

Selecting Sites for the WorkWell Primary Care Innovation Fund in North West London

Economic growth and improving productivity remain top government priorities. A key part of this is improving access to work and supporting people with health conditions to stay in work. Building on the success of WorkWell nationally, the Government announced the Primary Care Innovation Fund to help patients with health conditions return to employment and reduce pressure on doctors.

The WorkWell programme in North West London (NWL) has been one of the most successful in the country. However, despite this strong performance, only around 13% of people starting WorkWell currently come from primary care. This represented both a challenge and an opportunity: to work with primary care colleagues to improve referral rates and make employment support a routine part of care.

Our approach: NWL ICB secured £100,000 from the fund and committed to selecting five Primary Care Networks (PCNs) as pilot sites launching on 22nd September. Each site receives £20,000 to deploy additional capacity, test new approaches, and build an evidence base over six months. This approach allows us to:

- Target populations with high volumes of fit notes
- Strengthen GP engagement and referral pathways
- Generate robust evaluation data to inform future system-wide rollout

The pilot will also test the use of clinical system status alerts on EMIS and SystmOne to support the proactive identification of patients who would benefit from WorkWell. These alerts will help primary care teams systematically identify patients with recurring fit notes or employment-related health concerns, making employment support conversations a more routine part of clinical care.

Selection criteria: All NWL PCNs were invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs). Submissions were assessed against equity-focused criteria:

- Alignment with Core20Plus5 priorities – ensuring pilots reached communities experiencing the greatest inequalities.
- Fit note prevalence and demand – targeting areas with high numbers of fit notes.

- Readiness to implement – workforce and infrastructure capacity to mobilise quickly.
- Geographic spread – ensuring a balance across boroughs and contexts

Selected PCNs: Following this process, five PCNs were selected:

1. Harness South (Brent)
2. Inclusive Health (RBKC)
3. North H&F (Hammersmith & Fulham)
4. Acton (Ealing)
5. Regent Health (Westminster)

WorkWell is available to support your patients who are unemployed or at risk of job loss due to health conditions. Referrals can be made directly through your EMIS, SYSTMONE & Joyapp system or by calling the WorkWell team.

For more information about WorkWell – NWL services visit

- Website: [WorkWell – North West London](#)
- call **0808 196 2386**
- email: workwellwest@shaw-trust.org.uk

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NHS North West London commissioned West London Alliance to provide WorkWell for people in Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster. The wider employment support programmes also support Barnet residents.

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