

# Our nursing and midwifery strategy 2024 - 2027

Skilled, kind and proud



# Foreword

I am enormously proud of all your contributions. The commitment and care provided by our nurses, midwives, nursing associates, healthcare support workers and maternity support workers makes a huge difference to people's lives every day.

With the engagement of our workforce, this strategy has been developed to take us forwards, building on all that we have achieved in the last few years. It builds on our strengths and lays out our shared aspirations for the future.

It sets out the vision for the nursing and midwifery workforce and outlines how we will continue to contribute to the Trust's overall vision of 'Exceptional people, outstanding care.'

Whilst developing this strategy, our teams have identified a number of themes which will support our nursing and midwifery staff to be 'skilled, kind and proud'. This will be our framework for delivery.

Increasing demands on the NHS have created the need for strong leadership, innovation and resilience. This strategy and the associated ambitions aim to empower our nursing and midwifery professions to ensure there is a strong professional voice in the Trust, alongside a well-developed culture of professional accountability that delivers excellent care to patients and families.

To deliver this ambitious strategy, we will ensure our workforce are given the right tools to consistently be '**skilled, kind and proud**', supporting us to provide outstanding care for our patients.

## Skilled

We will maintain and develop our professional competencies to deliver safe, skilled and effective care.

## Kind

We will be kind and compassionate to the patients and families we care for and be kinder to our colleagues and each other.

## Proud

We will be proud of our professional voice and be empowered to speak with authority on matters that affect our patients and our professions.

Whatever your role in our nursing and midwifery workforce, this is **your strategy**.



**Jo Haworth** Chief Nurse

In writing this strategy, \*when we refer to nursing, midwifery workforce or team we are including nursing associates, maternity support workers and healthcare support workers.

\*When we use the term 'patients', we are including all service users.

# Who we are

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust provides a full range of general hospital services, alongside some specialist complex care to around 760,000 people living in West Kent and parts of East Sussex.

It also provides specialist care to a wider population including specialist cancer services to around 1.9 million people in Kent, Medway and East Sussex.

We are honoured to have a diverse workforce with a broad wealth of experience and working with the wider multi-disciplinary team, the Trust would not function without the contributions you make.

The commitment, dedication and resilience you demonstrate in response to the needs of our communities is truly valued.

Our nursing and midwifery workforce make up the largest part of our total workforce with a vast scope of practice, and have a significant impact on patient outcomes and experience.

## Our nursing and midwifery team in numbers:



Correct as of 1 November 2023.

These numbers are a snapshot of our team and not a full dataset. In line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the People and Culture Strategy we will create an environment where our staff can develop, thrive and bring their whole selves to work.

# What it means to be part of the nursing and midwifery workforce

**As part of the nursing and midwifery workforce at MTW our expectations are:**

- We act in accordance with the NMC code of professional practice\***
- We are committed to delivering outstanding care through high standards of professional practice, trust and compassion**
- We are patient-centred ensuring a personalised and shared approach to care, listening to patients and their families and involving and empowering them in decisions about their care**
- We practise effectively, safely and safeguard against harm**
- We are patient-focused and person-centred ensuring our part in reducing health inequalities, promoting health and preventing illness**
- We seek feedback for continuous quality improvements**
- That you are accountable to others as professionals representing the organisation and working in accordance with Trust values**

\*The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates; Nursing and midwifery council.

## **Our commitments are:**

- You will be supported with your personal development. We want everyone to reach their full potential
- We will embed a psychologically safe culture where staff feel safe to speak out and feel that their voices are heard
- You will be supported with your health and wellbeing
- You will experience an equitable and inclusive culture
- We will empower you to continuously improve the care we provide
- We will continuously improve practice through research and audit



## Introduction and context

To deliver our clinical strategy, service developments and a sustainable workforce built for the future, we need to transform our nursing and midwifery workforce. We'll do this by continuing to introduce new and advanced roles, a strong pathway of succession through apprenticeship routes to practice and adopting new ways of working, including the use of advanced technology (such as patient apps and artificial intelligence).

Through clear leadership and a passion for excellence in professional practice, we will continue to improve service delivery, and deliver high-quality, safe care, meeting the changing needs of the communities we serve.

The commitment and investment to get the right combination of numbers and skills of nurses and midwives across services has been recognised and this will continue through increasing student placement capacity, ongoing workforce planning and a focus on retention. There will be ongoing support and investment in professional standards, valuing all roles and responsibilities in the wider workforce.

We are already delivering successful nurse-led clinics which is a clear strength, as well as presenting further opportunity to play a vital role in the future care of our patients. Within the nursing and midwifery workforce there are established roles in research and education which promotes advancement in clinical practice and influential roles for nurse and midwifery leaders across all disciplines.

In the lifecycle of this strategy, we will be working as a system, with pathways of care crossing organisational boundaries. This provides an opportunity for staff development and shared posts with our partners. As a major employer in the system (an anchor organisation), we will strengthen the pipeline of local recruitment and offer development posts to our local communities.

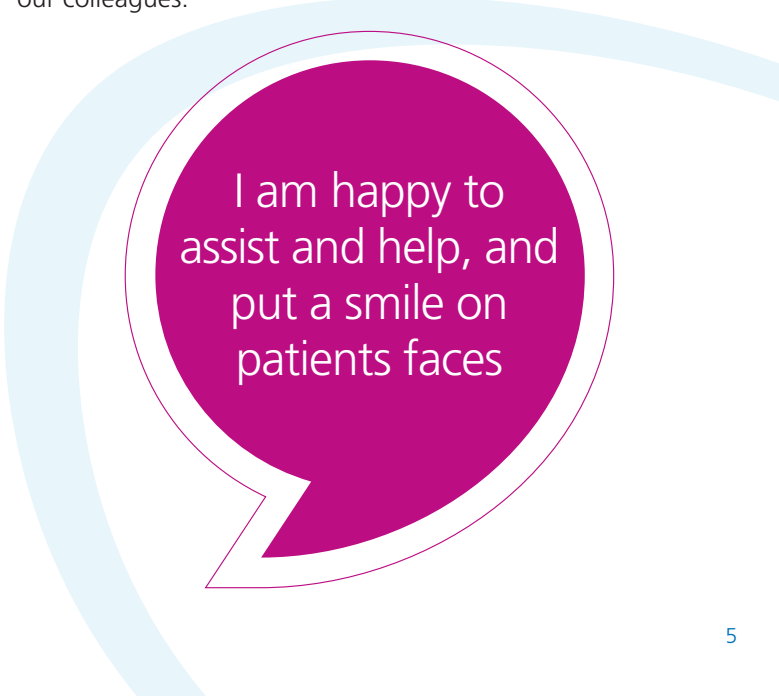
Our patients are presenting with increasing comorbidities and complexity, including both mental and physical health needs. We need to respond to ensure that our staff are confident and competent to meet these needs.

With the ambition to develop an academy of professional practice, we will offer more education and training internally and design competency frameworks that cover generic roles and specialised posts.

Our new nursing and midwifery strategy places importance on research and development, continuous improvement, digital literacy and innovation in practice, while continuing to champion the fundamentals of nursing and midwifery practice - including emotional care and acts of kindness that support our patient's recovery and wellbeing.

With your help we've created a strategy that identifies key areas of focus and improvement, that build on our current strengths and develops our people to ensure we provide the best care to patients.

Thank you to everyone involved and for your ongoing dedication to our patients, their families and our colleagues.



I am happy to assist and help, and put a smile on patients faces

## How this strategy aligns

The ambitions within this strategy are underpinned by our values and will support the delivery of the Trust vision and strategic themes. It interconnects with and supports other strategies as shown below:



This strategy is supported by the nursing and midwifery workforce plan, which details the deliverables to secure a healthy pipeline of new recruits and succession plans.

The workforce plan outlines how roles can be adapted to ensure people are working to their maximum potential within their scope of professional practice. This links to the medical workforce strategy and clinical strategy which recognise the valuable contribution of nursing and midwifery advanced roles in the future of healthcare.

We will work with the divisional triumvirates to align development priorities with service developments.

Our strategy is also aligned with current and emerging national strategies from the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) and Chief Midwifery Officer for England, and our local workforce plan is consistent with the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan, which sets out our detailed plan to train, retain and reform.







# A culture of compassionate and safe care

With increasing demands on health and social care, alongside our patient needs and expectations, demonstrating compassion is more important than ever.

MTW strives to be an organisation from which our patients know they can expect high quality care and compassion, and one that our people are proud to be part of. Key to this is a culture of respect and inclusion.

To enable our people to provide compassionate, safe care, we must focus on creating a supportive environment that empowers our nursing and midwifery staff to consistently deliver in a person-centred way. We will do this with a culture of coaching, time for structured learning, and mindful and reflective practice.

By valuing diversity, experience and talent, we will ensure that the right capacity and capability is present for every shift. This will allow us to consistently deliver person-centred care by a team who are skilled, kind and proud.

All of our people are leaders in their own way, and take responsibility for ensuring that practice is safe and current. This involves 'looking up and out' by learning from others both inside and outside of the organisation, which will inform and improve professional standards of practice.

We will strive to embed a culture of psychological safety where staff feel safe to speak out and share their ideas for improvement. Engagement with our workforce is vital to ensure staff feel safe, listened to and are enabled to make improvements to care and their own work environments.

Through the development of a nursing and midwifery shared governance model, we will strengthen the professional voice in the care provided, enabling shared decision making between HCSWs, nurses, midwives and leaders. There will be an increased presence of nursing and midwifery leadership to observe practice, consider nurse and midwife sensitive indications (hard and soft data) and monitor patient experience and excellence in nursing and midwifery professional practice. We will develop a balance of widely recognised indicators, things that matter to patients and things that matter to staff.

All of our people are leaders in their own way, and take responsibility for ensuring that practice is safe and current.



# Working together, we are **skilled, kind** and **proud**



## **Skilled**

We maintain and develop our professional competencies to deliver safe, skilled and effective care



## **Kind**

We are kind and compassionate to the patients and families we care for and we are kind to each other



## **Proud**

We are proud of our professional voice and speak with authority on matters that affect our patients and professions

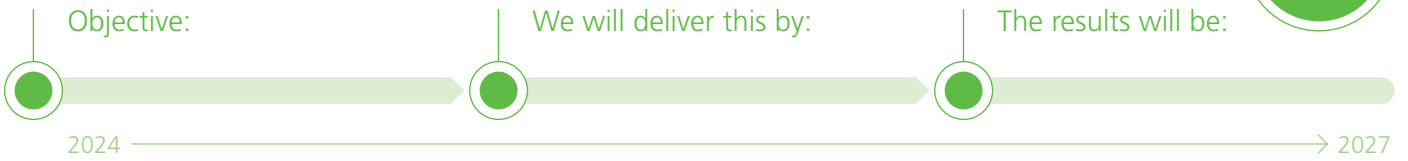
# The strategic aims and priorities you identified for the next three years are:



The actions and developments for each objective are detailed on the following pages. They are not independent of one another, and key activities will drive improvements across several themes.

The strategy will be implemented through annual delivery plans, and timelines will be informed by our strategic foundations, alongside the clinical strategy, people and culture strategy and professional priorities.





## Strategic theme 1: Enable a diverse, skilled, sustainable nursing and midwifery workforce

- Informed by the clinical strategy and models of care, we will deliver the workforce plan and adopt a strategic approach to workforce design along pathways of care to ensure a safe and productive skill mix

- Introducing advanced roles and new roles
- Aligning with the medical workforce plan to increase the number of advanced clinical practitioners, including consultant practitioners
- Reviewing the future pipeline and increasing the number of apprenticeships and student placements
- Working with schools and colleges in our areas
- Clarifying roles to ensure maximum time to care and a person-centred experience

- MTW is an employer of choice
- Strong pipeline of nurses, midwives and advanced clinical roles
- Improved patient experience
- Safe staffing levels maintained
- 10% of traditional medical roles filled with non-medical alternatives
- Improved staff retention
- Improved Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) data in nursing and midwifery
- A workforce that is responding to local health needs

- We will deliver an inclusive approach to talent management including clear career pathways for all

- Introducing a professional practice framework of competencies from preceptorship, through to generic roles, specialist and advanced roles (with a new competency passport)
- Introducing individual career conversations for all of the nursing and midwifery workforce
- Developing a Chief Nurse fellowship offering rotational programmes for aspiring senior leaders.
- Ensuring all staff have educational opportunities to support them in practice
- Strengthening the current process of learning needs analysis.
- Investing in the infrastructure for learning including practice development nurses
- Delivering interview training and support for individuals in the recruitment process

- More diverse and representative workforce
- Inclusive values-based recruitment and talent management practices
- Trained nurses and midwives to deliver the service developments in the clinical strategy
- Improved student experience
- Increased numbers of staff with qualification in speciality or similar



- Launch an academy of professional practice with partners, providing accredited programmes and courses for internal staff as well as develop commercial opportunities in partnership with others

- Increasing number of accredited courses we offer internally (balance of on-the-job and university learning)
- Develop new partnerships with regional universities
- Working across the Trust to develop multi-disciplinary learning and embedding our organisational culture
- Focusing on profession's equality of opportunity

Objective:

We will deliver this by:

The results will be:

2024

→ 2027

- Strengthen the enhanced care team support for patients with mental health and learning disabilities

- Designing and delivering a skills development programme to equip staff with the confidence and competence to support this patient cohort
- Developing a head of mental health

- Improved patient experience for people presenting with mental health and learning disabilities

**Strategic theme 2: Deliver excellence and innovation in professional practice through education and professional development**

- Increased level of nursing and midwifery research across inpatient and community

- Increase the awareness and accessibility of research, including training on research methodology
- Creating a research forum to recognise good practice and build an evidence base
- Developing a journal club to support staff with an interest in research
- Exploring opportunities to develop clinical academic posts
- Developing a framework to support staff to publish papers in journals, at conferences etc.
- Working with the Quality Improvement (QI) team to implement key findings and high-impact outcomes

- Improved performance and outcomes
- High-quality care
- An organisation that is always learning
- A dashboard that demonstrates nurse and midwife sensitive indicators
- Improved reputation as a high-quality and, research-focused organisation
- Shared governance will improve quality of care and experience and reduce risk
- Patient-centred care

- Review of best practice and learning from others through QI and Innovation

- Reviewing the use of technology in practice including artificial intelligence and patient apps
- Developing digital literacy and data analysis competencies
- Embedding data quality principles to enable change

- Focus on consistent quality of nursing care fundamentals and standards, such as infection prevention control

- Introducing a ward accreditation programme
- Running bite-size masterclasses of learning and education for basic nursing care
- Core competencies refined to include Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) code and skilled, kind and proud principles
- Align clinical educators to drive high impact action for improvements and culture change

- Introduce a shared governance model for the nursing and midwifery workforce

- Developing a dashboard of nurse and midwife sensitive indicators
- Involving staff at the bedside in shared decision making about the care of the patient and improvement initiatives by building on 'patient first'
- Using the professional voice to advise on standards and experiences





Objective:

We will deliver this by:

The results will be:

2024

→ 2027

**Strategic theme 4: Embed Trust values and behaviours that foster psychological safety and kindness to one another**

- Strengthen collaboration across multidisciplinary teams (MDT) with new and extended roles

- Multi disciplinary learning and reflective practice
- Multi disciplinary decision making, huddles, handover and audit
- Sharing understanding of roles and responsibilities through team sessions
- Working with Medical Education to support multi-professional learning from novice to expert

- Collaboration and respect across MDT
- Increased focus on health and wellbeing, improving staff experience
- Improved retention
- A just culture
- Safe to speak out
- Learning culture
- Psychological safety

- Schedule a plan of staff listening and engagement events

- Building on existing listening forums, to ensure all voices are heard
- Specific target groups and forums to understand and improve experiences and monitor safety

- Strengthen the support framework for the nursing and midwifery workforce

- Working with People and OD colleagues to develop a structured approach to staff support using debrief tools and restorative and group supervision
- Developing a plan to ensure sufficient mentorship opportunities are available
- Strengthening the number of safe space champions in the workforce.
- Increasing the numbers of trained Professional Midwifery Advocates and Professional Nurse Advocates by 2025
- Encouraging attendance at Schwartz rounds
- Ongoing accessible wellbeing activities



- Focus on inclusivity and respect of difference

- Cultural awareness training
- Listening to the experiences of IENs and IEMs (and other staff network groups)
- Embedding an IEN and IEM council



## Strategic theme 5: Celebrate the professions through accessible knowledge sharing and engagement

- Take a structured approach to sharing stories and successes, helping us all to develop and learn
- Holding an annual conference for the nursing and midwifery team
- Hosting an annual graduation event to celebrate all the successes of our workforce
- Developing a nursing app and intranet hub to share stories, successes and drive key educational messages and current topics of focus and priority
- Encouraging access to external learning and networks (e.g. membership to the Florence Nightingale Foundation)
- Developing an online welcome handbook for nursing and midwifery staff
- Holding nursing and midwifery grand rounds
- Celebrating our workforce by submitting entries to national awards e.g Nursing Times, HSJ
- Supporting staff to present at national and international conferences
- Increased professional pride and profile
- Empowered collective leadership culture
- Improved engagement scores, i.e. staff survey
- Sense of belonging
- Improved retention and lower vacancy rates
- Shared clinical decision making
- Reduction in HR cases relating to the Nursing and Midwifery Code

## Strategic theme 6: Promote excellence in nursing and midwifery leadership and be a respected professional voice

- External awards and publications
- Internal awards within the organisation
- Embedding collective leadership principles where individuals take accountability for their roles and deliverables
- Promoting professional standards through role-modelling and visible leadership, both in and outside the Trust
- Strengthening professional understanding of the Nursing and Midwifery Code
- Increasing professional accountability
- Sharing stories from the front line, to be shared at board to empower nurse leaders to drive cultural improvements
- Development of specific nursing and midwifery forums (e.g. IENs and IEMs)
- Recognising our staff experiences, their motivations for work and individual needs for flexibility
- Ensuring all nursing and midwifery leaders are able to complete Exceptional Leaders training, or similar programmes
- Improving the uptake of external grants to improve practice





# Delivering and monitoring success

The success of this strategy will be measured on its delivery. It will be implemented through a detailed annual plan for each strategic theme, with a named lead responsible for delivery.

Progress will be reported through the Nursing, Midwifery AHP and Pharmacy Board, where we will hold ourselves to account, reporting onwards to the Trust executive team and People and Organisational Development Committee.

We will keep the conversations going to ensure that the priority areas of focus remain current, impactful and meaningful for patients, families and our people.

With your help we've created a strategy that identifies key areas of focus and improvement, and that empowers our people. Thank you to everyone involved and for your ongoing dedication to our patients, their families and our colleagues.

## Who was involved in this strategy

*Senior nursing and midwifery leaders*

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*The Nursing and Midwifery, Allied Health Professionals and Pharmacy Board*

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*The Nursing and midwifery workforce, through seven focus group discussions*

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*Survey responses*

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*Chiefs of service*

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*Executive and non-executive director input*

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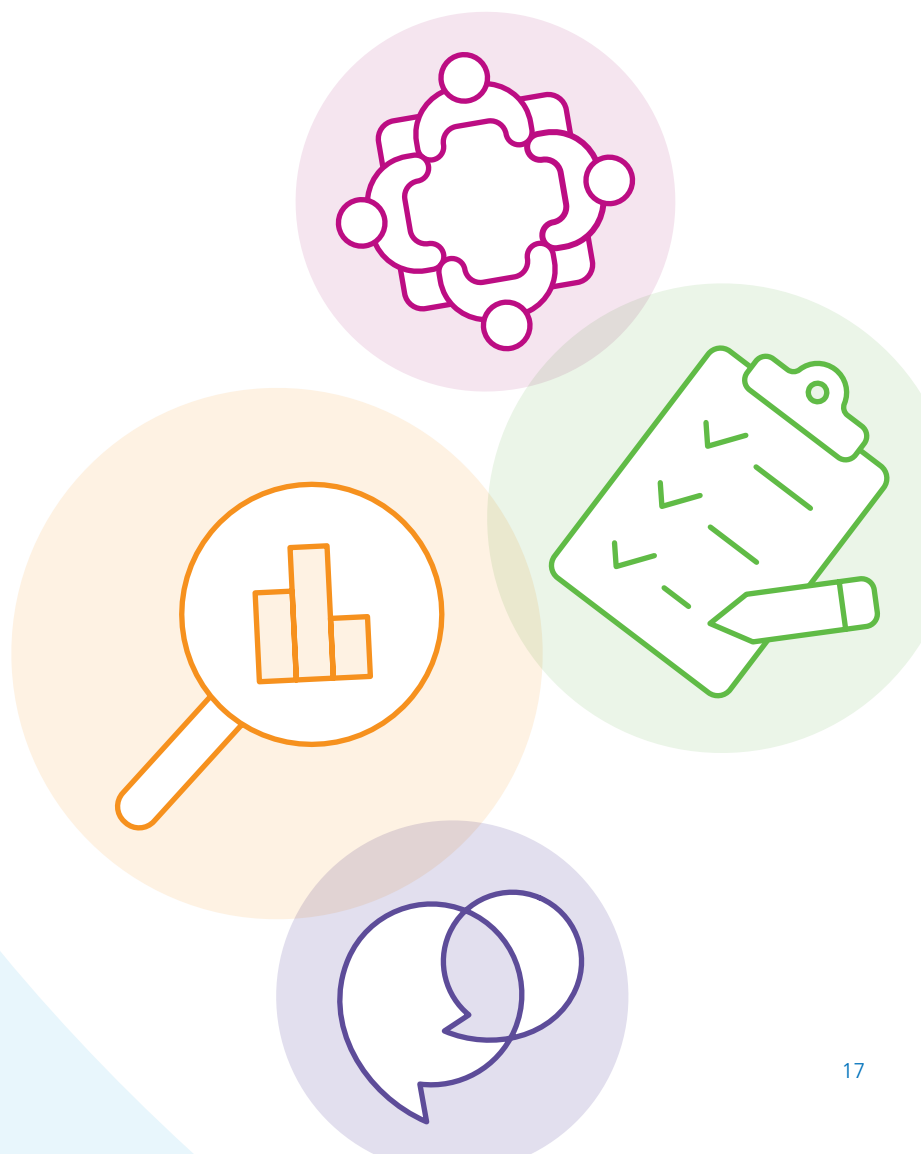
*Review of patient experience and family and friends' data*

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*Patient representatives*

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*EDI network*



## Quotes from our nursing and midwifery teams

Working together with an amazing team

A supportive environment which has allowed me to continue studying – the trust has been flexible with my working hours to allow me to do this

Compassionate and understanding everyday on the ward is an enjoyable experience and drives me forward

The Trust is supportive especially the education side of things. As an internationally recruited member of staff I have been well supported, this generates a positive attitude and I enjoy my role

Never a dull moment

Good environment to work in, organised and clean

Good health and wellbeing support for staff

Team work is dream work





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