



Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE News

August 2025

Welcome to our August update for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) colleagues in Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M).

Some of you will already be receiving our news directly, or via your local infrastructure organisation and this email complements that and is another way to share our updates with you.

We hope you find this newsletter useful and we encourage you to share it in full, or any of its content with your networks.

You can also find past and future editions online [here](#).

Updates

Health and care system updates

In mid-July chair of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (NHS C&M), [Raj Jain announced he'll be retiring from his role](#) in October this year. During his time in the role, Raj has been a great supporter of the VCFSE's role in improving health and care and we take this opportunity to thank him and to wish him well in his retirement.

The news comes at a significant time of change for NHS C&M, as it continues deal with [nationally required reforms](#). The integrated care board (ICBs) is expected to cut its back office running costs by 50%, leading to reductions in staffing levels and restructuring so it can respond to the [new operating model for ICBs](#).

All this comes as Cheshire and Merseyside continues to be one of the most financially challenged systems in the country.

Launching the VCFSE sector manifesto for Cheshire and Warrington



Cheshire and Warrington Infrastructure Partnership (CWIP) has launched a new manifesto for the VCFSE sector.

With a combined authority set to be established for Cheshire and Warrington next year, the manifesto sets out 10 key themes showing how the sector can help communities thrive.

The manifesto has been developed alongside the wider VCFSE sector, with more than 40 people attending a recent webinar and others providing feedback digitally.

A major call is for one of the six new seats on the combined authority board to be given to a VCFSE representative, ensuring our sector has a voice at the top table.

Find out more



Figures reveal child poverty rising in Cheshire and Merseyside

New figures from [CHAMPS Public Health Collaborative](#) show that child and family poverty remains a significant and growing challenge across C&M.

The latest data, published in July 2025, reveals that over 111,000 children and young people aged 0 to 16 are living in relative low income families – an increase from the previous year. Alarming, almost two-thirds of these children are in households where at least one adult is in work, highlighting the reality of in work poverty.

These findings build on the CHAMPS led [Rapid Situational Analysis of Child and Family Poverty in Cheshire and Merseyside \(August 2024\)](#), which the wider sector in C&M was involved in developing through our transformation programme, alongside other partners.

More recently, the [VS6 Partnership](#), working with CHAMPS and Youth Focus, recently published a report on [tackling child poverty in the Liverpool City Region](#). The report sets out practical recommendations to help improve outcomes for children and families in the region

Find out more

Nominations open – VSNW funding and commissioning awards 2025

Nominations are now open for the VSNW Funding and Commissioning Awards 2025, recognising commissioners and funders who go above and beyond to support the North West's VCFSE sector.

Categories include:

- Outstanding Grant Funder
- Outstanding Commissioner – Local Authority
- Outstanding Commissioner – NHS



Nominations are open until **Friday 3 October**. The winners will be announced at the VSNW Annual Conference and AGM on **Thursday 27 November**.

Nominate now

Excellence in health creation awards 2025

Entries are open for the Excellence in Health Creation Awards, celebrating people, organisations, partnerships and systems across the UK who put health creation at the heart of their work.

Categories include health creation champion of the year, best cross-sector programme, and best grassroots approach to reducing long-term conditions.

It's free to enter, and winners will be honoured at the Partnership Summit on **Tuesday 21 October** in Manchester.

Find out more

Events and Opportunities



Learn how to lead system change

North West Collaborative recently brought together neighbourhood leaders from across the region for an innovative "Hackathon" event. Participants explored new ways to work across health, care, and community sectors to design solutions that truly meet local needs.

To build on this momentum the collaborative is launching its [Leading for System Change programme](#) on **Wednesday 24 September**.

This unique learning opportunity is designed for leaders who want to work across organisational boundaries, tackle complex challenges, and deliver better outcomes for communities.

Places are limited and applications close on **Friday 5 September**.

Find out more

Register for Fairer Lives, Healthier Communities, Ending Smoking Together

Hosted by CHAMPS Public Health Collective, this event will share updates on the All Together Smokefree programme and explore how we can work together to end smoking across Cheshire and Merseyside.



Speakers include Sarah Woolnough, Chief Executive of The King's Fund, plus colleagues tackling illicit tobacco and vaping.

It's taking place on **Friday 19 September, 10am to 12.30pm**, Online (Microsoft Teams).

Register now

Help shape emotional wellbeing and early mental health services

The Change & Integration team in Cheshire & Merseyside is offering a six month, two day a week role to help create a more joined up approach to emotional wellbeing, early mental health, and youth services.

The team works with health, local authority and VCFSE partners to improve outcomes for children and families across the region.

Applicants should have experience in mental health or youth work, plus strong partnership and service development skills. You will remain employed by your current organisation, with costs reimbursed, so line manager approval is essential.

- [Read the job description for more information](#)
- [Explore the project plan](#)

You can also email rebeccabrown@wirral.gov.uk if you have any questions. Closing date is **Friday 22 August**.

Subscribe and feedback

If you didn't receive this newsletter directly from VSNW, you can [subscribe here](#) to ensure you don't miss future updates.

We'd love to hear your thoughts on this new update—what's useful, what could be improved, and how we can make it more relevant to you and your work. **Share your feedback with us at** cmhcl@vsnw.org.uk

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. If you have any updates or opportunities you'd like us to share in future newsletters, please contact cmhcl@vsnw.org.uk



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