NHS Devon

NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

ICB clustering update

Plymouth Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny, March 2026

Background

In March 2025, the Department of Health and Social Care announced that all integrated care boards (ICBs) were required to significantly reduce their running costs and shift to a more strategic role with some changes in responsibilities.

This required many ICBs – including NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (CIOS) and NHS Devon – to develop plans to "cluster" with other local ICBs.

'Clustering' means that, although both ICBs will continue to exist, they will work as one – with a single Board, leadership team and staffing structure, underpinned by some decisions that will continue to go through the sovereign Boards during clustering.

Every ICB in the country is required to meet new and reduced running costs of £19 allocation per head of weighted population by April 2026, in line with a new national Model ICB Blueprint.

For Devon and Cornwall, with a combined weighted population of two million, and some workforce efficiencies already delivered, the organisations' combined annual allocations will reduce from £57.8 million to £38.3 million (£19.5 million reduction or 33%).

To achieve this, both organisations will put people, patients, customers and communities at the heart of all their work, and make the most of opportunities for digital, clinical and workforce innovation in designing and commissioning new care models and services, enabling a different and more efficient way of working within a leaner workforce.

Acting Chief Executive arrangements

Libby Ryan-Davies has been appointed as NHS Devon's Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Accountable Officer (AO), effective from 1 February.

Libby will continue in the role until we appoint a Cluster CEO (interim or substantive, depending on the outcomes of recruitment that is currently underway) for NHS Devon and NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, which is expected to be from 1 April and is subject to NHS England approvals.

Together through change

Having originally joined NHS Devon in August 2024 as a Transformation Director, Libby has held the Devon Deputy CEO role since April 2025.

During her time in Devon, Libby has led on a number of high-profile projects, including leading NHS Devon's Health and Care Strategy, which set out a bold and necessary transformation to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the local health and care system.

Libby will continue to lead NHS Devon and work closely with Susan Bracefield, NHS Cornwall and Isles of Scilly's Acting CEO/AO, on our plans for 2026/27 and ensuring we close out 2025/26 as expected. Both Susan and Libby will continue in these roles until the interim/substantive Cluster CEO starts (or the new Cluster Executive structure formally rolls out).

Chief Executive recruitment

The organisations are currently in the process of recruiting a new joint chief executive. Applications closed on 1 March, with the aim to have an individual in post as soon as possible.

Staff consultations

In December 2025, NHS CIOS and NHS Devon launched two joint staff consultations on a new proposed structure. This was organised into two phases to enable a senior structure to be in place first to support the implementation of the process with wider staff:

1. Executives and senior leaders (phase one)
2. All remaining staff (phase two)

The phase one consultation closed in early January and executive selection processes took place in the late week of February. Appointments will be announced in due course. Recruitment to the remaining senior leaders in the phase one structure will take place in March.

The phase two consultation closed in February, with the feedback currently being reviewed.

The vast majority of staff employed by both organisations are affected and are being supported with information, advice and training/workshops. A voluntary redundancy (VR) scheme is also running alongside the consultation that allows colleagues to apply to leave the organisations. The majority of VR panels take place in March.

What this means for partners, patients and the public

While this is a change in structure, both organisations' focus remains firmly on the health and wellbeing of our population. Their commitment to high-quality, compassionate care for people in Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly and Devon is unchanged.

The organisations will be engaging with partners and stakeholders on ways of working once the senior leadership structure (phase one) is in place. Further information about this will be shared shortly.

Partners and stakeholders will continue to be engaged as this work progresses. The organisations' website is also updated regularly with the latest information.

ENDS