

directors of
adass
adult social services
East Midlands

Annual Report

2023/24

Promoting excellent
social care across
the East Midlands





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Chairs Introduction

Welcome to the East Midlands ADASS. It's been a long time since we published an annual report but we thought it's time to celebrate and share some of the great work that we have been doing particularly as it's still a very challenging time for adults social care. The re-introduction of regulation in the form of CQC assessment, increasing demand and pressures in the NHS which are all adding significant pressures to the finances in local government.

For the East Midlands it's been a lot of change this year, we have said goodbye to Directors who have been with us a while – Helen Jones and Glen Garrod and welcomed three new ones – Simon Stevens, Kim Sorsky and Laurence Jones.

We are really lucky in the region and even with all the additional pressures the Branch has still received strong support from colleagues across the region and we have been supported to deliver a number of key pieces of work and projects this year which we will tell you more about in the report.



Stuart Lackenby
Deputy Chief Executive



About Us

The East Midlands ADASS Region consists of the 10 East Midlands Local Authorities with adult social care responsibility and is the smallest of nine regions that form part of the ADASS regional network. We have a mix of unitary and shire councils that serve both urban and very rural populations. A number of our directors are currently responsible for children's services and / or public health as well as adult social care.



Andy Smith
Derby



Simon Stevens
Derbyshire



Laurence Jones
Leicester



Jon Wilson
Leicestershire



Martin Samuels
Lincolnshire



David Watts
North
Northamptonshire



Stuart Lackenby
West
Northamptonshire



Catherine Underwood
Nottingham



Melanie Williams
Nottinghamshire



Kim Sorsky
Rutland

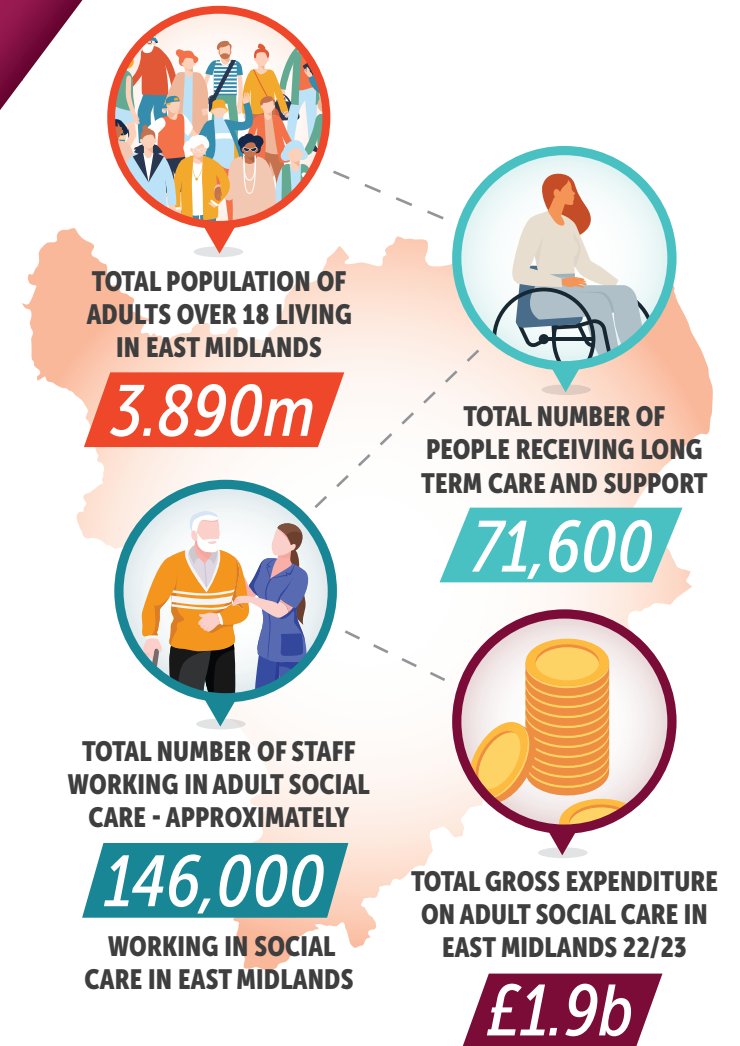
The branch is supported by a small programme team who are hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council on behalf of the partners.

Our Vision

Promoting excellent social care across the East Midlands

We deliver our vision by:

- › Providing strong local leadership
- › Working together to improve the quality of social care in the region
- › Sharing good practice and holding each other to account through our sector led improvement programme
- › Focusing on the things that matter
- › Building strong relationships with our partners recognising that we achieve better outcomes for people if we can work effectively together
- › Supporting our colleagues to champion the role of adult social care and influence national policy
- › Promoting a culture of co-operation, support and collaboration across the region



Promoting Sector Led Improvement

A key role of our regional branch is to promote effective sector led improvement through facilitating collaborative working and effective communication.

As a branch we believe that together we hold the key to delivering excellent social care in the East Midlands. Sector led improvement is the cornerstone of our work.

Over the last year we have:

- **Promoted effective peer engagement and communication**
This year we have circulated weekly bulletins to over 60 local leaders and coordinated two full peer reviews using our revised methodology and a wider group of peer challengers.
- **Delivered benchmarking, data sharing and external challenge**
Reviewed our quarterly in year benchmarking data in branch meetings and carried out nine externally led challenge conversations enabling us to identify areas for individual or collective improvement.
- **Hosted over 100 regional meetings, events and networks**
- **Developed a number of tools and resources around CQC assurance preparation and audit** including offering bespoke support to the four councils who have been formally assessed.
- **Provided leadership training to over 100 middle managers** in preparation for CQC assessment.



East Midlands Regional Improvement Groups

The Regional Improvement Groups are set up around our key priority areas of practice or policy. They are responsible for the delivery of a key part of our regional action plan and report regularly back to branch. All are Director led and include representatives from each local authority.

Care Markets

Delivering a strong sustainable market

DASS Lead – Martin Samuels from Lincolnshire

The Care Markets regional improvement group is co-chaired by Colin Selbie from Derbyshire and Indy Lahel from Leicestershire. The group meets quarterly and oversees project work and other communities of practice around commissioning and market quality.

Over the last year we have:

- › Commissioned regional benchmarking reports on care homes and home care.
- › Piloted provider led reviews and drafted a toolkit to support the process.
- › Peer support re use of grants, Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund, Accelerating Reform Fund etc.

Workforce

Focus - Promoting the recruitment and retention of a strong diverse and skilled workforce

DASS lead – Melanie Williams from Nottinghamshire

The Workforce regional improvement group is co-chaired by Kate Galoppi from Leicester City and Shirley Way from Skills for Care. The group meets quarterly and includes a range of other stakeholders from health and social care who have a shared interest in workforce.

Over the last year we have:

- › Overseen the development and delivery of the regional international recruitment programme which has hosted numerous events and webinars for international recruits and providers focusing on provision of information and support but also celebrating the diversity of the new workforce.
- › Planned a regional equality, diversity and inclusion workshop.
- › Promoted use of the adult social care workforce dataset.



Principal Social Workers

Developing excellent social care practice

DASS lead – Kim Sorsky from Rutland

The Principal Social Workers regional improvement group is co-chaired by Chris Erskine from Lincolnshire and Kelly McAleese from Rutland. The group meets quarterly but supports a number of task and finish groups as they develop tools and resources.

Over the last year we have:

- › Developed a regional practice framework and are currently auditing implementation.
- › Produced a regional report on the role of the Principal Social Worker which will be shared nationally.
- › Developed new tools for peer audits and reviews.
- › Provided bespoke peer support to our Principal Social Worker colleagues whose local authorities are going through CQC assessment.

Quality Assurance

Support to deliver effective governance and prepare for CQC assessment

DASS lead – Andy Smith from Derby City

The Quality Assurance regional improvement group is co-chaired by Ruth Lake from Leicester City and Sue Batty from Nottinghamshire. The group meets bi-monthly and also works through a number of task and finish groups to develop tools and resources.

Over the last year we have:

- › Designed and delivered training for over 100 middle managers on CQC assurance.
- › Developed a waiting list management checklist.
- › Facilitated a review of each other's local authority self-assessments, including hosting a regional workshop.
- › Shared learning from the two CQC pilots hosted in the region.
- › Worked with Partners in Care and Health to develop an overview guide to CQC assessment that each local authority can personalise and use as part of their communication plans.

Finance and Performance

Supporting Councils to make best use of their available resources

DASS Lead – David Watts from North Northamptonshire

The Finance and Performance regional improvement group is co-chaired by Clare Rickett from Nottinghamshire and supported by Dan Fisher our Branch data lead. The group meets quarterly with additional work carried out by local authorities and partners in care and health outside of the meeting to collect and analyse the regions data.

Over the last year we have:

- › Developed and delivered a regional quarterly dataset.
- › Deep dived in hospital discharge data.
- › Contributed to national metric developments, including the waiting list survey.



IMPACT Waiting Well

Understanding and improving the experience of waiting for social care

DASS lead – Jon Wilson from Leicestershire

The IMPACT waiting well project has been a one-year collaboration between the 10 councils in the East Midlands, people who draw on care and support and IMPACT (the centre for implementing evidence in social care). The project has focused on co-producing tools and products that support people who are waiting for social care and for staff who are managing waiting list.

Over the last year we have:

- › Started the project with surveys for key stakeholders and locality based workshops to define the problem and to agree joint priorities for action.
- › Set up co-owned governance structure with clear accountability to both the branch and multi stakeholder steering group.

For more information on any of our regional improvement groups:
em-adassadmin@nottsc.gov.uk

Communities of Practice

Alongside our improvement groups the region hosts nine communities of practice. They are different from our traditional networks as they are:

- › Centred on a set of common interests or theme.
- › Primarily focus on sharing knowledge and improving practice.
- › Are self-determined and self-supporting.

On occasion they do take on agreed shared activity on behalf of the branch, which is delivered through task and finish groups.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)

Brings together leads from local authorities, health and other stakeholders to look at deprivation of liberty practice and process. The group members bring different examples to discuss and pick up emerging case law.

Lead – Heather Blow from Lincolnshire

Continuing Health Care

Continuing health care leads from each local authority focus on developing a range of strategies which support the award of appropriate healthcare funding for people who are eligible.

Lead – vacant

Learning Disability and Autism

A large community of practice that brings together professionals from health and social care alongside people with lived experience to look at policy and practice issues around learning disability and autism including transforming care. A focus for 24-25 will be on commissioning in particular care and support for young people with complex needs.

Lead – Amy Brook West Northamptonshire supported by Claire Bruin (Associate)

Operational Pressures

A forum for local authority contract managers to share intelligence about current market supply and sufficiency issues. A common theme this year has been the loss of nursing homes across the region.

Lead – branch office



Carers

Brings together carer leads from health and social care across the Midlands. Currently focusing on sharing best practice and learning from the accelerating from reform grant carers projects.

Lead – Jude Boyle from Derbyshire

Principal Occupational Therapists

Focused on connecting with the national network, sharing best practice and promoting the quality and role of Occupational Therapists in social care.

Lead – Cate Bennett from Nottinghamshire

Digital and Technology

A forum for local authority technology and digital leads to promote best use of technology and innovation alongside digital social care records and the digital switchover programme. The main focus this year has been around sharing experiences.

Lead – Vacant





Business plan for 2024-25

Due to the nature of our programme some activities do not always fit neatly into one year cycles so some of the work we have reported on for 2023-24, will be continuing into 2024-25.

This business plan sets out the key activities and deliverables we will be focusing on this year.

Sector Led Improvement (SLI) Programme

In 2024/25, we will be implementing our updated regional SLI cycle to ensure it offers councils more opportunity for constructive peer feedback and challenge, including offering bi-annual externally led challenge conversations, peer-led self-assessment reviews and targeted peer reviews to all councils.

- › All councils will have received a peer review by the end of March 2025 and a challenge conversation by the end of June 2025.
- › Develop and deliver our post-assessment support offer to councils through “buddies” matching scheme.
- › Continue to develop the regional networking through regional improvement groups communities of practice and webinars.

Care Markets

In 2024/25, continue with a mix of sharing knowledge, experience and best practice around fee setting, commissioning practice and quality oversight whilst overseeing some new projects.

- › Continuing our series of deep dives into different market segments starting with nursing care and learning disabilities and autism.
- › Launch and roll-out of the provider led review toolkit.
- › Refresh and relaunch our regional provider failure protocol.



Workforce

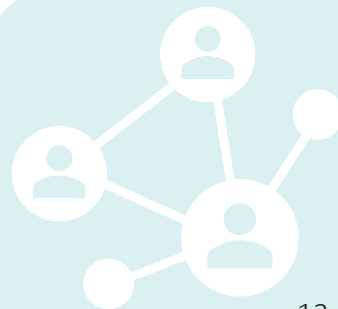
In 2024/25 whilst we wait for the new national workforce strategy we will:

- › Focus on equality, diversity and inclusion, including promoting the diverse by design in adult social care toolkit and the workforce race equality standard starting with a workshop in June.
- › Support the retention of qualified social workers by comparing workforce data, considering regional approach to use of agency and costs and evaluating the apprenticeship model.
- › Increase our understanding of our councils internal workforce, by collecting and comparing data.
- › Ensure that international recruits working in social care and their employers in our region are well supported and have access to support and resources to make it a positive experience.

Principal Social Workers

Alongside their key role in responding to local and national priorities and feedback that impacts on practice. The network will:

- › Continue preparedness for CQC assessment through defining the Principal Social Worker role, developing tools and supporting staff.
- › Further develop the regional peer audit tools and peer review guidance.
- › Develop regional guidance document on allocation and safe caseloads.
- › Develop and produce an annual report on social work practice in the East Midlands.





Quality Assurance

As more CQC assessments are being rolled out in the region, the network will continue to share learning and best practice around assessment and quality assurance alongside:

- › Further developing our pre and post assurance support offer to councils, including bespoke work and toolkits around audit.
- › Working with our co-production network to develop our “learning from feedback” from those who draw on care and support.
- › Develop our learning from assessments as they are published, drawing out areas for regional focus, for example, transitions and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- › Developing our tools in relation to supporting councils to manage risks, for example, waiting lists.

Finance and Performance

A key part of this network is about mutual support and shared learning for finance and performance leads around areas like client level data, section 114, year-end. Alongside this, the network will:

- › Continue to develop and interrogate our regional dataset, carrying out deep dives and highlighting areas to interest to Branch.
- › Continue our maximising income project looking at Continuing Health Care, joint funding, charging and section 117.
- › Look for opportunities to create consistency of reporting and maximising digitalisation.



IMPACT Waiting Well

The project is due to close in late autumn 2024, before then the project will:

- Co-produce guidance, frameworks and/or toolkits on:
 - Effective asset mapping.
 - Waiting well packs for citizens.
 - Waiting well guidance for staff and managers.
- Work with local authorities to implement the recommendations from the project and share the tools and products that are developed.
- Showcase the project nationally at the National Children's and Adults conference in Liverpool.



A new priority for 2024/25 that will be overseen jointly by the care markets group and learning disabilities and autism community of practice.

Improving outcomes for people with learning disabilities, autistic people and those young people who need support into their adult lives.

In 2024/25 we will:

- Focus on developing a better understanding around the transition and needs of those young people who move from children's to adult services, including experience, support offer and cost versus quality.
- Develop joint work with health including workforce, training and development and identifying joint commissioning opportunities.
- Focus on defining what good looks like – training, assessment and review.
- Develop a better understanding of the existing and future market supply.



For more information contact:

em-adassadmin@nottsc.gov.uk

<https://em-adass.org.uk/>