

# Activity and impact: Integrating movement into Greater Manchester's health systems



2024/25



## > Introduction

**Everyone in Greater Manchester should have the opportunity to live well.** It is a primary focus across the city region to improve the health of our people and our communities.

We all want Greater Manchester to be a thriving city region where everyone can live a good life by creating the right conditions for everyone to live happier, healthier lives.

**Movement and physical activity are core to our health and wellbeing.** We cannot improve our health without moving more. It helps protect us from the biggest killers like cancer and heart disease and supports the management of numerous long-term health conditions.

Physical activity should be front and centre but all too often it's missing. It has been designed out of life, and Greater Manchester Moving are determined to design it back in.

Movement and physical activity are also fundamental to [GM Live Well](#), Greater Manchester's commitment to everyday support in every neighbourhood. Moving more is vital to neighbourhood prevention approaches that reduce health, social, and economic inequalities in our communities.

**GM Moving in Action is an ambitious plan to support active lives for all.** There are thousands of people and organisations who are playing their part, including GM Moving, NHS GM, GMCA, 10GM, TfGM, GM Active and many others. All of them are leading and supporting [GM Moving in Action](#) across the city region.

Across our city region, Greater Manchester Moving play a strategic leadership role in support of GM Moving in Action, Greater Manchester's whole-system strategy for physical activity. **We lead, support, and connect.** We work with people and partners across the system to develop and deliver on the whole-system vision and approach outlined in GM Moving in Action.

Nationally, we are one of 42 Active Partnerships. Together, we work to create the conditions for an active nation. We work closely and collaboratively with Sport England and other health sector partners nationally, to support the local implementation of the Uniting the Movement Strategy.

Closer to home, **GM Moving and GM Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) work closely together.** We're ensuring that movement, physical activity, and sport are core to supporting better individual and collective physical and mental wellbeing. NHS Greater Manchester is a vital partner, and member of The GM Moving Partnership Board which works on behalf of the whole system, to shape and steer GM Moving in Action.

GM Moving work at every level of GM's health system, supported by funding from NHS GM, to ensure that everyone in GM's health and social care system workforce can design movement and physical activity into their lives and their work.

Increased levels of physical activity will contribute to good health and improved health outcomes which, in turn, drives down demand for health services.

**This report details some of GM Moving's biggest successes in 2024/25.** It represents the first of a three-year funding agreement with NHS GM. Whilst our focus here is on the work of the GM Moving team, it's important to note that everything we do is in collaboration with partners across every place and every part of the system. Equally, there is a volume of work across our team, partners, and communities that isn't captured in this report.

Our thanks go to all those partners, localities, healthcare workers, and others who have supported our efforts to deliver the GM Moving in Action and ICP strategies over the past 12 months. We look forward to many more years working together.

## > How we're working

This report is split into five key sections. These sections have been used to reflect the NHS England 'four ways forward' and guide readers through our key achievements, and with awareness that work streams and priorities could be covered in multiple sections.

For example, mental wellbeing as a priority would be covered in both the prevention and walking, wheeling and cycling sections, while physical activity may also appear in mental health pathways. Both require system change.

Section	Priorities covered	Connections
1. <b>Prevention and health creation.</b> A prevention-powered NHS needs movement at its centre. We work with partners across the sector because people who move more will need the NHS less.	Deconditioning and Falls Prevention Women's Health Mental Wellbeing	We work to create health and prevent ill health to reduce demand on our health services.
2. <b>Active Environments &amp; Walking, Wheeling and Cycling.</b> The creation and development of active environments where people are free to walk, wheel, and cycle will boost physical activity levels.	Mental Wellbeing Healthy Active Places	One way to support this is with healthy, active places which enable active travel, and an active healthy workforce.
3. <b>Workforce.</b> An active workforce is more productive and takes less time off sick. We work with NHS staff in all areas to build movement into their day.	Health and Care Workforce Wellbeing	When residents need the health service, we want happy, active staff to use physical activity within the clinical pathway they use.
4. <b>Clinical Pathways.</b> When people are diagnosed with health conditions, physical activity supports their management, making it a vital part of our clinical pathways in Greater Manchester.	While You Wait Mental Health Clinical pathways (Respiratory, CVD and Cancer)	
5. <b>System Change.</b> We want to help everyone move more. It's not about telling people to move - that doesn't work. It's about designing local, regional, and national systems and conditions which put movement central to a good life.	Live Well Prevention Healthy Active Places Health inequalities / CORE 20 Plus 5	All this work is underpinned by system and policy change which works across the whole system.

> [Click here to contact the GM Moving team](#)

## > Prevention and Health Creation

A prevention-powered NHS needs movement at its centre. We work with partners across the sector because people who move more will need the NHS less.

In Greater Manchester, we integrate movement and physical activity across the entire health and care system, including the reduction of poor health. Our efforts have a specific focus on movement and physical activity as a means of reducing health inequalities.

### Prevention Case Study

What?	GM Moving commissioned <a href="#">FreshRB</a> to develop three case study videos which demonstrate physical activity and sport's ability to support <b>mental wellbeing</b> and reduce the burden on mental health services.
So what?	The videos, which have been viewed more than 500 times and are available on the <a href="#">GM Moving website</a> , show how different locations and community groups are using movement, physical activity and sport to boost the mental wellbeing of their participants. This is GM Live Well in action, moving support from formal settings like hospitals into the community.
Now what?	The videos are available for all to use via the GM Moving YouTube channel. GM Moving continues to champion movement, physical activity, and sport's pivotal role in reducing the burden on our strained NHS services, particularly on mental health, and will continue to develop and share stories of the work.

Elsewhere, we have:

Priority – deconditioning and falls prevention:

- Connected into the GM Ageing Hub, informing the design of age-friendly places and supporting walkability so people remain independent for longer.
- Held a webinar on Strength Messaging and supported [the launch of Strength Training Awareness Day](#) to raise the profile of this aspect of CMO guidelines.

Priority – women's health:

- Organised and led on four GM Menopause Network sessions, three in-person and all hosted by network partners.
- Led the [GM Tackling Inequalities Network](#) to support those who need us most.
- Prepared for Phase 2 of [#FeelGoodYourWay](#) to raise awareness of physical activity and sport's role in supporting young girls with their mental wellbeing.

We have also:

- Completed phase 2 of our Better Conversations training, helping non-medical staff have different conversations about activity with people facing the biggest barriers.
- Completed delivery of our latest [Systems Leadership series](#).
- Designed and delivered a health integration-focused sport partners forum.

**These activities give a flavour of the broad range of relationships we maintain and how we work to keep physical activity on the agenda.**

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Research shows that productive partnerships working around a common purpose and partners acting together to build on strengths and remove barriers are pre-requisites for tackling physical activity inequalities.



## > Active Environments & Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling

In addition to our prevention work, we have colleagues working on the creation and development of Active Environments and Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling to embed movement into everyday life.

Our ambition is for an environment that creates conditions to enable the greatest number of people to routinely walk, wheel, or cycle for travel, pleasure, personal or environmental benefit. This includes building capability and confidence of health and social care partners, workplaces, community organisations and the GM Moving team to build walking and wheeling into their ways of working and contribution to outcomes.

<b>What?</b>	GM Moving distributed £85,000 of NHS GM investment directly to groups supporting the least active via the <a href="#">GM Walking and Wheeling Grants</a> . 34 groups and organisations supported people to walk/wheel more throughout the 24/25 winter thanks to financial support distributed in partnership with Salford CVS and 10GM.
<b>So what?</b>	<a href="#">Support was targeted towards those least likely to be active</a> because the least active have the most to gain in terms of physical and mental health benefits by moving more. Walking and wheeling are the most accessible forms of exercise so it's a great starting point for those doing little to no other physical activity. We targeted funding towards opportunities for the deaf community, young people, older adults, and ethnically diverse communities.
<b>Now what?</b>	Most funded projects concluded their funded activities in March with the GM Walking Festival in May, a key part of our offer of ongoing support to the groups. <a href="#">The Impact Report</a> and <a href="#">video case study</a> are on the GM Walking website with the fund reopening in late summer/early Autumn.

Elsewhere, we have:

Priority – Healthy, active places:

- Convened the Inclusive Active Design Group, Older Adults Network, representatives for Children and Young People and LGBTQIA+ communities to co-design additional cards to supplement the Right to the Streets cards and workshop. This has enabled the cards to better represent the barriers and views of women, girls and gender diverse people in their diversity. These cards are now in production.
- Held five [Right to the Streets](#) workshops on inclusive active design.
- Continued to deliver Right to the Streets workshops and [won an Award](#) for our two series of [The GM Moving Podcast](#) focusing on this movement in Trafford.

We have also:

- Designed and delivered the [GM Walking Festival 2024](#).
- [Submitted evidence](#) to APPG enquiry into active travel and social justice.
- [Contributed to CMO's Annual Report](#) on Health in Cities.
- Worked with NHS GM Sustainability colleagues to align their agenda with active travel.

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## > Workforce

An active workforce is more productive and takes less time off sick. We work with NHS staff in all areas to build movement into the workday.

In Greater Manchester, we're supporting the health and care workforce to live active, healthy lives through working with NHS staff to build movement into their workplace and sharing stories of change that have positively impacted on staff wellbeing.

<b>What?</b>	<a href="#">The Active Practice Charter</a> is an initiative from The Royal College of GPs (RCGP) and Sport England to inspire and celebrate GP practices committed to increasing activity and reducing sedentary behaviour in staff and patients.
<b>So what?</b>	GM Moving is building relationships across NHS GM and public health teams in the city region and building significant momentum behind the Active Practice Charter. This is particularly evident in Salford, Oldham, and Manchester, who are now looking to get whole PCNs signed up after seeing the impact on individual practices in their areas. <a href="#">Active Practices</a> also support healthcare professionals and staff increase their activity levels, a boost for productivity and a healthier workforce. Research shows those who are more active themselves are more likely to advocate for their patients to be active. Increasing the number of advocates within the health profession will only further accelerate the changes we're beginning to see.
<b>Now what?</b>	We have 21 Active Practices in GM, up from 13 in 23/24. This shows an increased determination across the system to increase activity and reduce sedentary behaviour among staff and patients which will lead to stronger, healthier, more connected communities and services. The target is to exceed 30 practices in 25/26.

Elsewhere, we have:

Priority – Health and care workforce wellbeing:

- Worked with businesses to refresh our [Active Workplaces toolkit](#) so more places can create a positive culture around everyday movement throughout the workday.
- Held an [Active Workplaces webinar](#) for health and care system partners focusing on the framing, messaging and narrative around physical activity.
- Hosted and presented at NHS GM Organisational Development (OD) Community of Practice on the language which could help staff in their organisations to move more.



## > Clinical Pathways

Physical activity supports the management of many conditions, making it a vital part of our clinical pathways in Greater Manchester.

Our efforts are ensuring that all layers of the health system have access to resources to understand the opportunities and benefits of integrating physical activity into clinical pathways, with a stronger emphasis on prevention to address inactivity and inequality.

<b>What?</b>	Physical Activity Clinical Champions ( <a href="#">PACC</a> ) offers free peer-to-peer training to support healthcare professionals have more effective conversations with service users about the benefits of physical activity. For 2023-2024 GM Moving has been working with the national PACC team to train a further 450 healthcare professionals across 18 different teams using a more local, place-based approach.
<b>So what?</b>	One in four people say they would be more active if advised by a healthcare professional. Lack of confidence in having conversations about physical activity is a key barrier for healthcare professionals. Supporting them to engage in PACC training addresses this barrier, as well as increasing their knowledge of local assets and strengthening community relationships. It also supports those looking to achieve Active Practice status.
<b>Now what?</b>	PACC remains a useful tool in supporting healthcare professionals who want to work differently. It supports our Different Conversations work with non-clinical roles. It's a useful way to demonstrate how to build movement into clinical pathways to support the management of many conditions. GM is now looking into the process of becoming a PACC pilot to support a more place-based approach.

Elsewhere, we have:

Priority - While You Wait:

- Contributed to shared decision-making framework for acute reversible deterioration outside of hospital with physical activity messaging.

Priority – Mental Health:

- Built and developed stronger relationships with social prescribers and those completing Talking Therapies work.
- Established ourselves within GM Mental Health Exec Steering Group and convened national Active Partnerships Community of Practice on mental health.

Priority - Clinical Pathways (Respiratory, CVD and Cancer)

- Contributed to the ongoing national clinical pathway project alongside Active Partnership colleagues to support the development of a more structured and consistent approach.
- Supported a cardiorespiratory training workshop facilitated by GM Active for GM Neurorehabilitation and Integrated Stroke Recovery Network.

## > System, Culture and Policy Change

We want to help everyone move more. It's not about *telling* people to move - that doesn't work. It's about designing systems and conditions which put movement central to a good life.

We're growing the scale of our influence and creating the conditions for disproportionate influence. We continue to identify and support local community champions and trusted transmitters and translators, to act as conduits of the promotion of physical activity in neighbourhoods.

We utilise our insight, experience, and established reputation to share our learning and push more challenging discussions and system change at a strategic level regionally and nationally. This includes as strategic leaders in the national Active Partnership Health Sub-Group, the national Physical Activity and Health Care Collaborative Group with NHS England, NHS Horizons, the Richmond Group of Charities, and many more.

<b>What?</b>	GM Moving and partners <a href="#">signed a refreshed Memorandum of Understanding</a> (MOU) agreement with Sport England in September in Leigh. National and local leaders visited the largest bike library in Greater Manchester as part of the refreshed commitment and a presentation was made at the ICP Board
<b>So what?</b>	The refreshed MOU sees key partners; Sport England, GMCA, NHS GM, TfGM, VCSFE leadership group, GM Active and GM Moving, commit to continued collaboration and joint working towards shared objectives around the health and activity levels of GM residents. It's a key landmark which reflects our decade-long journey to date as well as our commitment to support the NHS to achieve their goals, including a shift to prevention and moving care into communities.
<b>Now what?</b>	The evidence is growing that our whole-system, place-based way of working is reducing inequalities and boosting health outcomes. There's more work to do, but relationships and trust – as signified throughout the MOU – are crucial for us to achieve our shared objectives.

We have also:

- Held a [webinar for the sector](#), attended by more than 100 health and care professionals and colleagues from the sport and physical activity sector. Attendees committed to 'build on connections' and 'link-up cross-system relationships'.
- Informed the [NHS England Position Statement](#) and delivered four workshops on narrative and framing. We continue to lead work locally and nationally to shift mindsets, language, culture and narrative.
- Convened an afternoon workshop for 50 Active Partnership colleagues and partners working on health integration ahead of a national network forum of 130 people in Manchester. This allowed us to share our journey and learnings with national partners and build connections with colleagues doing similar work to accelerate progress.
- Supported the co-ordination of a national response to the NHS Ten-Year Plan in addition to [submitting for GM Moving](#).

- [Written and submitted evidence](#) on movement, physical activity, and sport and the role it plays in Greater Manchester to the government as part of their Spending Review.
- Shared GM Moving place and health integration at 'A Movement for Health in Cheshire and Merseyside' event.
- Established ourselves within GM Active Health Steering Group and continuing to play a lead role in the [Pivot to Wellbeing in public sector leisure](#) work.
- Worked alongside a framing expert to support national Active Partnership network narrative on health and care integration work.
- Regular engagement in the GM VCFSE leadership group and VCFSE Population Health subgroup.
- CEO Hayley Lever, Strategic Director Eve Holt, Chief Officer for Strategy, Innovation & Population Health (NHS GM) Warren Heppolette and GM Mayor Andy Burnham appeared on four [The Conveners Podcast episodes](#).
- Informed the creation of the [ukactive and Active Partnerships blueprint](#) for relationship between health and care and physical activity sectors which was published at their annual conference.
- Spoken at national conferences, events, and round tables, including NHS Confederation and Elevate, and contributed to a range of government round tables and consultations on devolution, health integration and future NHS strategy.

## > Ambitions for 2025/26

GM Moving has bold ambitions for 2025/26. Our [organisational business plan](#) is our roadmap for delivering GM Moving in Action over the next two years (25-27) with priority plans covering [Health and Care Integration](#), [Walking, Wheeling and Cycling](#), and [Healthy, Active Places](#) and more.

We want to ensure that movement, physical activity, and sport are core to supporting better individual and collective physical and mental wellbeing, in both the short and long term, through integration focusing on health, care and wellbeing in Greater Manchester neighbourhoods.

In 2025/26 we'll be:

- Ensuring that increasing physical activity is a key consideration within the transformational reform of the NHS due to take place in 2025/26. Giving all layers of the health system access to resources to understand the opportunities and benefits of integrating physical activity into clinical pathways, with a stronger emphasis on prevention to address inactivity and tackle inequalities. Driving use of approaches such as: Physical Activity Clinical Champions, Active Practices, and Social Prescribing.
- Creating and sharing co-produced stories, messaging and framing with partners across the region and nationally, including health and care and VCSFE, using messages that resonate with them and their audience, with a focus on mental health.
- Ensuring movement is part of the implementation of Live Well, and the GM Neighbourhood Model, and the GM Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy: 'Doing Mental Health Differently 2024-2029' via working with NHS Talking Therapies and connections with primary care and community services.
- Supporting the health and care workforce to live active, healthy lives through working with NHS staff to build movement into their workplace and sharing stories of change that have positively impacted on staff wellbeing.
- Aligning the sector with development of communications and narrative that play an influencing role and ensuring that national policy and direction is informed by integrated place-based approaches in GM.
- Sharing learning from the ways of working within this work across other workstreams and health missions to prevent learning in silos.
- Building collective action across the system to embed health and activity within the place system of built and natural environments.

## > Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read about GM Moving's work in health creation.

If you'd like to find out more, or work with us directly, get in touch with any member of our team below:

<b>Beth Sutcliffe</b> Strategic Director – Health <a href="mailto:beth@gmmoving.co.uk">beth@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I sit on the GM Moving Executive team and am responsible for strategic direction of the health work, including connecting to and ensuring we are aligned to national and local priorities and opportunities.
<b>Kate Harding</b> Strategic Lead for Health Inequalities <a href="mailto:kate@gmmoving.co.uk">kate@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I work to integrate physical activity across the health system through highlighting the benefits and opportunities to patients and healthcare staff of movement and physical activity. I lead the health team which focuses on <b>Live Well, While You Wait, mental health and wellbeing</b> , and <b>priority clinical pathways</b> .
<b>Louise Robbins</b> Strategic Lead for Walking and Active Environments <a href="mailto:louise@gmmoving.co.uk">louise@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I work to highlight the role walking, wheeling, and cycling has on health and social outcomes. I work to connect transport, health, and place systems and apply data-led, targeted, and equitable approaches to interventions designed with communities.
<b>Kelly Rodgers</b> Strategic Lead for Healthy Active Places <a href="mailto:kelly@gmmoving.co.uk">kelly@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I work to support the design and creation of <b>healthy and active places</b> that embed the conditions for healthy and active lives for all. The design of spaces influences how easy it is to be active.
<b>Claire Marshall</b> Strategic Lead for Active Adults <a href="mailto:clairemarshall@gmmoving.co.uk">clairemarshall@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I lead the Active Adults team and contribute through the <b>deconditioning and falls prevention</b> work, alongside internal colleagues and external partners, as well as workforce wellbeing. I also support our <b>women's health</b> work.
<b>Andrew Lawton</b> Strategic Lead for Comms and Marketing <a href="mailto:andrew@gmmoving.co.uk">andrew@gmmoving.co.uk</a>	I work to create and share co-produced narrative, messaging, and framing with partners across the region and nationally. I align marketing and communications, share our learnings and influence regional and national policy.



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