**🔑 KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR**

1. [Coastal Navigators Network Report](https://bbi.uk.com/coastalnavigtorsnetwork/) (2024) – useful evidence of need data.
2. NHS Dorset Priorities – Key message is that there is a need for new contracting and funding approaches that will strengthen the out-of-hospital model and integrated neighbourhood working.
3. NHS Dorset – Are moving to a more outcome-based strategic commissioning framework.
4. Please inform your members that Dorset Hospital Emergency Department has a new entrance – South Wing Entrance 1.
5. Please inform your members Bournemouth Emergency Department is moving to its new building in May (Poole ED is unchanged at this time).
6. Look out for further information from South Western Ambulance Service (SWASFT) about their new defibrillators and Bleeding Kits. Also will be looking for Volunteer first responders and Community Ambassador Volunteers.
7. New [Carers Online Self-Help Tool](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/bridgit-online-self-help-for-carers) – Bridgit
8. New Funding Opportunity – [Dorset Council Local Alliance Groups](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/lag-funding-for-projects-25-26) are funding projects to support children, young people and families. Up to £5,000 for individual groups and £20,000 for consortium applications.
9. See Dorset VCSA News Update - [**NHS changes are coming—what do they mean for the VCSE sector**](https://www.dorsetvcsa.co.uk/news/2025/05/15/big-nhs-changes-are-coming-what-do-they-mean-for-the-vcse-sector)

**📅 ICB BOARD MEETING – UPDATE SUMMARIES**

1. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT UPDATE**

The NHS England Transformation Executive Team began on 1 April 2025, with ICBs directed to cut running costs by 50% and prepare for potential mergers or clusters. Dorset submitted its 2025/26 operational plan, meeting most targets except for regional non-emergency (CAT 2) response times. A [new National Women's Health Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england/womens-health-strategy-for-england) has been published, in response, Dorset has launched a new [women’s health website](https://ourdorset.org.uk/women/) to improve access and awareness. The spring COVID-19 vaccination programme is underway, with 44% uptake among eligible Dorset residents. Dorset also hosted the national launch of the [Coastal Navigators Network](https://bbi.uk.com/coastalnavigtorsnetwork/), aiming to reduce health inequalities in coastal communities through targeted interventions. Key priorities for 2025/26 include delivering the operational plan, strengthening neighbourhood models, progressing major transformation programmes, and launching new care models for neurodiversity, mental health, and end-of-life services.

1. **DORSET COUNTY HOSPITAL (DCH) & DORSET HEALTHCARE (DHC) UPDATE**

Patient stories at April board meetings highlighted the need for improved accessibility for people with disabilities and support for smoking cessation in mental health settings. Dorset County Hospital (DCH) and Dorset HealthCare (DHC) both met year-end financial targets, with DCH breaking even and DHC reporting a £1.3m surplus. Operational performance improved, with DCH meeting 4-hour ED and cancer diagnosis standards, and DHC achieving 99.9% ED compliance and increased mental health activity. Staff survey results showed above-average morale and engagement across both trusts, and both organisations reported their lowest gender pay gaps in six years. DCH launched a major construction project for a new Emergency Department and was selected for a national green spaces programme, while both trusts progressed shared digital and infrastructure strategies.

1. **UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS DORSET (UHD) UPDATE**

University Hospitals Dorset has successfully opened the new BEACH building, moving radiology, critical care, maternity, and neonatal services, with Bournemouth Emergency Department move planned for 14 May. The trust is collaborating with Dorset County Hospital and Dorset HealthCare to explore a shared services model for estates, facilities, and procurement, while also developing the South Six Pathology Network and appointing a new interim chair, Judy Gillow MBE. Beverley Bryant has been confirmed as Chief Digital Officer across all three trusts to lead a unified digital strategy under the One Dorset Provider Collaborative.

1. **GP ALLIANCE UPDATE**

The Dorset General Practice Alliance is working with the Wessex LMC and NHS Dorset to address concerns around underfunded services like phlebotomy and shared care, offering support to practices reviewing their delivery. It remains active in Integrated Neighbourhood Team development, has held successful training and celebration events, and joined Community Action Network Advisory Board to strengthen local collaboration. Regular meetings with NHS Foundation Trusts are ongoing to improve patient pathways amid shared operational challenges.

1. **SOUTH WESTERN AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST (SWAFT) UPDATE**

In April, South Western Ambulance Service responded to 12,749 incidents in Dorset, are within national response times. The service received £142,000 in charitable funding to support initiatives like new community response vehicles, improved defibrillator access, and a new Community Ambassador Programme to train the public in life-saving skills. SWASFT also joined the Avon and Somerset Bleed Kit Partnership, enabling 999 call handlers to direct to the nearest bleed kit, further enhancing pre-hospital emergency response.

1. **BCP COUNCIL UPDATE**

BCP Council has been shortlisted for multiple national awards and is advancing major reforms in Children’s Services, including a new leadership structure and the launch of a Children and Young People’s Partnership Board. Children’s Services has now received a Good rating from Ofsted ILACS and is embracing the [Families First Partnership Programme](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6825b992a60aeba5ab34e006/The_families_first_partnership_programme_guide.pdf). There are now interim arrangements in place for Wellbeing services following a leadership change. While managing a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan, BCP faces rising costs in adult and children’s services and a £57.5m SEND funding shortfall for 2025/26, with a cumulative deficit projected at £165.5m by March 2026.

1. **DORSET COUNCIL UPDATE**

Dorset Council continues to make progress in adult social care through its FutureCare programme, reablement initiatives, including roll out of [Bridget Care online self-assessment](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/bridgit-online-self-help-for-carers) support for carers, and housing strategies aligned to health and wellbeing priorities, despite financial pressures and unresolved joint funding with the ICB. Children’s Services received an Outstanding rating from Ofsted inspection, and the council is expanding its family hub network, supported by government and council grant funding for community-based family support projects. [Families First for Children Pathfinder](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/news/dorset-charities-deliver-help-to-local-families-) has worked closely with DVCSA and VCS to support local projects. [New funding launched](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/lag-funding-for-projects-25-26) through Local Alliance Groups.

1. **PUBLIC HEALTH & PREVENTION UPDATE**

A new Directorate of Public Health and Prevention was launched on 1 April 2025, with preparations underway for its first assurance visit and a forthcoming place-based partnership proposal via the Health and Wellbeing Board. Dorset Council is co-producing a Community Partnership prospectus with statutory and VCS partners to drive integrated, preventative approaches through major transformation programmes across the county.

1. **VCSE UPDATE**

Healthwatch Dorset’s recent [pharmacy report](https://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/report/2025-04-29/local-pharmacies-peoples-experiences-using-services-dorset) revealed positive feedback overall but highlighted serious challenges in rural areas, limited awareness of Pharmacy First, and concerns about end-of-life care and NHS system connectivity. Current projects include gathering feedback on Hospital at Home, engaging underrepresented communities, and focusing on the digital divide, with volunteers actively involved in shaping services like Bournemouth’s new A&E.

The Dorset VCS Assembly hosted its first [*Transforming Health & Care Together*](https://www.dorsetvcsa.co.uk/news/2025/04/25/transforming-health-and-care-together-a-successful-vcse-event-in-dorset) event in April, which successfully connected over 50 voluntary sector delegates with key health and care partners, strengthening collaboration and sparking interest in ongoing co-design and engagement. See [NHSE/ICB news update](https://www.dorsetvcsa.co.uk/news/2025/05/15/big-nhs-changes-are-coming-what-do-they-mean-for-the-vcse-sector).

1. **DEEP DIVE – MENTAL HEALTH**

Link to [Big Mental Health Report](https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/our-policy-work/reports-and-guides/the-big-mental-health-report-2024/) (Mind 2024). See pgs 36-50 of “[ICB Part 1 Public Meeting pdf](https://wag.org.gg/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ICB-Board-Part-One-public-Meeting-Papers-090525.pdf)”.

1. **BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF) identifies eight strategic risks, with digital maturity, health inequalities, financial performance, and social mobility currently outside tolerance, and highlights updated mitigation efforts across each area. While further development of the BAF was planned, national announcements will mean retaining the current BAF until new strategic priorities are clarified. See Report on pgs 58-83 of “[ICB Part 1 Public Meeting pdf](https://wag.org.gg/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ICB-Board-Part-One-public-Meeting-Papers-090525.pdf)”.

**COMMITTEES INTERNAL UPDATE -** See pgs 84 – 95 of “[ICB Part 1 Public Meeting pdf](https://wag.org.gg/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ICB-Board-Part-One-public-Meeting-Papers-090525.pdf)”.

1. **INTENSIVE ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE REVIEW**

NHS Dorset, in partnership with Dorset HealthCare and the Dorset Mental Health Forum, has developed a system-wide action plan to enhance intensive and assertive community mental health services, particularly for individuals with complex needs who are hard to engage – Assertive Outreach Team (AOT). The plan responds to national directives, CQC findings, and a local serious incident review. NHSE will review progress in June 2025.

1. **SYSTEM INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

Urgent and Emergency Care Update

* Ambulance and ED performance improved in February 2025 but remained below target, with Dorset showing stronger results than the regional average. Handover delays and high “no criteria to reside” figures continued to impact flow. Hospital@Home occupancy increased in March, nearing target levels

Planned Care Summary

* Waits over 65 weeks significantly reduced from 41 in February to 13 by March, with just 1 forecasted for April. Theatre utilisation exceeded target at 79%, and diagnostics performance peaked at 88% but remains below plan. Cancer targets slipped slightly across multiple indicators, with ongoing underperformance in early-stage diagnoses and FIT testing.

Mental Health Summary

* Strong access performance continues for perinatal and CYP mental health services, including CAMHS Gateway. Adult community mental health contacts and SMI health checks remain below plan, though showing gradual improvement. Dementia diagnosis, inappropriate out-of-area placements, and recovery rates in Talking Therapies all remain key areas of concern.

Workforce Summary

* Workforce reduction programme missed target by 703 at year end, with only 73 reduced year to date against a 613 target. Substantive and bank staff numbers rose, while DHC was the only trust to reduce staff in post. Agency spend improved significantly, now forecast at 2.4% of pay bill, well below the 3.2% target

Quality Summary

* Positive outcomes from assurance visits, shared learning sessions, and a pilot for the new reducing Violence (for children in care) nursing role has demonstrated positive outcomes. Full maternity scheme compliance achieved by UHD and DCH; key patient safety learning being shared system-wide. Challenges include: high MRSA rates, delay with the learning disability & autism review improvement work, but all cases will be cleared by 12/05.

Finance Summary

* At Month 11, the Dorset ICS is forecasting a year-end deficit of £12m, with a year-to-date deficit of £46.8m – £7.6m off the planned trajectory. 72% of planned efficiencies have been delivered, leaving £26.6m in slippage. Agency spend is forecast to underspend by £5.6m.

Full Report slides can be viewed on pgs 124 -205 of “[ICB Part 1 Public Meeting pdf](https://wag.org.gg/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ICB-Board-Part-One-public-Meeting-Papers-090525.pdf)”.

🗓️ **NEXT MEETING:** Integrated Care Board **–** 10th July 2025