

North East London Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (NEL VCFSE) Collaborative highlights report

June 2025

About the NEL VCFSE Collaborative

The North East London (NEL) Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Collaborative works closely with [NHS North East London](#) to provide strategic advice and guidance on the VCFSE sector across NEL and ensures a two way flow of communication from VCFSE to the ICB.

The [NEL VCFSE Collaborative](#) is funded by NHS North East London and currently meets monthly with participation of VCFSE across the 7 London places (City and Hackney, Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest) as well as our five thematic representatives (Workforce and Volunteers, Long Term Conditions (LTC), Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism, Babies, Children and Young People, and Faith) to work with the ICB and to contribute in a meaningful way to health outcomes.

New membership of NEL VCFSE Collaborative

Since the last highlights report, we sought diverse, inclusive and compassionate leaders to be a part of the Collaborative through an expression of interest process.

We aimed to find leaders who not only reflect the community they serve and the staff they employ but also have the leadership style and breadth of perspective to make good collective decisions within our leadership group.

We are pleased to announce our representatives:

Name	Role	Organisation
Peter Laing	Newham representative	Newham Community Renewal Programme
Shelley Hart	Havering representative	Havering Volunteer Centre (HVC)
Sam Miller	Barking & Dagenham representative	Green Shoes Arts
Carrie Hirst	City & Hackney representative	Hackney CVS
Vicky Scott	Tower Hamlets representative	Tower Hamlets CVS
Monwara Ali	Waltham Forest representative	Waltham Forest Community Hub
Jenny Ellis	Redbridge representative	Community Action Redbridge

JJ Khun	Workforce and Volunteers representative	WIILMA
Bashir Uddin	Long Term Conditions (LTC) representative	Bangla Housing Association (BHA) London Bangladeshi Health Partnership (LBHP)
Vanessa Morris	Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism representative	Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest
Ora Johnson	Babies, Children and Young People (BCYP) representative	Fernbank Children's Centre Hula 4 Fun CIC
Jeremy Simmons	Faith representative	FaithAction

We look forward to working together with all 12 of our NEL VCFSE Collaborative representatives to work collaboratively with system partners in addressing health inequalities in North East London.

Full biographies of our representatives are available [here](#).

NEL VCFSE 'State of the Sector' report

In February 2025, we conducted a 'state of the sector' survey to help us understand the current climate of VCFSE across NEL. Here, we conducted a survey and received 158 responses. Alongside this survey, we are analysing the Charities Commission data to give a broader overview of the VCFSE in North East London.

The data drawn from the survey and wider analysis will be shared as a report in July 2025. Further details will be shared in the next highlights report.

Health Equity Academy proposal and expression of interest

We are delighted that we were successful in our proposal to the Health Equity Academy and have received funding which supports us to work with VCFSE workforce to enable the workforce to address health inequalities.

Through an expression of interest process, the VCFSE Collaborative is seeking a voluntary, community or faith organisation(s) based in North East London to support with the delivery and evaluation of two exciting strands of work: Community of Practice to address Health Inequalities and Knowledge share (guidance documents).

- 1) Community of Practice to address Health Inequalities is a series of structured Action Learning Set (ALS), to build closer and integrated ways of working with

the health system. The purpose of these ALS is to support VCFSE leaders in furthering integrated working, support communities to engage with health systems and reduce healthcare inequalities.

2) Knowledge share (guidance documents)

We want to create accessible and practical guidance for the VCFSE to sustain and maximise opportunities and tackle barriers to inequalities. This includes guidance on sustainability and funding for building capacity and capability in a very fragile sector. We are seeking an organisation to co-develop with VCFSE, practical guidance to share expert and local knowledge.

Funding available for both areas of work:

- £9,487 Community of practice
- £18,970 Knowledge share and practical guidance documents

The deadline to submit an expression of interest is by **midday 30th July 2025**.

Further details on how to apply can be found [here](#):

NEL Cancer Alliance – Expression of interest

The North East London Cancer Alliance (NEL CA) has a remit to improve and transform cancer patient pathways from prevention through to end-of-life care, supporting delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan ambitions for cancer. NEL CA work in close partnership with the NEL Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB), hospital trusts, local borough public health teams, charities and community groups across seven boroughs – Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge as well as the City of London. A key area of work for the Alliance is in improving awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer and increasing uptake of cancer screening services across North East London, which are vital in diagnosing cancer early.

Evidence shows that people from some communities are less inclined to seek primary care advice promptly when experiencing symptoms which may be cancer and are also less likely to engage in cancer screening activities. These communities include those:

- Who are from a BAME background
- who do not speak English as a first language
- from the LGBTQ+ community
- with serious mental illness
- who experience deprivation
- with a learning disability

This year NELCA are funding a number of community and voluntary organisations working with seldom heard communities in NEL to codesign interventions to improve awareness of cancer signs and symptoms and screening services.

NELCA will award grants to organisations to generate and implement ideas with their community that they believe will have the greatest impact on improving earlier attendance at primary care and participation in cancer screening. This can include, but is not limited to, the creation of communication materials and the delivery of engagement activities.

The budget for this intervention is £20,000 per organisation, this will be paid in one lump sum.

To express your interest in the project, please contact Dimple Makwana at dimple.makwana@nhs.net. **Deadline is 5pm on 11th July 2025.**

Integrated Care Board (ICB) changes

In March 2025, the Government announced that all Integrated Care Boards (ICB) will have to reduce 50% of their running costs by the end of 2025. A new Model ICB Blueprint was published in May to support the change. It describes ICBs as existing to improve their population's health and holding accountability for ensuring the best use of the health budget to improve healthcare – this will be facilitated through strategic commissioning while continuing to hold key statutory functions.

Each ICB has now submitted an indicative plan to NHS England, setting out how they will meet the new budget envelope for their area. The NEL submission was based on our high level operating model and on the basis on further detailed work undertaken on components of that model. NHS North East London is now working towards starting a detailed consultation exercise with staff on the structure of the new organisation.

Any further developments will be shared in the next report.