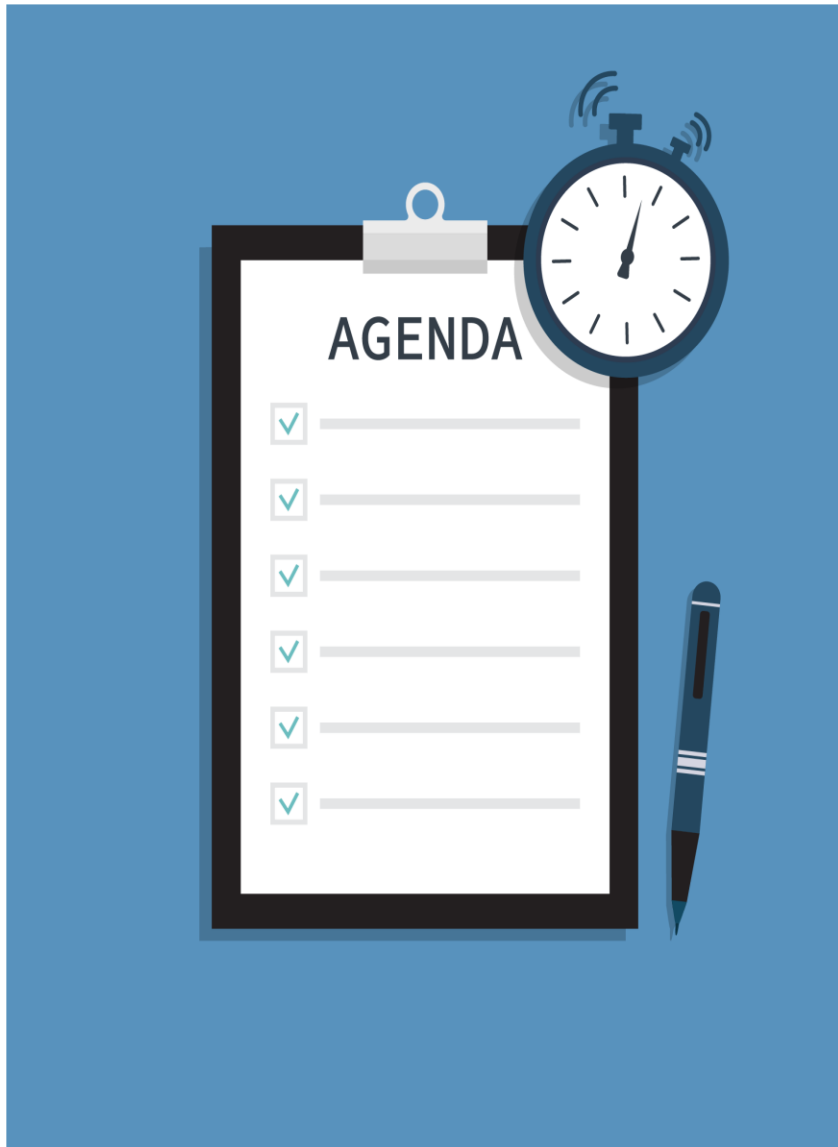




Health and Wellbeing Forum

September 14th 2026



- Welcome and introductions
- Updates
- VCSFE strategy presentation
- Discussions
- Scenarios to explore implementation of the strategy
- Discussion with social prescribing manager o explore ways to support fundraising.
- Networking and close.





UPDATE

- VCS children and youth forum 16th September.
- Case study masterclass 17th September between 10-11am
- Research café on social media and online safety at Barkantine community centre E14 8SJ
- Connection coalition – Bringing generations together 22nd October 9.30am at the Grocers wing.
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1998777734008?aff=oddttdtcreator>
- Healthy Tower Hamlets campaigns
https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/health_social_care/Health-and-adult-social-care/Health-and-wellbeing/Healthy-Tower-Hamlets.aspx
- Winter vaccination programme –
contact:mahmuda.begum4@nhs.net



NEL VCFSE Collaborative



VCFSSE Strategy: Equitable system partnership

September 2026

About the NEL VCFSE Collaborative



We are a strategic partner to North East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB). ICBs are the statutory NHS organisations responsible for commissioning and managing healthcare budget for over two million people across seven the NEL boroughs.

The VCFSE Collaborative is hosted by Tower Hamlets CVS.

The Collaborative represents the VCFSE sector across 7 places (boroughs) in NEL through our representatives (including themed representatives). We advocate for the VCFSE and inform strategic decision making from a VCFSE perspective. This is done at various governance levels through our representatives.

Monthly leadership group meeting – mechanism to gather and feed insights

Development of [NEL VCFSE Strategy](#)

[NEL State of the Sector report](#)

About the VCFSE Collaborative

Ensure VCFSE contribution and integration.



Embedded in key governance structures and programme of work such as Care Closer to Home and Neighbourhood work in each borough

Raise VCFSE profile, increase understanding and promote the value of working collaboratively.



Developed and published VCFSE State of Sector report

Identify new opportunities and align funding opportunities.



Health Equity Funding and Long Term Condition funding

Develop shared learning, training and capacity building.



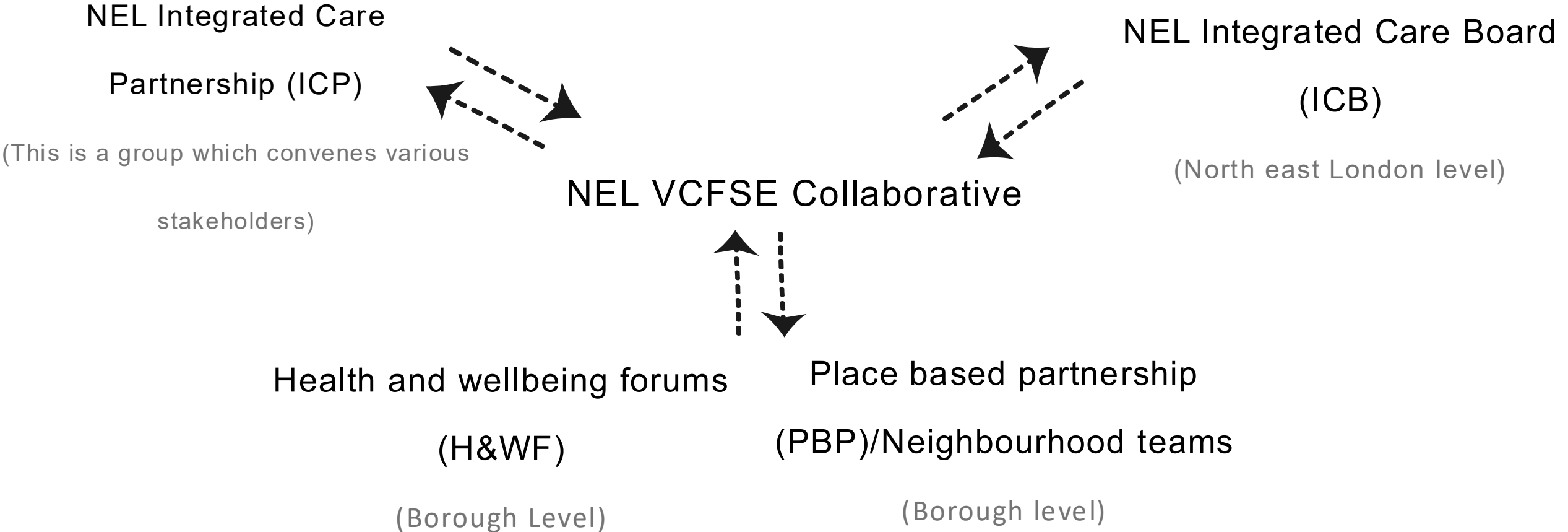
Community of Practice and training delivered by Compost London and Community Action Redbridge

Support infrastructure through peer advice, support and development to build parity across NEL



Ongoing development of representative roles and keen to hear how we support this

How do we communicate?

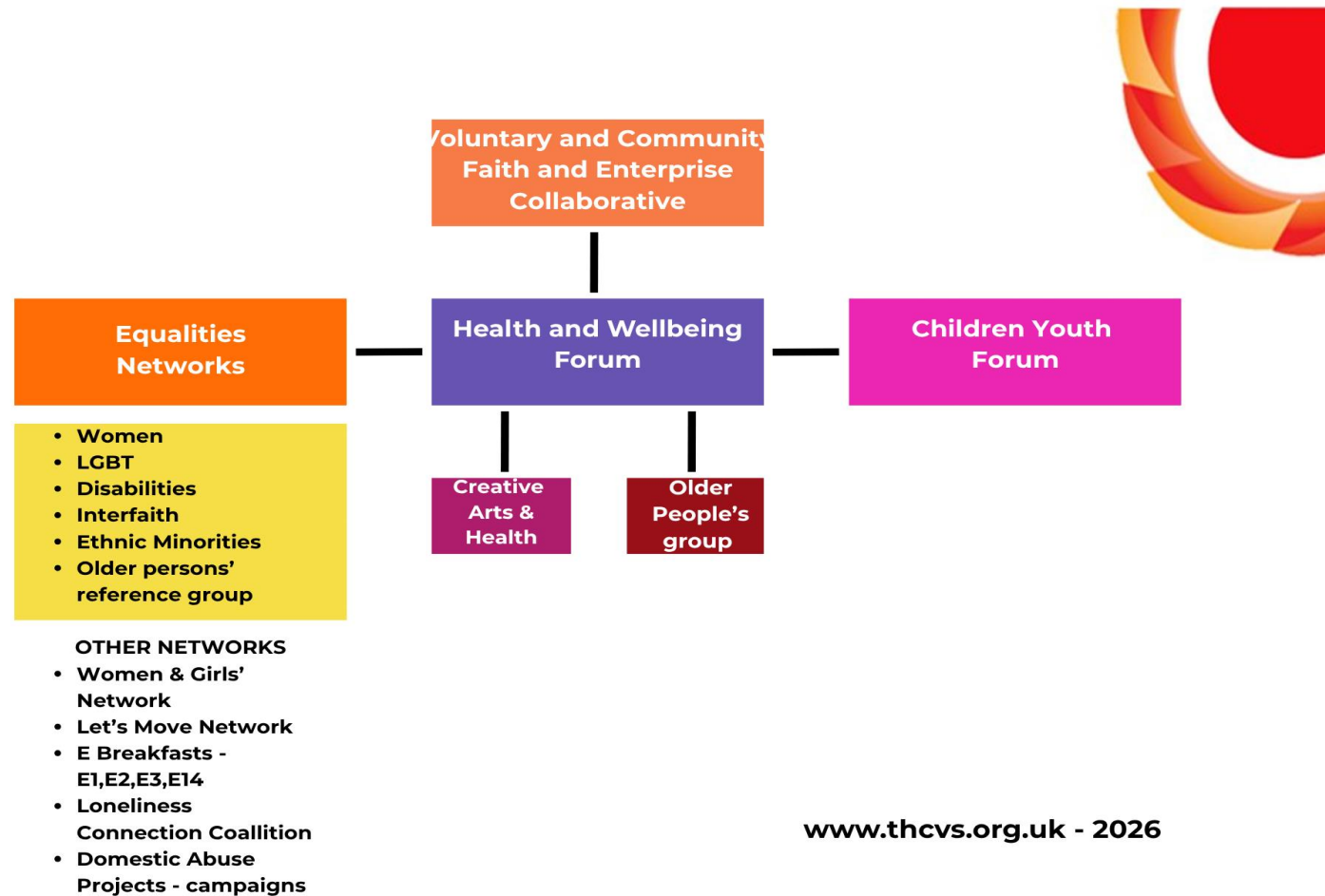


Place based representatives and thematic representatives (where appropriate) will attend H&WF and PBP, and another relevant forums

Monthly highlights report will be circulated ([subscription](#))



What's happening in Tower Hamlets?



www.thcvS.org.uk - 2026

Why strategy matters now

Strategic aim

How the VCFSE sector can move to a equal valued partner (delivery, convening and strategic insight) in neighbourhood health, prevention and system design across North East London.

System case

The strategy responds to the shift from hospital to community, analogue to digital, and sickness to prevention, aligning the sector with ICB commissioning reform and Integrated Neighbourhood Teams.

5,534

Local and regional charities
and social enterprises across
NEL

61%

Organisations operate with
annual income under £100k

Workforce

22,626 charity employees
98,247 charity volunteers
14,992 charity trustees

How the strategy was developed



Sector-led insight

Built through in person focus groups in Spring and Summer 2025, with 70 VCFSE organisations across NEL.



Discussions

Discussions covered collaboration, challenges and opportunities, sustainability, relationships, commissioning and integration.



Wider feedback

Input from ICP stakeholders including local authority representatives, Healthwatch and ICB colleagues.

Collaboration

What good partnership should feel like

Challenges

Barriers, opportunities and leadership gaps

Sustainability

Funding and support needed for delivery

Relationships

Commissioning, engagement and system integration

Seven strategic pillars

- 1 Recognition of unique strengths in prevention and health creation
- 2 Genuine power sharing, equity and co-production
- 3 New tiered commissioning model focused on prevention, health creation and social value
- 4 Investment in capacity, infrastructure and leadership
- 5 Improved data integration and digital interoperability
- 6 Shared resources and collaborative learning
- 7 Neighbourhood working and effective integration

Pillar 1

Prevention and health creation

- Invest in core VCFSE functions at place and neighbourhood level.
- Embed community-led prevention into care pathways and access routes.
- Use trusted relationships to improve uptake and reduce acute pressure.

Pillar 2

Power sharing and co-production

- Involve VCFSE from inception of service design and commissioning.
- Embed diverse VCFSE voices in governance and planning stages.
- Resource co-production so neighbourhood decisions are systematically shaped by community insight

Examples in the strategy include Volunteer Centre Hackney's Together Better model and Tower Hamlets neighbourhood forums, both showing how trusted community infrastructure can improve access, insight and pathway design.

Pillar 3

Tiered commissioning

Long-term small grants, development grants and multi-year strategic partnerships, with core cost coverage, simpler processes and social value built in.

Pillar 4

Capacity and leadership

Leadership development, shared back office support, digital capability and routine co-location in neighbourhood health settings.

Pillar 5

Data and interoperability

Shared data platforms, community intelligence, proportionate evaluation and research partnerships to evidence impact and improve outcomes.

Why this matters

These pillars address answer the core barriers: Funding instability, inaccessible processes, weak infrastructure, limited data access and uneven strategic capacity across the sector.

Operating principle

Shift from short term, transactional funding and project based funding to a sustainable partnership model with annual investment growth and evidence sharing.

Pillar 6

Shared resources and collaborative learning

Create funded learning networks, shared training offers, digital resource libraries and mentoring between larger and smaller organisations.

Example: Redbridge members hub as shared digital infrastructure.

Pillar 7

Neighbourhood working and effective integration

Place VCFSE in neighbourhood health hubs and INTs, backed by funded roles such as navigators, community health workers, peer support and welfare advice.

Example: Ocean Estate Women's Group pilot linking mental health, peer support and wider determinants.

Together these pillars turn VCFSE from a peripheral delivery option into a core neighbourhood health partner with defined roles in convening, feedback, prevention and community connection.

System response



This Strategy was endorsed by the ICB Strategic Commissioning Committee and a response was developed.

The ICB response recognises the VCFSE sector as a strategic partner in prevention, neighbourhood health, delivery engagement and tackling inequalities.

What the response commits to

- Endorsing the Strategy's seven pillars as a framework for a different relationship between the system and the VCFSE sector.
- Embedding VCFSE involvement in prevention, co-production, commissioning, data, learning and neighbourhood working.
- Developing a more detailed partner response, including a strategic-commissioning approach.
- Working with the Collaborative to develop investment in a VCFSE-led population health initiative.

System response

Strategy priority	What the ICB response offers
Prevention and health creation	VCFSE involvement in the System Prevention Group; integration into care pathways; exploration of ring-fenced neighbourhood investment
Power sharing and co-production	Continued representation in governance; VCFSE involvement in co-design, staff training and equality impact processes
Commissioning and social value	Testing a VCFSE provider/alliance model; grants alongside contracts; total-cost recovery; mapping and increasing investment
Capacity and infrastructure	Community leadership development; shared infrastructure within Integrated Neighbourhood Teams; co-location in neighbourhood health centres
Data and evaluation	Inclusion in the Population Health Management (PHM) tool rollout; commitment to the Community Insights System; data sharing agreements; VCFSE involvement in benefits realisation and evaluation
Shared learning	Access to OD, training, collaboration and communities of practice; support for peer learning and larger-to-smaller organisation support
Neighbourhood integration	VCFSE role in designing standard Integrated Neighbourhood Teams; community asset mapping; funding for organisations receiving health-service referrals

Turning commitment into a jointly owned delivery plan



Proposed next steps – what else

Develop the VCFSE-led population health initiative

Agree a priority population, neighbourhood(s), intended outcomes, funding route and evaluation approach for an early demonstrator.

Create an investment baseline and plan

Map existing investment in VCFSE organisations, including grants, contracts, infrastructure, engagement and pathway funding; identify opportunities to grow and simplify investment.

Design the neighbourhood offer

Set out how the system should work with the VCFSE, role of VCFSE in Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, including participation in decision-making, community engagement, asset mapping, referral capacity and funded coordination.

Agree measures of progress

Use a balanced scorecard covering:

- Investment reaching diverse organisations, including smaller groups.
- VCFSE influence in commissioning and neighbourhood decisions.
- Community reach, experience, equity and trust.
- Prevention and pathway outcomes.
- Organisational sustainability, capacity and collaboration.

Current programmes/upcoming engagement



End of Life Care – Faith and death literacy

Care Closer to Home (CCTH)

Tower Hamlets Neighbourhood Transformation Funding

Health Inequalities funding 27/28

Vaccination and Immunisations

Discussion



Q1) What does the sector need to build better collaboration?

Q2) How do we get prepared in meantime?

Q3) Are the existing forums in THs the space to influence?

Q4) How can we strengthen the role and value of VCFSE?

What does good look like?



Structure



Involvement



Involving smaller
organisations



Communications



What would good look like...

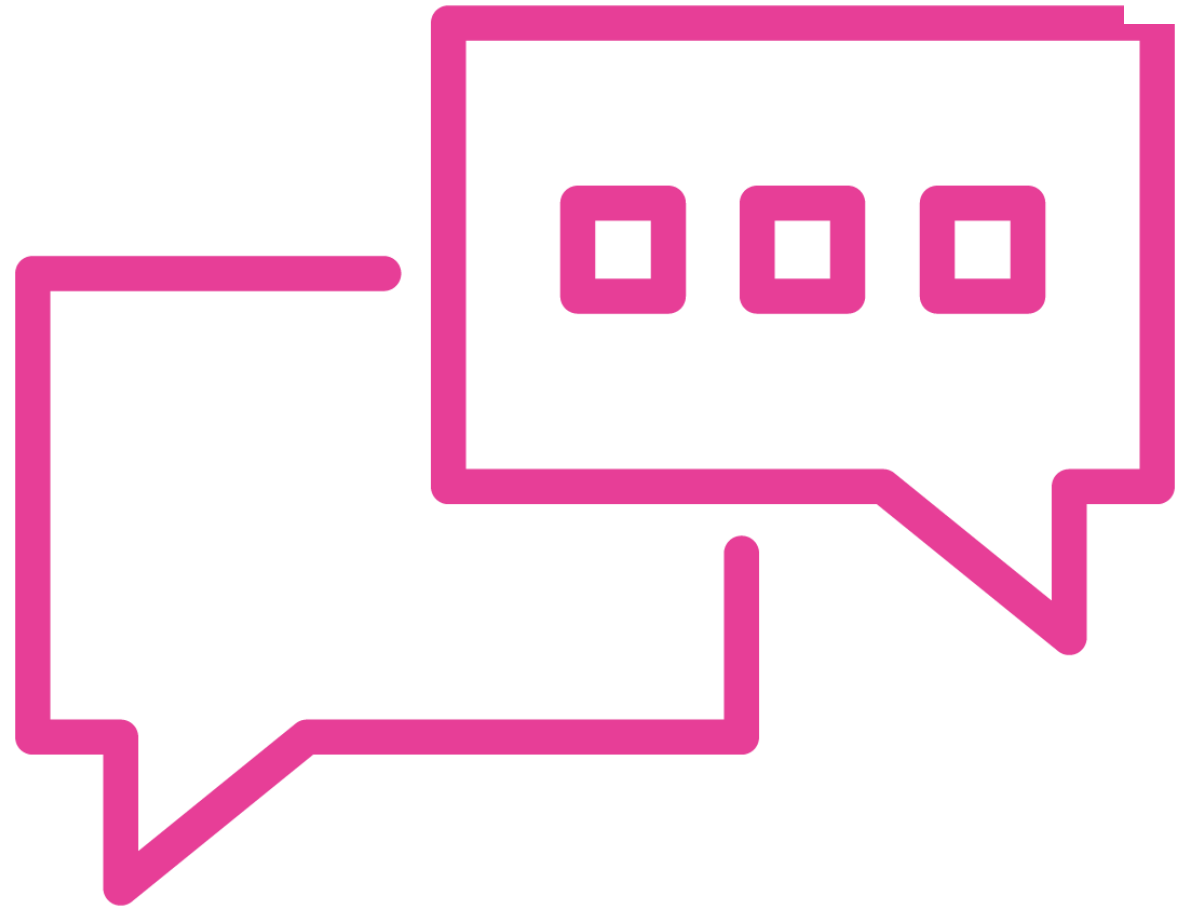
- £10,000 for winter vaccinations (Flu and Covid-19) to over 60s
- £100,000 for a proactive care model with VCFSE delivery focused on supporting frailty cohort
- £50,000 on a young people support offer
-



Next steps



Any
Questions



Discussion with GP Care Group

**How can the GP Care group work with
the VCS to strengthen funding
applications**





**Let us know
what you think**

- Agenda for future meetings
- Research opportunities
- Health and wellbeing bulletin
- Trainings and updates