

Our ref: Y62GEN21-22/WLCCG

NHS England and NHS Improvement  
North West  
Regatta Place  
Brunswick Business Park  
Summers Road  
Liverpool  
L3 4BL

***Sent via email:***

Andrew Bennett, Accountable Officer

[REDACTED]

Dr Peter Gregory, Chair

[REDACTED]

20 June 2022

NHS West Lancashire CCG  
Hilldale,  
Wigan Road,  
Ormskirk  
L39 2JW

Dear Andrew and Peter,

**2021/22 CCG Annual Assessments**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to you and your colleagues at the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in what has been another challenging year for the NHS. The North West NHS England & Improvement Regional Team appreciates your continued good work, supporting the Level 4 incident response due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, whilst continuing to manage the smooth transfer of services to the Integrated Care System (ICS), ahead of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022. I recognise the complexity in which the CCG has had to exercise its duties and I have ensured that these factors have been considered as part of the CCG's annual assessment for 2021/2022.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires that the performance assessment must consider the duties of CCGs to: improve the quality of services; reduce health inequalities; obtain appropriate advice; involve and consult the public; and comply with financial duties. For 2021/22, it has been necessary to align these duties with the operational priorities set out in the Operational Planning Guidance for 2021/2022.

The annual assessment for 2021/2022 has continued to focus on the CCG's contributions to local delivery of the overall system plan for recovery, with emphasis on the effectiveness of working relationships in the local system. This year's review has included reviewing evidence of delivery against performance targets, key lines of enquiry, discharge of statutory duties, along with engagement with your local Health & Wellbeing Board.

This is the last time that CCGs will be assessed, as the forthcoming Health and Social Care Act 2022 will supersede this requirement, due to the establishment of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and the decommissioning of CCGs on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022.



The financial year of 2021/2022 has continued to be a particularly challenging year in every respect for the CCG, its partners, and the people of Lancashire & South Cumbria, along with your neighbouring partners within Cheshire and Merseyside. However, it is recognised that the CCG has continued to rise to the challenges along with its system partners.

In particular, I note the continued contribution of the CCG Leadership Team and staff who have continued to support various elements of the wider system response, such as LSC Gold Command and Urgent and Emergency Care, as well as continuing to support and manage testing and vaccination programmes.

In terms of the development of Primary Care Networks (PCNs), whilst PCNs are continuing on their development journey, their continued contribution to the COVID-19 response has remained strong, which has resulted in the continuous progress in terms of how PCNs continue to come together to meet local challenges and needs of the population they serve.

Despite the challenging year, there have been some positive examples of integrated working which I would like to take this opportunity to commend the CCG on, particularly in relation to supporting the system to respond to emergency demands and manage winter pressures. The CCG has supported increased access for patients in primary care and have commissioned an increased stroke offer for the West Lancashire footprint. The development of a 2 hour crisis response service is also a notable outcome in the past year.

The CCG's governance statement clearly outlines, context, scope of responsibility, governance arrangements and effectiveness. The CCG provides a description of key risks and associated issues. The Head of Internal Audit report provided substantial assurance, identifying a good system of internal control designed to meet the CCG's objectives, with consistent application.

The CCG demonstrates a clear understanding of the population and local issues from a health inequalities perspective and has worked with system partners on reducing health inequalities and the development of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which sets out the CCG's objectives on reducing health inequalities across the West Lancashire footprint

The CCG continues to engage with partners across the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing footprint in relation to its implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The CCG has also played an active role in the continued development of the place-based partnership in West Lancashire and this leadership extends to the wider work on the Shaping Care Together review with colleagues in the Cheshire and Mersey system.

It is noted that the CCG did not meet its statutory financial duty to break-even. This was due to the write off of a prescribing prepayment in year. The CCG did meet statutory financial duty by not exceeding its Running Cost Allowance and delivered the Mental Health Investment Standard. The CCG was also supported via COVID-19 nationally set finance regime and associated funding (block contract arrangements, top-up funding, COVID re-imburement process). The CCG received a substantial

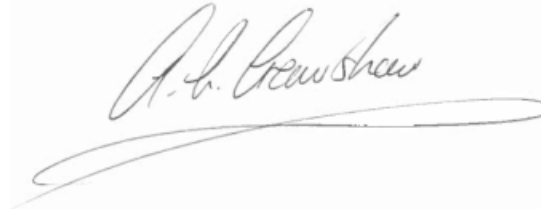
assurance rating from its External Auditors in respect of having effective systems and processes in place.

As part of the transition phase to the ICS, the CCG is now in a strong position to handover the legacy work and corporate memory which it has formed. This will now place the ICS in a strong position, as it continues to strive to address inequalities and improve the health needs and outcomes of its local population.

Thank you once again to the Leadership Team, CCG colleagues and volunteers for their continuous hard work, dedication, and contributions. We wish you all the very best for the future as we transition to our new partnership arrangements on the 1st July 2022.

You are welcome to take this letter to your Governing Body by way of demonstrating the outcome of this year end assurance process. In the meantime, please let me know if there is anything in this letter that you would like to follow up on.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "A. Crawshaw", with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath it.

**Andrew Crawshaw**

**Regional Director of Performance and Delivery - North West**