

**NHS Cheshire and Merseyside**

**Children in Care Annual Report**

**2023-24**

**Supplementary Report – Health Outcomes  
for Cheshire East Cared for Children &  
Care Experienced Young People**

Nicola Wycherley

Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Cared for Children (Cheshire East)

# Cheshire and Merseyside ICB

## Children in Care Annual Report (2023-24)

### Supplementary Report – Health of Cheshire East Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People

#### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 This is a supplementary report to the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) Children in Care (CiC) annual report 2023-24 and seeks to provide further information regarding Cheshire East Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to provide assurance in relation to the statutory duties of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB and Cheshire East Council for Cared for Children and an overview of the progress and challenges in supporting and improving their health outcomes.
- 1.3 The report covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and sets out the Cheshire East performance against the mandatory health outcomes for Cared for Children comparative to the national performance and that of the closest statistical neighbours as per the Department of Education annual statistical release 'Children looked after in England' (Nov 24).
- 1.4 The report is produced in line with duties and responsibilities outlined in the 'Statutory Guidance on Promoting the Health and well-being of Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England' (2015).

#### 2. Health Outcomes for Cared for Children

- 2.1 All data is summarised in Table 1.
- 2.2 **Annual Health Assessments.**  
91% of children underwent an annual health assessment in the previous 12 months. This is an improvement on the previous year's performance of 2% and better than the national performance of 89% and performance of the closest statistical neighbour at 86%.
- 2.3 **Immunisations**  
98% of children were up-to-date with their immunisations as per the national childhood immunisation schedule. This is an improvement of 5% on the 22/23 performance and better than the national performance of 82% and the performance of the closest statistical neighbour at 96%.
- 2.4 **Dental Checks**  
87% of children had their teeth checked by a dentist in the previous 12 months. Not only is this a significant improvement of 13% on the previous year, it is also better than pre-pandemic performances. The national performance was 79% and the performance of the closest statistical neighbour was 61%.

**2.5 Developmental Assessments (0-4)**

100% of children aged 0-4 were up to date with their developmental assessments as per the Healthy Child Programme. This is an improvement of 3% on the previous year's performance and better than the national performance of 88%.

**2.6 Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (5-16)**

Only 73% of children aged 5-16 had an SDQ completed in the previous 12 months. This is a drop in performance of 6% on the previous 12 months and is below both the national performance and that of our closest statistical neighbour at 77% and 85% respectively. The SDQ process has been identified as a key priority of the iTHRIVE implementation and seeks to develop a new multiagency pathway, which aims to improve not just compliance but also outcomes.

**2.7 Care Leaver Health Summaries**

97% of care leavers turning 18 in this year, opted to receive a copy of their health summary around the time of their birthday. This is a significant improvement on the previous year's uptake of 57%.

**Table 1: Health Outcomes for Cheshire East Cared for Children 2023-24**

	Cheshire East 2023/24	England 2023/24	Statistical Neighbour 2023/24	Cheshire East 2022/23
Children who had their annual health assessment %	91% ↑	89%	86%	89%
Children who are up-to-date with their immunisations %	98% ↑	82%	96%	93%
Children who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the past 12 months %	87% ↑	79%	61%	74%
Children (0-5) who are up-to-date with the development checks	100% ↑	88%	100%	87%
% of 4-16 in care for 3 months or more with a completed SDQ score in the past 12 months.	73% ↓	77%	85%	79%
Care leavers who received a summary of their health by their 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday %	97% ↑	Not Available	Not Available	57%

**3. Summary**

**3.1** In 2023-24 there was an improved performance against statutory health outcomes for cared for children and care experienced young people in Cheshire East. With the exception of the SDQ process there was an improvement in performance against all indicators compared to the previous reporting year.

**3.2** Similarly, Cheshire East performed better against these indicators than both the England performance and that of our closest statistical neighbours. Most significantly was an improvement in dental checks, in which performance is now better than pre-pandemic figures.

- 3.3** Improvement is required around the uptake of Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires, and this is being looked at as part of the iTHRIVE implementation process.