

# Growing Health Together

**Co-designing integrated and sustainable primary care, to both meet the needs of the community, and the demands and changes in the health and care system.**

The [Fuller Stock Take \(2022\)](#) highlighted the need to reform and integrate primary care, to improve outcomes for both our communities, and for those delivering health and social care.

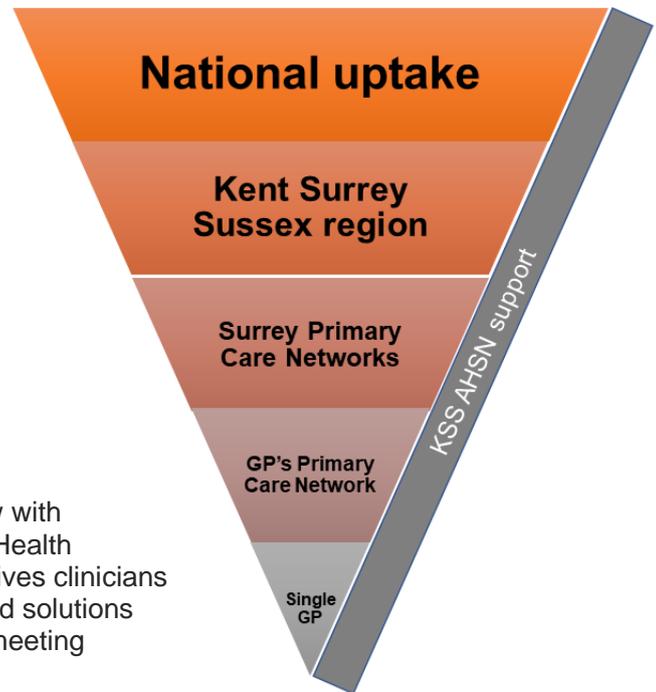
The report called for locally led, nationally enabled change, and a recognition that one size does not fit all.

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration Kent Surrey Sussex (ARC KSS)'s own [priority setting exercise in 2021](#), asking local communities what their needs were in terms of areas to focus research and service development.

## Growing Health Together

Pioneered in one primary care network (PCN) by Dr Gillian Orrow with colleagues Katherine Saunders and Dr Michael Bosch, Growing Health Together (GHT) now extends across five PCNs in Surrey. GHT gives clinicians protected time to work with local citizens to create evidence-based solutions for their own communities, promoting health and wellbeing, and meeting specific local needs.

Surrey Heartlands ICS invited GHT to assist groups of PCNs, to collaborate with community members and local organisations to improve health and prevent disease across East Surrey.



The African Community in Surrey & Sussex, participating in an intergenerational group event, supported by GHT. This was a music workshop for children, featuring African storytelling, food, dancing and celebration. It brought members of this community group together with the wider Horley community, including carers and young people with disabilities, to help support community cohesion, combat racism, encourage gentle physical activity and support mental wellbeing.

## Pull from the system:

Anticipate needs of patients  
Support those with complex health needs  
Faster access to advice  
Wider range of care options  
(VCSE, social prescribing, etc.)

Place-based  
Preventative, health  
creation focus  
Relationship-based within  
local communities

## Growing Health Together East Surrey

Supporting population  
health, health equity and  
the environment  
Supported by population  
health data

## Push from the ground up:

More personalised, integrated and holistic solutions  
Looking at people's strengths rather than deficits  
Improved access to care.

### ARC KSS's involvement

The original conversations around this project took place as a result of an ARC funding call around care. We have supported the project to secure evaluation funding, considering the implementation and target audience from the outset. This work was supported by our partners at Kent Surrey Sussex Academic Health Science Network (KSS AHSN).

Together, we established a wrap-around project team, including academics and NHS colleagues, local authorities, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and public health and service users.

### What next?

The project team are currently 'mapping' the GHT ecosystem to better understand who it involves, their individual, organisational involvement and the relationships between them. Once completed the study hopes through evaluation to capture the 'active ingredients' of GHT- *What, works for whom in what context and why?* Once completed it is hoped the learning framework can be piloted in other PCNs across and beyond. Evidencing a model of primary care delivery that offers benefits for people, workforce and communities. A model in which we grow healthier together.

'We are thrilled that funding has been secured for a comprehensive evaluation of Growing Health Together's work in East Surrey.

'This will be invaluable in isolating the 'active ingredients' that have enabled health creation to shift from radical idea to embedded practice within our NHS, improving health outcomes for local people.'

*Dr Gillian Orow, GP and Director of Growing Health Together*

### Further information

For more information, contact:

Dr Sarah Hotham: [s.hotham@kent.ac.uk](mailto:s.hotham@kent.ac.uk)

Dr Gillian Orow: [info@growinghealthtogether.org](mailto:info@growinghealthtogether.org)

Dr Samantha Fraser: [sam.fraser4@nhs.net](mailto:sam.fraser4@nhs.net)

This research was funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

**Kent Surrey Sussex  
Academic Health Science Network**

[www.kssahsn.net](http://www.kssahsn.net)

[enquiries@kssahsn.net](mailto:enquiries@kssahsn.net)

**NIHR Applied Research Collaboration  
Kent, Surrey and Sussex**

[www.arc-kss.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.arc-kss.nihr.ac.uk)

[arckentsurreysussex@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:arckentsurreysussex@spft.nhs.uk)