

## Practical Engagement and Integration in Northamptonshire

The Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) are actively working to better understand, integrate with, and support the social care system. This case study covers two examples:

1. The Adult Social Care Workforce Group. This is a network led by Skills for Care and recognised by the ICB. It is attended by ICB Workforce leads and several other partners across the system.
2. Social Care Tours and the Social Care Meet and Greet. These initiatives were led by Skills for Care and have galvanised engagement between health and social care, and enabled a deeper understanding of social care among NHS-experienced ICB Workforce leads.

### This case study:

- demonstrates proactive and practical ways of boosting engagement between different parts of the system
- is based on conversations with Lauren Stacey, Skills for Care Locality Manager and Sharon Smeeton, Deputy People Director, Northamptonshire ICB.

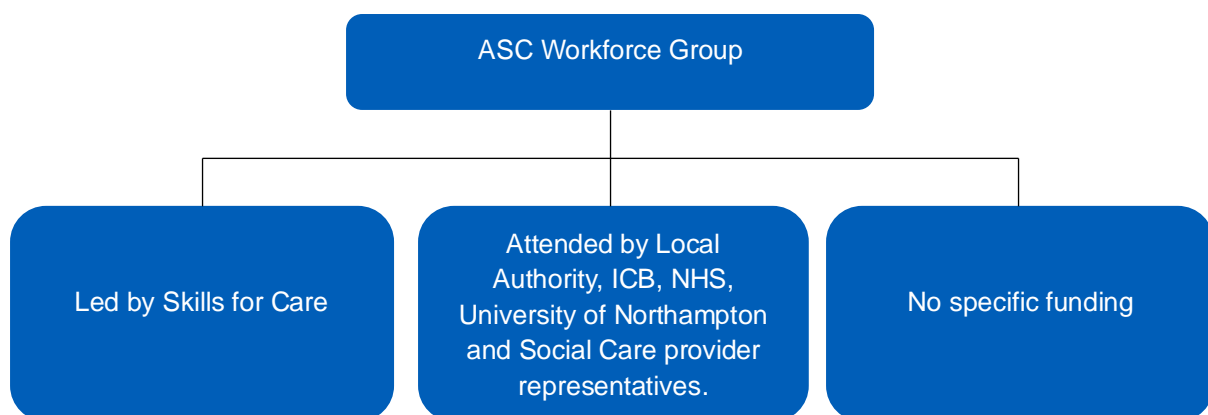
## Where this fits in the system

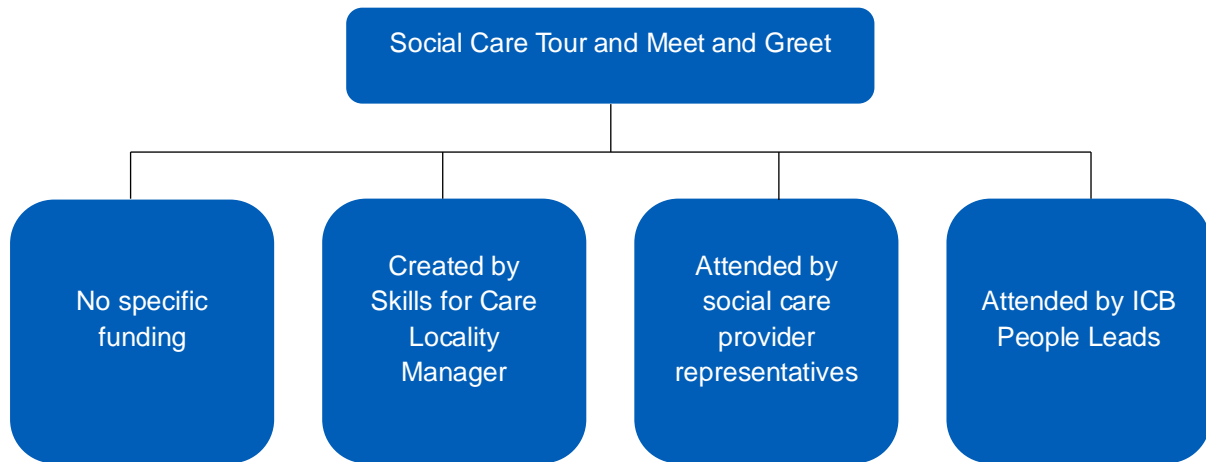
### Funding

- The initiatives receive no specific funding and are proactively organised by Skills for Care and the ICB People Function to support and accelerate integration.

### Connections to the ICB

- The workforce group consists of partners drawn from across the system, including but not limited to ICB staff.
- ICB Workforce Leads separately attended the 'social care tour', 'meet and greet' event, and continue to engage directly with social care contacts.





### Adult Social Care Workforce Group

Created before the ICB, the Adult Social Care Workforce Group meets monthly to discuss social care. Participants are drawn from across the sector, including local authorities, the ICB, NHS Trusts, primary care, the University of Northampton, and social care providers.

Now formally recognised by the ICB, the group is a crucial tool for driving integration and information-sharing. It provides a single point of engagement for time-poor social care leads to reach key personnel from across the system.

The group helps champion integration by providing feedback to ICB colleagues. For example, when the ICB received funding to produce a careers video, the project team attended the Adult Social Care Workforce Group to hear from, and reflect, social care feedback on the film.

### The Social Care Tour

The 'Social Care Tour' originated from a desire to increase practical awareness and understanding of adult social care services amongst members of the ICB's People Function. Organised by the local Skills for Care representative, three members of the ICB People Function visited a learning disability service, a local home care provider office, and an older persons' care home.

At each location, the ICB representatives had informal meetings with the registered manager to understand more about their service, their People challenges, and training and development. ICB representatives had the opportunity to discuss their work and how this could be adapted to include the social care workforce.

### Social Care Meet and Greet

Having found the tour and conversations so valuable, a subsequent 'meet and greet' event was organised so that the ICB People Function could meet with a larger number of social care managers. This meeting focused on the ICB's system-wide people priorities (retention, placement planning, and inclusion). It also helped with the sharing of ideas on how providers and the ICB People Function could better work together and support one another.

The ICB People Function team have since been able to directly engage with social care managers, either via the Skills for Care Registered Manager Network, or through their own connections forged at the meet and greet event. Some registered managers have also since attended relevant ICB project groups.

### Where this fits in the system Impact

These initiatives increased engagement and information-sharing across the system. This is helping the ICB People Function better understand local challenges, develop effective initiatives, and collect supporting data.

By forming system-wide connections, the ICB People Function has increased joint working on its core priorities. It has also enabled more honest conversations, helping break down points of exclusivity. For example, moving away from NHS-centric language in ICB communications designed for the whole system.

### Next Steps

The workforce group continues to meet monthly. There is also plenty of ad-hoc engagement directly between social care providers and ICB leads on relevant projects. The ICB People Function continues to collect system-wide data to aid integrated decision making.

A priority focus is training placements. Adult social care training requirements are now being included as part of placements through the ICB, primary care and other services. This means that the University of Northampton can plan nurse training placements across the whole system.

**“There’s a real willingness in Northamptonshire to improve integration and joint-working with our social care partners. We’re not waiting to be told to do this or for it to become a formal requirement; we’re doing it because it’s the right thing to do. It’s really important for us to capture data from the local social care system and to collectively work towards ‘One’ health and care workforce.”**

**- Sharon Smeeton, Deputy Director of People, NHS Northamptonshire ICB**