

Integrated Care Board

Date of meeting	17 September 2026
Title of paper	Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee Escalation and Assurance Report – 2 July 2026
Presented by	Craig Harris, Chief Commissioning Officer
Author	Head of Governance and Committee Officers
Agenda item	17
Confidential	No

Executive summary				
This report highlights key matters, issues, and risks discussed at the Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee held since the last report to the Board.				
Public and Stakeholder Engagement				
N/A				
Recommendations				
The Board is asked to:				
Note the Alert, Advise and Assure the committee report and approve any recommendations as listed				
Which Strategic Objective/s does the report relate to:				Tick
SO1	To improve population health and reduce inequalities through effective strategic commissioning.			✓
SO2	Commission high quality, safe and accessible services that deliver better and more equitable outcomes and patient experience.			✓
SO3	To develop and sustain the workforce, leadership and organisational capability required to operate as an effective strategic commissioner.			✓
SO4	Improved financial sustainability through directing available resources to deliver the greatest possible value.			✓
SO5	To deliver agreed national and local outcomes through a balanced focus on performance, improvement and long-term system resilience.			✓
Implications				
	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Associated risks		✓		
Are associated risks detailed on the ICB Risk Register?			✓	
Financial Implications			✓	
Where paper has been discussed (list other committees/forums that have discussed this paper)				
Meeting	Date	Outcomes		
Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee	2 July 2026	To provide the Board of committee business during this period.		
Conflicts of interest associated with this report				
Not applicable.				
Impact assessments				

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Quality impact assessment completed			✓	
Equality impact assessment completed			✓	
Data privacy impact assessment completed			✓	

Report authorised by:	Craig Harris, Chief Commissioning Officer
------------------------------	---

Integrated Care Board – 17 September 2026

Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee Escalation and Assurance Report

1. Introduction

1. This report highlights key matters, issues, and risks discussed at Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee held since the last report to the Board on 9 July 2026 to alert, advise and assure the Board.

2. Northwest Specialised Commissioning Committee Highlight Report

Key escalation and discussion points from the Committee meeting	
Date of Meeting: 2 July 2026	Chair: Steve Spill
Alert	
• Ongoing performance concerns relating to: - Cardiac surgery waiting lists at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals. - Spinal surgery waiting times at Northern Care Alliance (NCA). - Capacity pressures within complex gynaecology and endometriosis services. • National concerns regarding renal dialysis capacity, with growing demand outstripping existing provision however work already in place in NW addressing this. • Continued neonatal service review risks, particularly following publication of the Ockenden and Amos reports, requiring alignment with maternity service planning. • Ongoing quality concerns regarding complex spinal surgery services at NCA, including patient safety findings from retrospective case reviews. • Fragility within paediatric rheumatology services at East Lancashire Hospitals following clinician departures.	
Advise	
• Specialised commissioning contract values have now been agreed with all providers, with Indicative Activity Plans (IAPs) nearing completion. • OPIC development continues to progress, supported by a governance task and finish group focusing on implementation from October 2026. • Greater Manchester specialist cardiac and vascular surgery reconfiguration programme has successfully completed NHS England Stage 2 assurance and entered public consultation. • Urology reconfiguration programme has recommenced following earlier delays, with a compliant service model expected by the end of summer 2026. • Committee members supported bringing a detailed update on neonatal review options and implications to a future meeting. • Finance and Contract Subgroup continues to oversee contract deconstruction, contract management and performance monitoring arrangements, with Phase 1 expected to complete by the end of summer.	
Assure	
• Month 2 financial position remains on plan, reporting an overall surplus against allocation.	

- Renal dialysis quality concerns at NCA are now being managed through established quality oversight arrangements within the wider system.
- Strengthened governance arrangements have been introduced for spinal surgery services at NCA, including enhanced MDT and mortality review processes.
- Collaborative quality governance arrangements between NHS England, ICBs and providers continue to provide oversight of specialised commissioning quality concerns.
- Significant progress has been made in the national contract deconstruction programme, with acute contract reviews well advanced and provider validation underway.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The committee has conducted their business in line with their terms of reference and associated business plans.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Board is requested to:

- Note the Alert, Advise and Assure within the committee report and approve any recommendations as listed