequality data to drive focussed improvements for people with a learning disability across all PCNs.
- Aqua analysed sample data from 30 patients (Swinton PCN), to assist partnership leads to agree focussed actions including in polypharmacy, overuse of sedatives and low dementia screening.
- In addition, the review highlighted a need to improve pre-health check patient interaction and annual patent reviews (as they form the basis for quality data collection and patient-centred care).
- Next steps: continue to test and sustain annual health review improvements with partners and patients / carers.
- Start medication / dementia screening and weight management improvements (inequity driven to be based on data from additional PCN reviews).

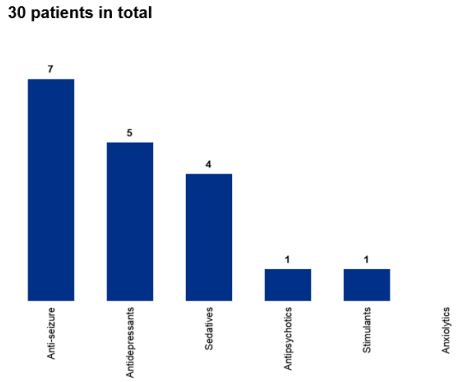
Advancing Quality Alliance

Checks and reviews



Advancing Quality Alliance

STOMP Medications



Data was collected according to the categories used in the Stopping over medication of people with a learning disability and autistic people (**STOMP**) initiative. Anti-seizure medication is the most common.

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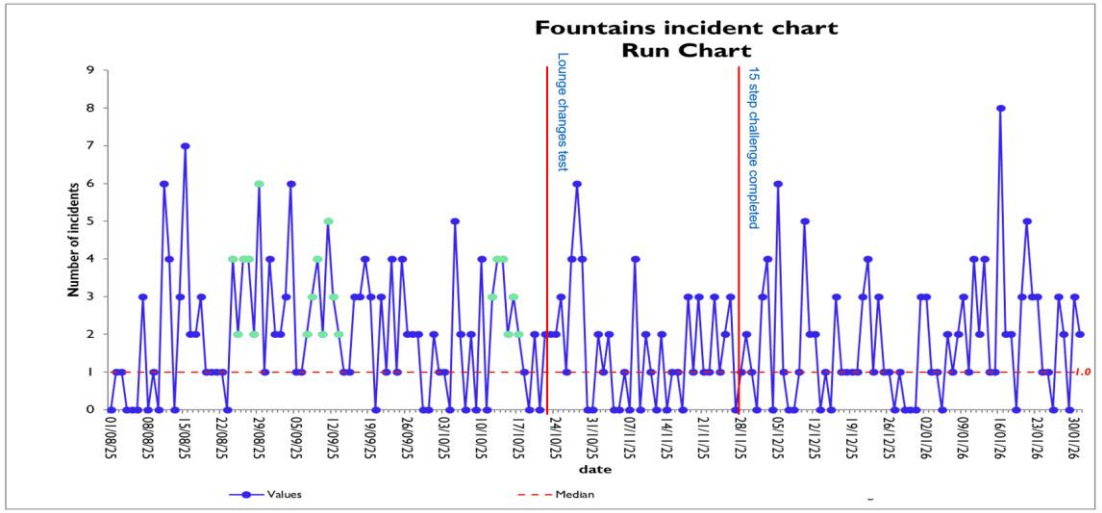
Safety

Outcomes

- Physical incidents dropped from 54% to 9% between Aug and Dec 2025
- A drop from 25% to 12% of incidents in bedrooms.
- Corridor incidents also dropped.

'We found these sessions very informative and engaging. Thank you for spending time with us and the positive feedback and knowledge you brought [us]"

Home manager



Care Homes: Least Restrictive practice

- The project's aim was to reduce harm to residents and staff by 25% within 6 months, within a pilot care home in Salford.
- Aqua delivered 2 face to face learning events - on least restrictive practice and trauma informed care – and explored the home's approach to reducing restrictive practice.
- Aqua provided 5 face to face coaching sessions and support to identified teams and leads. They also worked with the home lead to ensure data collection, enabling Aqua's analysis and monthly reports back to home.
- As a result of Aqua's support all incidents saw a gradual decline (see box).
- The home is currently working on a range of improvements in both staff training and support and the environment to help reduce restrictive practices.
- Next step: Aqua is scoping the potential to work with a small group of homes as part of a mini-improvement collaborative to reduce restrictive practices.

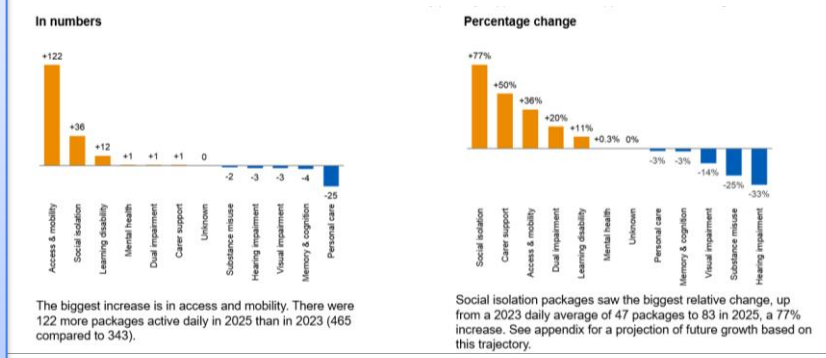
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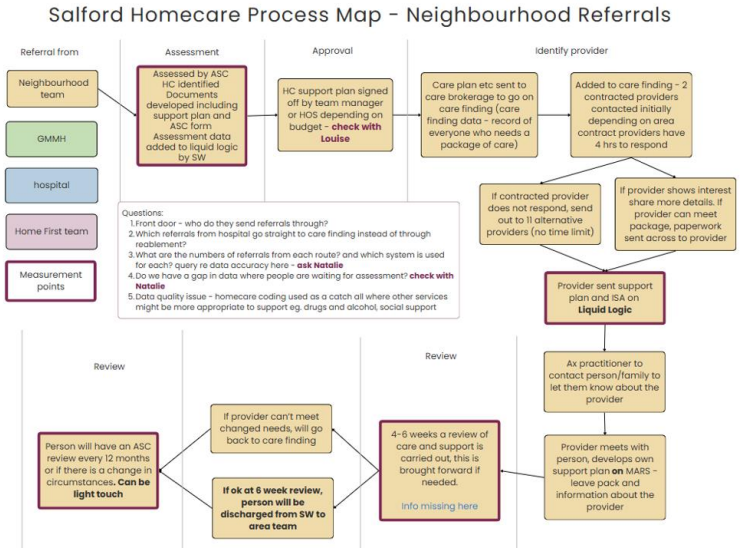
Adult Social Care Transformation

Homecare demand

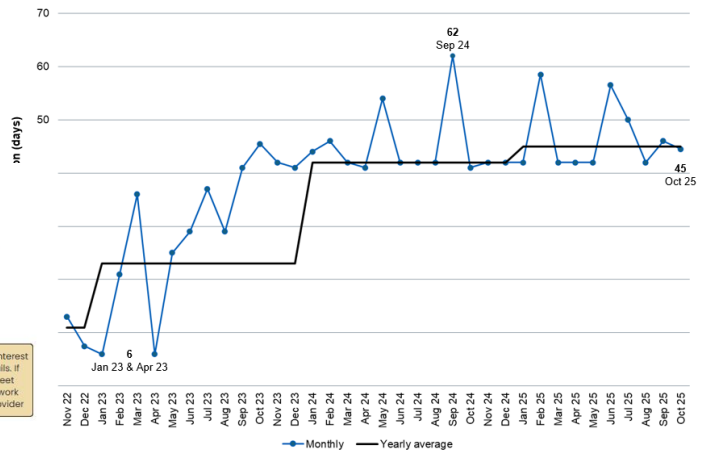
- Aqua was asked to provide analytical and improvement support to better understand the year-on-year increase in demand, and corresponding cost to the Salford system, of home care. This had created a significant overspend in 24/25, projected to increase.
- Aqua completed process mapping, insight discussions with 6 people and an initial analysis of homecare package data from the last 3 years and produced a progress report summarising initial findings. Aqua made recommendations for further data analysis and insight, with future focus areas discussed and agreed with senior adult social care (ASC) leaders.
- Next steps: In Q1, Aqua will undertake analysis and engagement with relevant stakeholder to further explore:
  - the review process
  - mechanisms and incentives in place for carers to report the need to reduce a care package,
  - the care needs of people waiting for care and receiving home care support for 'social isolation'
  - future coding to ensure a reliable picture of demand and care types.

"The framework and project management provided by Aqua has enabled the projects to progress and kept them on track, something we had struggled with previously. It's also helpful that the Aqua team have a good understanding of the work area which gives us additional viewpoints and enhances the discussions."
Andy Briffa, Adult Social Care Market Management Lead





Average active packages per day



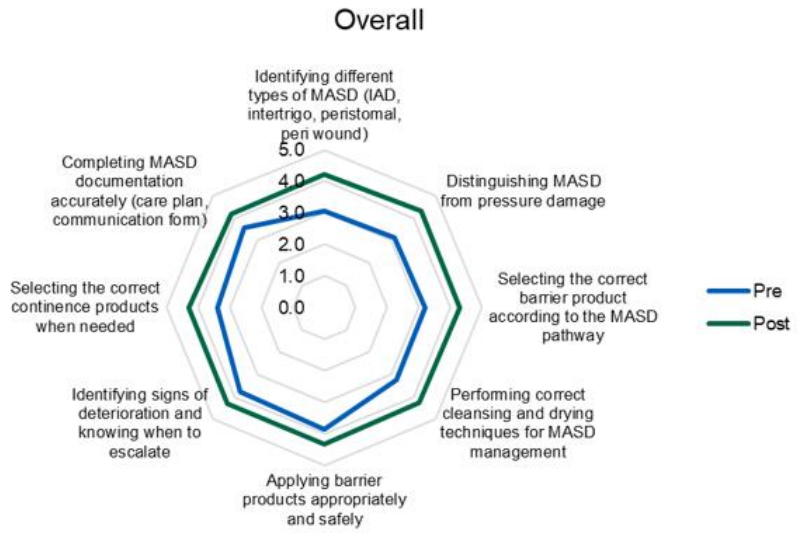
Package duration

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Adult Social Care Transformation

Blended care pilot: Moisture Associated Skin Damage (MASD)

- Aqua was asked to review evidence and learning on blended care models from other localities, and co-design a pilot approach.
- Aqua gathered learning from 2 leading systems and facilitated collaborative working between Salford homecare providers, district nursing operational teams and the market management team. This included 3 home carer training sessions, 2 co-design workshops with providers, bi-weekly project meetings, and test of change catchup meetings.
- Aqua combined quality improvement and project management approaches to support current and future state process mapping, data analysis, measurement planning, and initial benefits analysis.
- MASD guidance, competence sign-off materials and supporting resources were developed to strengthen improvement work and support consistent practice.
- Project outputs include improved shared understanding, alignment, and confidence in blended care approaches across system partners, improved home carers competency & confidence in MASD management and early qualitative and quantitative learning on feasibility and benefits.
- Next steps: complete the end report - combining stakeholder insights (including home carers and service users) and data to present evidence based possible future options to inform decision-making.



"They feel like the minute the skin goes red now, if they tell the client to stop using the perfume soap and they tell them to remove the Kylie mats, when they go on the next visits, they're coming back, it's better anyway."
Provider feedback

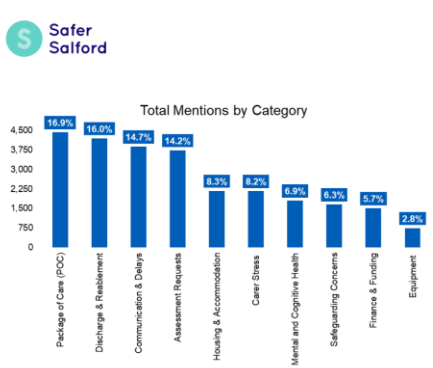
"I can't fault the training; I think it was one of the best training sessions I've been to. I think that the training actually cleared so much up."
Provider feedback

Safer Salford

Adult Social Care Transformation

Front door transformation

- Aligned to a wider transformation of ASC delivery in Salford, Aqua was asked to provide improvement support to its contact team during March 2025.
- After proactive engagement with programme leads, commissioners and the contact centre team leader, Aqua delivered rapid on-site diagnostic work during March, including:
  - Process mapping the current pathway.
  - Developing an audit of ‘general enquiry’ contacts, built from thematic analysis of general enquiry ‘free text’ entries on the care system - to improve quantitative capture of high-volume contacts.
  - Working with members of the contact centre team to identify priority improvement opportunities.
- Next steps: Aqua will agree next steps with the front door redesign working group. This is likely to include targeted engagement with priority stakeholders including service users.



Category Summary

In total there were **26,290** mentions of the 10 themes listed on the left-hand side.

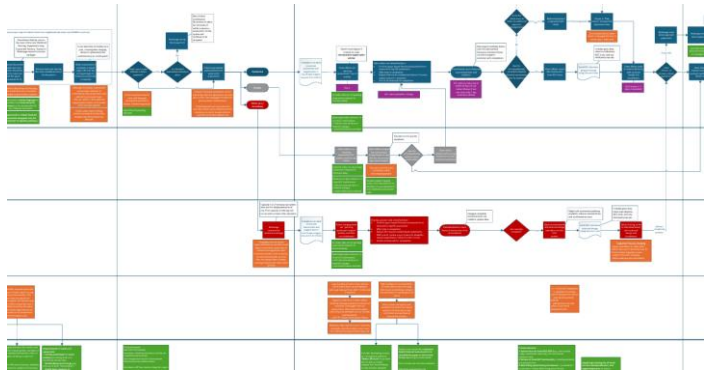
Of which, **Package of Care (POC)** accumulated the most mentions, accounting for **16.9% of total mentions.** Followed by **Discharge & Reablement** which accounted for **16%** of mentions.

The **top four** accounted for just over two thirds of the mentions at **62%** of mentions. Which, may present as an opportunity to investigate these themes further.

The lowest mentioned theme was **equipment**, which accounted for **2.8%** of mentions.

Financial assessment and charging process

- To improve the equity of financial assessment and charging of council contributions to ASC costs, in Q4 Aqua was to deliver a system visibility workshop with system stakeholders, underpinned by a visual process map and opportunity analysis.
- Aqua undertook virtual and face-to-face process mapping sessions with 9 teams, and facilitated a face-to-face March workshop that agreed core user-led design principles, financial assessment and charging principles, and identified priority improvement opportunities including SOP development, targeted charging reviews and user-driven communication improvements.
- Next steps: Aqua will support the programme and commissioning leads in meetings with the SRO, and reconvene the group to agree its aim, success measures and prioritise actions.



Safer Salford

Adult Social Care Transformation

Care home oversight group support

- Aqua was asked to help ASC consider how it can improve the way it uses data on incidents, complaints and whistleblowing.
- In January, Aqua facilitated a development session with the Care Home Oversight Group, helping the group define a shared purpose and key information flows. Since then, the group has adopted a 'team of teams' approach and strengthened safeguarding intelligence flows.
- Aqua was also asked to help create a system dashboard on care home resident NWAS and ED activity. Aqua reached out to stakeholders in NWAS, ED and BI and was able to compile all existing sources of evidence. The group met virtually and agreed that although the data exists, the flow through a centrally shared portal does not.
- Next steps: The ICB restructure has impacted the identification of a portal to host the NWAS and ED care home data flow, but this will be prioritised in April.

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Shared Purpose

Shared Purpose
We work together as a team of teams to support care homes to improve quality, helping to ensure safe, person-centred, and enjoyable experiences for residents.

1. Provide proactive support and constructive challenge	2. Use insights and evidence to guide decisions	3. Strengthen relationships and communication	4. Act together to maintain quality and safety	5. Support workforce development and future readiness
• We work alongside care homes to identify strengths, understand pressures, and offer timely support, while challenging practices respectfully to drive improvement.	• We gather, share, and analyse intelligence to build a full picture of each home and apply evidence-based best practice to improve care.	• We maintain open, consistent communication with care homes, families, staff, and partners to build trust and enable collaborative problem-solving.	• We coordinate as a 'team of teams' to address risks early, plan informal escalation when needed, and work collectively to create safer environments for residents.	• We champion a skilled, inclusive workforce by promoting learning, supporting staff development, and preparing for future cultural and societal needs.

Safer Salford

The problem and opportunity

Do we have a data flow on UEC contacts, attendance and admission? Yes/No

→ **Do we have this capability in the system to produce this?** Yes/No

→ **What data flow would be most useful for the system?** Format; Frequency; Content (attend, deflect, admit, discharge?)

→ **What do we need to enable this?** Shared purpose; IT platform; Capacity; Care Home core dataset?

→ **How will we, as system partners, use this data?**

- **NWAS** have capability to produce person-level data of call-outs and attendance
- **CHMP** produces attendance reports from NCA BI monthly; Salford attendances only
- **NCA SCO** can pull attendance, admission and discharge-ready data from the Inpatient App and UEC reporting dashboard; *may include non-Salford care homes*
- **C&M ICB** have an advanced UEC dashboard as a peer example

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