NHS
Wirral University Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy

2024 to 2026

together we will

Contents

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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Introduction

Our journey to deliver the best quality and safest care to the communities we serve

Our Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy is designed to cultivate a safe and secure working environment for our staff.

Violence is widely understood as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, that can result in physical or psychological harm (World Health Organisation, 2014). NHS colleagues experience violence in various forms, including physical assault and verbal abuse. Incidents may result in isolation, loss of confidence, sickness and increased staff turnover.

This strategy introduces a comprehensive framework for reducing and preventing violence against staff, in line with statutory and regulatory requirements. It comprises four Strategic Objectives and their underpinning priorities, all of which are aimed at safeguarding staff against violence, aggression and abuse.

Our 2021-2026 Trust Objectives and Priorities

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Our six strategic objectives and priorities demonstrate our intension to provide outstanding care across the Wirral through our hospital sites and units, as a lead provider within the Wirral system. We will be a Hospital Trust that patients, families and carers recommend and to which staff are proud to belong.

OUTSTANDING CARE

Provide the best care and support

- Empower patients through their care journey
- Improve patient flow, ensuring the patient is in the right place at the right time
- Strive to deliver intimate and personal patient experience
- Provide services in the most appropriate and accessible setting
- Embed a culture of safety improvement that improves outcomes

OUR PARTNERS

Provide seamless care working with our partners

- Integrate care to prevent ill-health, improve wellbeing and meet the needs of the Wirral population
- Deliver system partnerships which improve outcomes for our patients
- Lever our clinical expertise to drive clinical quality and influence system working
- Build partnerships with academic institutions to develop research and education capability

COMPASSIONATE WORKFORCE

Be a great place to work

- Develop and maintain a healthy organisational culture based on our values
- Retain, attract and recruit high calibre and skilled staff
- Support our staff to enjoy the best health and wellbeing
- Invest in our staff's continuous learning, education and innovation

DIGITAL FUTURE

Be a digital pioneer and centre for excellence

- Use digital technology to reduce waste, automate processes and eliminate bottlenecks
- Empower patients with the data and tools to manage their own health and wellbeing
- Allow business intelligence to drive clinical decision making
- Use health information to enable population health management for the Wirral

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Maximise our potential to improve and deliver best value

- Embed a culture of improvement and transformation
- Reduce variation in care pathways to improve outcomes
- Use our resources effectively and sustainably, so we can improve our services
- Create the conditions for clinical research to flourish

INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve our infrastructure and how we use it

- Effectively use our estate to support the delivery of care
- Delineate the role and functions of the hospital sites
- Develop the case for the upgrades of the hospital campuses
- Improve travel and transport to our hospital campuses
- Promote sustainability and social value

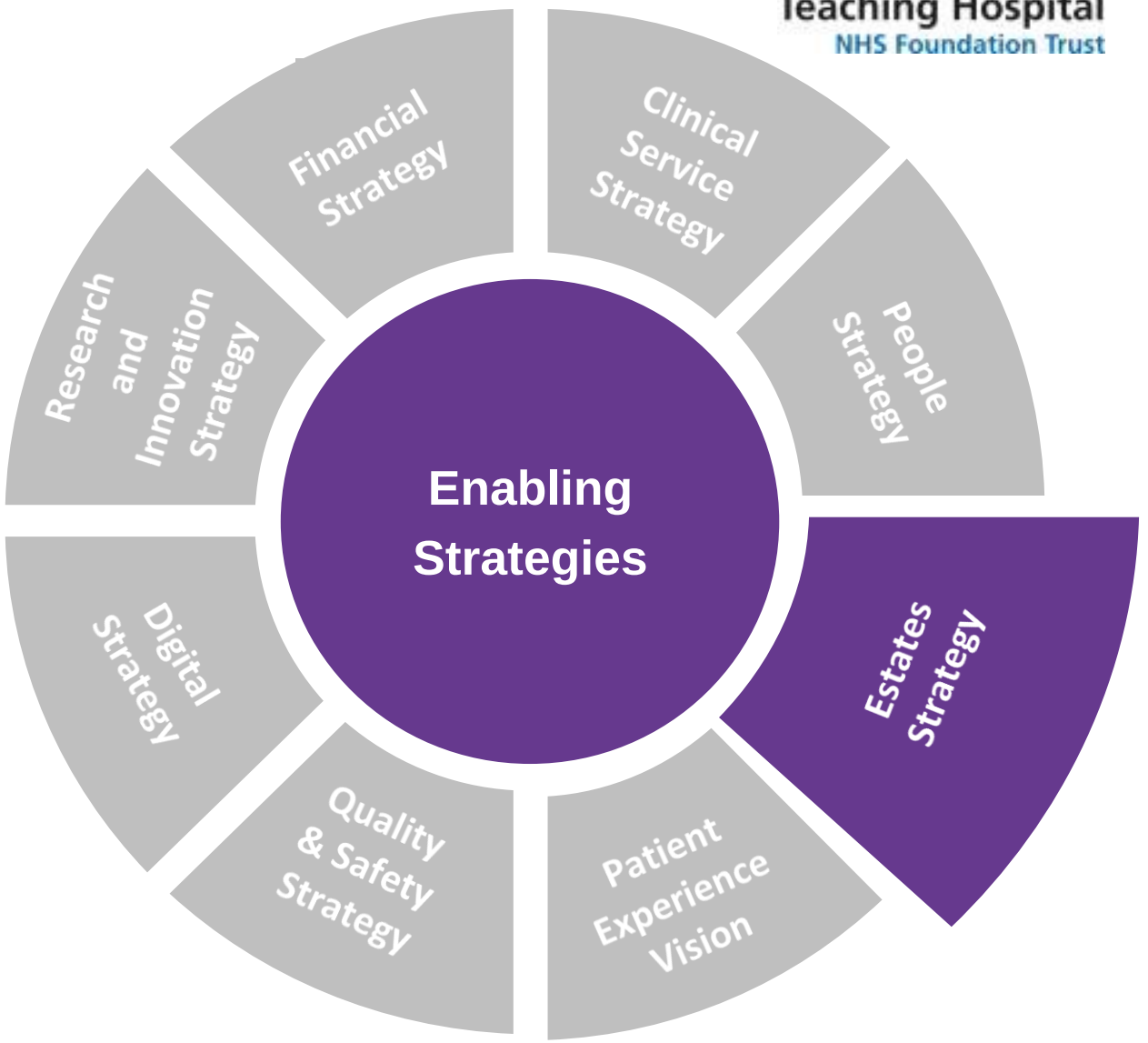
Strategic Framework

Our Enabling Strategies

Our 2021-2026 Strategy will be delivered through eight enabling strategies as shown.

This Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy underpins our Estates Strategy and outlines our intention to facilitate a secure working environment for our staff, safeguarding them against abuse, aggression and violence.

Delivering our Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategic Objectives will support us to deliver our Trust's overarching vision, where we strive to provide the highest quality and safest care to the communities we serve.



National Policy for Violence Prevention and Reduction

National Context

The safety and security of staff is a key NHS priority, as highlighted in seminal documents, including the *NHS People Plan*, the *Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment Criteria* and the *Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Assessment Criteria*.

The *Violence Prevention and Reduction Standard*, published as part of the *2021/22 NHS Standard Contract*, outlines how NHS colleagues can be protected against violence at work and complements existing health and safety legislation. The standard delivers a risk-based framework and sets out the ambition to safeguard staff against physical and psychological harm.

All NHS organisations should have regard to the violence prevention and reduction standard and are required to review their status against it and provide board assurance that this has been met twice a year.

The violence prevention and reduction standard utilises the *Plan, Do Check, Act* approach, which is a four-step management method to measure and achieve continuous improvement.

The development of this strategy is part of the first stage, *Plan*, where it is recommended that NHS organisations develop strategies, polices and plans which can be implemented, measured and embedded to drive improvements in violence prevention and reduction. At WUTH, the strategy was developed collaboratively with staff from across the Trust.

Our Violence Prevention and Journey

Celebrations

The Violence and Aggression Improvement Plan has been successfully embedded into Trust governance procedures.

Personal safety training has commenced for clinical staff.

Next Steps

The Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy has been developed.

Robust and accessible training will be provided to all staff.

The Trust will deliver, monitor and embed the Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy.

Violence risk assessments will be implemented and audited.

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Developing Our Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives and priorities for the 2024-26 Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy have been developed with consideration of the Trust's policies and its journey over the previous five years. A comprehensive review of national policies has also been conducted to ensure that the strategy aligns seamlessly with wider priorities.

An engagement workshop was held with staff from across the organisation to explore the current impact of violence and aggression in the Trust and to understand staff's aspirations to promote a safe working environment at WUTH. This information was used to develop the four strategic objectives and their underpinning priorities.

Our Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategic Objectives

1. Transforming Culture
2. Enhancing Training
3. Facilitating Communication
4. Embedding Governance Structures

Objective 1 - Transforming Culture

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Culture compromises our knowledge, beliefs and behaviours, all of which can influence our working environment. Transforming culture across our organisation with the aim of reducing and preventing violence against our staff is the primary objective of this strategy and the key driver of success in all underpinning priorities.

We Will:

- Reduce tolerance of violence and aggression by outlining our expectations of staff, patients and visitors.
- Cultivate psychological safety by supporting staff to highlight concerns through streamlined reporting processes.
- Raise the profile of our approach by introducing sharing and learning platforms, in addition to communicating the outcome of reported incidents to back staff.
- Provide appropriate support to staff after incidents by introducing a Trust-wide standard for debriefing.
- Support the development of a preventative culture by improving insight into additional needs and cultural awareness.

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Objective 2 - Enhancing Training

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Training is the toolkit which will equip our staff to transform cultures and reduce tolerance of violence and aggression. We aspire to offer training to all WUTH colleagues, in addition to tailoring our training provision to the specialist needs of staff, dependent on their working environment.

We Will:

- Create a consistent and inclusive training environment for staff across the Trust, raising awareness of the different forms of violence, reporting processes and the support available following incidents.
- Use data to explore and monitor training needs.
- Create specialist, mandatory training for staff working in areas with a higher prevalence of violence and aggression.
- Enable our staff to improve their skills in de-escalating conflict by providing protected time for them to attend training.
- Collaborate with external partners to understand local training provision and to develop cross-organisational training.

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Objective 3 - Facilitating Communication

Improving communication is central to reducing and preventing incidents of violence and aggression. For staff, communication can increase morale and raise awareness of the impact of reporting incidents. For patients and visitors, communication can ease anxiety and outline codes of conduct.

We Will:

- Develop a two-way channel of communication to ensure board-level arrangements are relayed to all staff.
- Celebrate successes of initiatives relating to violence prevention and reduction.
- Utilise communication to prevent incidents by developing diverse and accessible forms of communication with staff, patients and visitors, highlighting zero tolerance for violence and aggression.
- Communicate with patients and visitors to understand the causes of violence and aggression and how incidents can be prevented.
- Facilitate the exchange of information with partner organisations relating to known risks to improve safety for staff and patients.

Objective 4 - Embedding Governance Structures

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Robust governance processes will underpin reductions in violence and aggression by ensuring the stability of improvements to culture, training and communication. Internal governance routes will align with wider objectives and support the compliance of national indicators.

We Will:

- Embed a Trust-wide standard for escalation of incidents of violence, ensuring visibility of support and endorsement at executive level.
- Ensure policies and risk assessments accessible and easy to follow to support staff to put them into practice.
- Facilitate escalation processes with external partners to provide seamless support between organisations.
- Enhance insight and knowledge by improving data quality, facilitating data-driven decision making and the robust review of change.

Strategic Alignment

Our Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategic Objectives aligned to our 2021-2026 Trust Strategic Objectives

	Outstanding Care *Provide the best care and support*	**Compassionate workforce** *Be a great place to work*	**Continuous Improvement** *Maximise our potential to improve and deliver best value*	**Our Partners** *Provide seamless care working with our partners*	**Digital Future** *Be a digital pioneer and centre for digital excellence*	**Infrastructure** *Improve our infrastructure and how we use it*
1. Transforming Culture	✔	✔	✔		✔	
2. Enhancing Training	✔	✔	✔	✔		
3. Facilitating Communication	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
4. Embedding Governance Structures		✔	✔	✔	✔	

Next Steps

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Development and sign-off of the two-year Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy aligned to the Trust Strategic Objectives.

Key outcome measures for Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy will be set against each of our strategic objectives and priorities and reflected within the Violence Prevention and Reduction policy. Measures will be monitored at the Violence Aggression and Prevention Group.

Key to the success of this strategy is engagement with staff, patients, visitors and partner organisations, facilitated by the governance and resources to support our teams.

Violence Prevention and Reduction Strategy priorities will be reviewed as part of annual operational and strategic planning to ensure they remain relevant to our evolving organisational needs and maintain delivery momentum.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Violence Prevention and Reduction Workshop Output