



Midlands and Lancashire
Commissioning Support Unit



Nursing and Urgent Care



MLCSU
Clinical
Nursing and Urgent Care

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Introduction

I am delighted to introduce NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit's (MLCSU's) Nursing and Urgent Care team (NUCT) – your trusted partner for specialist, independent, clinical and analytical guidance on a regional, national and international scale.

Our mission is to enhance the patient experience and outcomes by supporting your decision-making processes at strategic, tactical, and operational levels.

With a wealth of senior clinical and operational experience, our team is uniquely positioned within the NHS and broader health and care systems to serve as your independent ally. We're committed to driving improvements in your key areas – offering a critical, friendly perspective to facilitate positive change.

Our expertise extends beyond clinical care and governance. We specialise in pathway and system transformation, urgent care flow and redesign, discharge optimisation, and capacity management. We offer expert insights and solutions to address your unique challenges and enhance your system's efficacy – improving outcomes for patients.

We pride ourselves on our proven track record in enhancing urgent care pathways. We support evidence-based understanding and decision-making for a variety of providers, including new and existing integrated care providers ('place'), integrated care boards (ICBs), integrated care systems (ICSs), and NHS England (NHSE).

Plus... as part of one of England's four commissioning support units (CSUs), we have the backing of thousands of experts in areas as diverse as data, analytics, transformational change, workforce planning, finance, and communications, engagement and behavioural insight. This adds unique value to our support.

At NUCT, we transform data and insight into action. Leveraging our expertise, we develop clinically-led solutions for system-wide improvements.

Our passionate and dedicated team doesn't just provide solutions; we join you on your journey towards unparalleled patient care and system efficiency. We partner with you, work hand-in-hand, sharing your vision and commitment to delivering excellence.



Allison Cape
Deputy Director of
Nursing and Urgent Care



Our principles

Our values, fuelled by passion and commitment, lay the foundation for everything we do:

1

Enhancing patient experience – we are relentless in our mission to level up patient outcomes and enrich their experience

2

Data-driven decisions – clinical data and insights aren't just tools; they guide everything we do. We rely on them to direct all our actions and decisions

3

Of the NHS, for the NHS – we share the values of our customers and are united with you in purpose

4

Trust and collaboration – as your trusted system partner, we commit to sharing our expertise and knowledge for better decision-making that endures.

Urgent care support and escalation management



Supporting whole system partners to ensure patients receive the care they need, when they need it

With extensive experience in urgent and emergency care (UEC) co-ordination and delivery, we offer more than a data platform. Our team of clinical and operational experts support the optimisation of unplanned care across whole health and social care systems, measuring and facilitating the management of provider and system pressures and supporting all partners to ensure patients receive the care they need, when they need it.

The provision and management of system-wide solutions using real-time data and insight achieve greater quality, accuracy and evidence-based decisions for optimum escalation and improved patient flow. We provide a single version of the truth and multi-system view to drive service improvements through strategic, operational and tactical support.



Why choose us:

- ✓ Extensive clinical, analytical and escalation experience and expertise
- ✓ Provide assurance to systems and regulators
- ✓ Time and cost-effective allowing systems to maximise internal resource
- ✓ Expert business intelligence and analytic teams using bespoke tools that answer questions before you anticipate them
- ✓ Analysis of real-time data
- ✓ Human support for whole system escalation
- ✓ Closer working with system partners to implement actions
- ✓ Clinical insight to inform decision making
- ✓ Fluid models to suit local system infrastructures.

Our services:

Escalation Management System

Choose EMS+ for a streamlined, proactive, and efficient escalation management experience.

Introducing EMS+, a dynamic web-based escalation management system, honed over 20 years for the evolving needs of health and social care providers.

We work with:



This intuitive tool helps you assess and manage operational pressures, in real-time, across all your providers, ensuring an optimal balance in your system's service delivery. The result? You'll have a powerful dashboard that provides a single, whole system view of what's happening on the ground.

Our team guarantees a smooth implementation of EMS+ across all providers, offering comprehensive training and support for maximum utilisation. Our team can also help you connect real-time data feeds into EMS+, providing immediate insights into key performance metrics such as A&E department pressures, ambulance handovers, arrivals, and decision to admit (DTA) information.

This data allows informed decision-making, fosters intelligent conveyancing and efficient internal and system-wide processes.

EMS+ empowers you with a proactive approach to managing system pressures. Its unique algorithm detects and communicates service pressures via automated alerts – enabling timely anticipation and management of activity surges. The tool also provides a clear overview of pressures across multiple health systems, helping facilitate mutual aid. Plus... EMS+ generates an automatic OPEL report for the entire system, ensuring appropriate action via the automated action card functionality, accurate reporting and proactive whole-system pressure management.

EMS+ provides a comprehensive view of capacity across health and social care systems, integrated with capacity grids and care home capacity. This feature streamlines discharge processes, ensuring seamless system-wide coordination. **With EMS+, you gain control, speed, and effectiveness in your healthcare operations.** The result is improved patient care and experience.

We continuously review and update EMS+ triggers in line with NHS policy changes, ensuring the system accurately reflects provider pressures and remains future-proof. Additionally, our team assists in developing and testing multi-agency action cards annually – utilising operational and clinical insights to guarantee robust and effective planning.



System Control Centres (SCCs)

Enhance your healthcare system's efficiency with our Regional Capacity Management Team (RCMT), experienced specialists in urgent care escalation management for over 20 years.

Leveraging our comprehensive tool and strong professional relationships, we offer deep insights into the complexities faced by health and social care providers, steering effective and strategic solutions.

Our bespoke services include:



Generating tailored reports to monitor pressures and activity levels when you need them: daily, weekly, monthly and ad hoc.



Creating and testing robust multi-agency escalation management strategies for optimal control during peak periods.



Predicting weekly, seasonal, and bank holiday trends for A&E attendances and admissions to enhance acute trusts' preparedness.



Driving comprehensive winter planning and analysis, including operational, clinical, and data insights workshops, for effective succession planning.



Designing and delivering ICB director on-call training and providing 24/7 support, ensuring efficient management of out-of-hours escalation pressures.



Playing a pivotal role in critical or major incidents, working in conjunction with NHS England and ICBs.



Operating our Urgent Care Intelligence Centre (UCIC), a year-round support team analysing live A&E and ambulance activity and coordinating with urgent care providers for efficient patient flow management.

Engage with us and let's strengthen your system together, for seamless service delivery and system partner assurance.



“RCMT provides comprehensive and understandable data that clearly shows the way issues and pressures affected the Staffordshire system throughout the winter period. This data is crucial in enabling MPFT to analyse their urgent care performance in this context, facilitating pro-active discussion about the effectiveness of their winter plans and supporting organisational decision-making and strategy for plans for the following winter. Without this data, there would be no understanding of the ‘bigger picture’ in which MPFT services operate and ultimately a lack of knowledge that enables MPFT to make informed decisions to improve people's lives”.

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust



Case study: System Control Centre

Building upon our extensive experience in escalation management and rapid 'Gold Command' mobilisation in Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS in 2020, we offer a System Control Centre (SCC) delivery model tailored to your local infrastructure.

Our service ensures a unified and consistent approach to managing system demand, capacity, and risk mitigation.

Our SCC is a key support system for tactical planning and improvement, providing specialist clinical advice and swift responses to emerging challenges.

This includes identifying and addressing systemic issues impacting patient flow, such as ambulance handover delays and performance, along with clinical and operational hurdles. Furthermore, we coordinate mutual aid to encourage collaborative action.

Backed by efficient real-time data streams, including critical Emergency Department metrics, our SCC identifies themes to alleviate immediate risk and pressure while fostering robust planning and continuous improvement.

Our services are deeply rooted in operational, clinical, and data insights. Through a comprehensive suite of tools and intelligence, we partner with other SCCs to support health and social care systems in managing escalation pressures and patient flow.



"The SCC has mobilised at pace during the pandemic to provide resilience by helping to manage daily operational activities. The centre is efficient and focused on patient care and makes a positive contribution to urgent and emergency care delivery across Lancashire and South Cumbria, coordinating mutual aid and mobilising staff to focus on challenges in the system."

Regional Director, NHS England North West



Data informed insight

Our team produce and present clinically-led, data-driven UEC performance reports at site, trust and system level to help inform strategic decision making.

Developed using the Care Quality Commission (CQC) People First Framework and the national Making Data Count methodology, our reports provide valuable insight from accessible data looking beyond purely the acute care pathway.

The reports can be used for regular briefings to provider CEOs and key system stakeholders to alert them to system pressures and developing trends.

Our agile, multi-disciplinary team of clinicians and data scientists can quickly and dynamically respond to emerging issues with detailed analysis and specific recommendations.

Choose NUCT – your trusted partner in efficient, effective care delivery.



“The MLCSU Nursing and Urgent Care team provide and present clinically led and independent performance data to our local A+E Delivery Board. This supports welcome objective challenge and insight to inform our decision making for the population of Morecambe Bay.”

Deputy Chief Operating Officer, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay Foundation Trust

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Urgent care and patient flow



Right treatment, right time, right team – our approach to enhancing patient care and experience

Working alongside you, we'll bring rapid improvements to reduce length of stay and improve patient outcomes. We do this by tailoring innovative best in class solutions for your unique healthcare environment. Our expertise improves patient experience, saves costs, and accelerates patients' access to the treatment they need. Put simply – we help you to minimise the time patients stay in hospital so that care is safer and overall outcomes are much improved.

As your independent, trusted partner, we provide comprehensive diagnostic reports, facilitate staff development, and foster a collaborative work culture that's firmly rooted in data and clinical evidence. We know the challenges faced by today's NHS and the strain placed upon our healthcare colleagues.

Bringing about immediate improvements and enduring change is what drives us.

We know colleagues perform at their very best when they have the required amount of time to care; the right resources and support, and when they can see real improvements in the care being provided.

We communicate transparently, ensuring understanding and engagement from frontline teams and patient groups. Our commitment is to sustainably and appropriately reduce length of stay, remove unwarranted variation and cultivate an efficient workforce, reducing stress and optimising skill utilisation. We work hand-in-glove with your teams to maintain their commitment, passion and contribution throughout.

Leveraging our experience, we act as your confidant and enabler, driving quality improvements and better outcomes.

Let's transform healthcare together – urgently and compassionately.



“Your work provided clear and impressive improvement in our Emergency Departments performance and a significant reduction in patient overcrowding both on the days of the RESET events and for several days afterwards, which really helped us get through this winter.”

Director of Unscheduled Care, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust



Why work with us:

- ✓ Expert, registered senior clinicians with decades of combined experience
- ✓ More than a computer programme, we analyse the data and provide insight to drive improvement
- ✓ We supplement your team's experience and knowledge with our own, ensuring change and impact endures
- ✓ Always compliant with regulations, standards and good practice
- ✓ Proven to improve patient experience, outcomes and satisfaction
- ✓ A critical friend working as an independent, collaborative partner
- ✓ From the NHS, with decades of collective experience working with the NHS for the NHS
- ✓ Tailored bespoke service to meet your trust's or system's needs
- ✓ Access to bespoke analytical tools and analysis.

Our services:

Urgent Emergency Care (UEC) and Flow Improvement

This supports significant advances in performance across the full UEC pathway, including admission avoidance, ambulance handover, Urgent Treatment Centres, Emergency Departments, whole system flow and discharge – all to optimise the outcome for patients and increase efficiencies for the health and care system.

We offer expert guidance in urgent care, pathway design, capacity management, and more. Our team works alongside clinicians to understand and address your challenges.

We analyse and enhance current systems for maximum results, whether it's implementing 'red to green', 'right to reside', or complex discharge pathways.

This targeted expertise enables both organisational and system-driven improvement where it is needed most. We work in partnership to co-design solutions, including working alongside wider MLCSU partners and stakeholders to develop and deliver multi-disciplinary support.





Case study: Patient Flow Efficiency and Effectiveness

The Northern Ireland National Health Board brought in NHS MLCSU's Nursing and Urgent Care Team (NUCT) to increase patient flow efficiency in five acute and community trusts.

NUCT deployed data and analysis to devise innovative strategies that resulted in tangible improvements. They offered clinical and operational guidance, pinpointed recurring issues, and created cross-pathway solutions to system hurdles. Over three days per trust, they worked with clinical and operational teams, offering real-time information support for crucial decision-making. Senior nurses assumed coaching roles to improve patient flow in emergency departments, wards, and discharge pathways, advocating a uniform approach to demand and capacity management across hospital and community teams.

The result

The team achieved zero ambulance delays, improved handover times, and timely crew shift completions through on-site presence. They set up hospital operation centres that used data to create an actionable unified view for decision-making. By increasing early discharges and utilising discharge lounge capacity, hospital flow started three hours earlier daily, resulting in aligning capacity with demand and preventing delays. Every cooperative action led to enhanced safety and patient outcomes, demonstrating that quality care goes beyond merely meeting targets. NUCT also collaborated with trust staff, recognising the necessary culture shift for the safe and successful implementation of change. They managed out-of-hospital information flows, speeding up hospital discharges and reducing unnecessary stays.



Their contribution was excellent. Their expert, patient-focused challenge and support enabled the team to reflect on issues differently and to introduce improvements in practices and processes which remain in place today.

*Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery, AHPs and Patient Experience/
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust*

Targeted Reduction in Length of Stay (LoS) programme

Our programme harnesses data and clinical insights to pinpoint and rectify **unwarranted variation** in length of stay – thereby enhancing patient outcomes, optimising efficiencies, and ensuring maximum utilisation of every resource.

Our expert team interrogates condition-specific data – understanding current patient flows and benchmarks these against comparative measures and best practices. Using this data, coupled with **taylor-made analytical tools**, hands-on expertise and process mapping, they can identify key lines of enquiry and opportunities for incremental gains.

Using these insights, our team initiates open, **clinician-to-clinician discussions** to devise and agree upon actions for driving and anchoring sustainable changes in pathways and processes – working with operational partners to implement and embed. They assess areas of the highest success and execute initiatives with the most substantial impact.

Our extensive experience imparts the assurance you need to ensure recommendations are implemented in the **safest manner for patients while also supporting and empowering staff**. This can be achieved by facilitating safety and executive summits to review findings and implementations. We can develop a peer-review structure to perpetuate the co-design of solutions.



Workforce productivity and sustainability

Working smarter not harder: solutions to meet the workforce challenges

The NHS England UEC Recovery Plan encourages organisations to identify sustainable workforce models. In response to this, our workforce review evaluates the current team skills alongside the potential of digital technology to enhance patient care.

Our expert clinical team collaborates closely with providers and systems to gain an in-depth understanding of their existing workforce models, patient experiences, and the balance of demand and capacity. Our aim is to pinpoint solutions that address the escalating demands on urgent care.

Rooted in data, our comprehensive review is conducted by a registered clinical team, well-versed in the complexities of a UEC environment. We consider the environment holistically, with the recognition of potential risks of intervention central to our approach. We also consider the impact of an active clinical environment on care delivery.

We believe that our workforce is our most valuable resource, so it is paramount to provide them with the right support. This involves optimising the use of their skills and assisting them in making the best decisions. When we discuss productivity, our emphasis is not on increasing workload, but on helping our teams maximise resource.

We deliver two offers that are tailored to specific needs:

1. Refocus and review in the post-COVID-19 workplace

The COVID-19 pandemic had profound effects on all facets of health and care systems, particularly within UEC environments. It spurred some temporary changes, but many have now become standard practice.

Our system productivity review focuses on these transformations. We examine provider data from clinical reporting systems, comparing post-pandemic productivity with the 2019/20 benchmark to gain a comprehensive understanding of the shifts.

Our team expertly analyses this data, collaborating with the department to pinpoint opportunities for enhancing productivity. This process allows us to tailor solutions that build upon the lessons of the pandemic, driving forward with more efficient, robust healthcare services.

2. Making sure the workforce meets the demand

After conducting a comprehensive review of activity within the UEC environment, our expert team gains a deep understanding of the skillsets necessary to optimise patient outcomes.

We explore opportunities for new roles, diverse skill mixes, and the implementation of digital innovation. Our approach aims to tailor urgent care delivery based on current population needs – transcending the constraints of traditional workforce models.

This forward-thinking strategy ensures we are always prepared to offer the highest standard of care in an ever-evolving healthcare landscape.



Optimising discharge

Let our team of seasoned clinical and operational experts guide you in creating and applying sustainable discharge models. We're all about helping achieve the best results for your patients and services.

We start with a discovery phase, closely reviewing your existing care pathways. This deep-dive analysis of demand and capacity allows us to identify areas for change and put them into action. Our approach is a mix of data, specialist insight, and teamwork, supporting you from admission through to, and beyond acute discharge.

This investigation sets the stage for our improvement plan. We prioritise actions with the highest impact, while promoting new, sustainable work methods that ensure better patient outcomes, boost independence, and deliver care exactly when and where it's needed.

We pride ourselves in offering personalised support tailored to your system's unique needs.

Using insights gained from the investigative phase, we design high-impact interventions that benefit your patients and boost system effectiveness.

We're here to:

- ✓ Offer assistance for immediate discharges, apply small changes for big gains, and instill primary drivers for improvement.
- ✓ Develop a blueprint that paints a picture of your future care models, spanning bed-based, home-based, community, and acute hospital pathways.
- ✓ Coach, empower, and facilitate to nurture and establish all new work methods.

Let us help you on this journey to optimising your discharge process.

Contact details

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Clinical quality and safety



We have the experience and scale to act as your partner in delivering excellence

Leveraging recent clinical, peer review, and CQC experience, our clinicians are uniquely positioned to enhance both NHS and wider health and care system delivery. We collaborate closely with your teams, ensuring that services align with established standards, promote best practice, and enhance patient satisfaction and outcomes.

We offer bespoke solutions, fostering local ownership and sustainability through hands-on coaching and mentoring. Our goal is to facilitate positive, lasting change in healthcare, boosting both service quality and patient satisfaction.

Let's journey together to create exceptional clinical care.



Why work with us:

- ✓ Registered senior clinicians with vast experience in embedding effective clinical leadership
- ✓ Experienced in coaching and mentoring clinical and support teams
- ✓ Vast experience working with the CQC and regulatory bodies
- ✓ Proven record in being cost and time effective
- ✓ Always compliant with regulations, standards and good practice
- ✓ Quality improvement approaches with measurable results in patient outcomes and satisfaction
- ✓ Ability to provide customised solutions to address your specific needs
- ✓ Work collaboratively with system-wide partners and local teams.

CQC Readiness Programme

CQC Readiness – your resource for advancing quality, sustainability, and best practices.

Discover structured support and guidance with our CQC readiness programme. Leveraging our team's significant clinical and operational experience within the NHS, we work alongside and on-the-ground with your team to prepare for CQC inspections.

Our role is not that of an inspection regulator but as collaborative partners, helping build necessary skills and instill processes compliant with current standards. We stand beside your clinical teams, empowering them to highlight the vital work they do.

We meticulously design our programmes to drive improvements and implement national guidance and best practices – thereby enhancing the quality of care and patient satisfaction.

Our CQC Readiness Programme offerings include:

- ✓ Assisting with a comprehensive self-assessment to gauge your adherence to CQC standards and identify areas requiring enhancement.
- ✓ Evaluating your organisation's policies and procedures to ensure they are up-to-date, thorough, and conforming to CQC regulations.
- ✓ Simulating an inspection process to identify areas of improvement, and acclimating staff to the procedure and expectations.
- ✓ Offering in-depth training and education on CQC standards, regulations, and inspection processes, helping your team comprehend compliance requirements.
- ✓ Constructing detailed action plans for areas not compliant with CQC standards, and providing support during their implementation.
- ✓ Ensuring consistent support for the initiation and ongoing management of quality improvement projects aligned with CQC standards.
- ✓ Guiding your team in developing leadership and management competencies, emphasising the creation of a culture focused on learning and awareness.
- ✓ Providing support in implementing and sustaining efficient frameworks that ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance within your organisation.

Peer Review programme

Our team has amassed significant experience in developing, facilitating, and delivering peer review programmes that amplify the voices of patients, carers, and professionals – all while ensuring compliance with relevant standards and regulatory frameworks.

We meticulously design our programmes to drive improvements and implement national guidance and best practices – thereby enhancing the quality of care and patient satisfaction.

Our offerings centre on how organisations and systems can:

- ✓ propel improvements in quality, safety, and outcomes across reviewed services
- ✓ build organisational confidence and competence in clinical quality
- ✓ facilitate benchmarking, the sharing of best practices, and collective learning
- ✓ equip organisations with superior information about the quality of their services
- ✓ empower patients by amplifying their voices.

Our reviews adopt a developmental approach, primarily empowering clinical and professional staff to elevate the quality of services. This process is not an inspection or performance management tool, but an evidence-based strategy effective in improving the quality of NHS care and providing quality assurance.



Our peer review programmes encompass:

- ✓ spearheading the preparation and planning for the programme on a system, regional, or national scale
- ✓ recruitment and training of all multidisciplinary team members, including users and carers – instilling confidence to conduct effective reviews
- ✓ analysing evidence and identifying key lines of enquiry
- ✓ providing support for clinical audits where required
- ✓ coaching and mentoring to empower both reviewers and participants
- ✓ delivering visit reports that are collaborative and objectively written to the highest standard – enabling services to implement improvements and support their quality agenda
- ✓ making recommendations to enhance service delivery, boost patient satisfaction, and improve quality
- ✓ offering follow-up support where required to embed best practice and provide professional assurance.



“You made what is a usually tedious and stressful event a pleasure to be a part. You made me

feel very welcomed and supported throughout each visit and always ensured the patient experiences and perspectives were adequately addressed and recorded during each of the visits. I valued the time you took to speak to me about any of the concerns I raised post visits.”

*Patient representative UK
Thalassaemia Society*

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