



Report Title	Winter Strategic Approach and Tactical Plan 2024/25
Author (name and title)	Liz Eastwood, Head of Service and Quality (Central Delivery) Tasnim Ali, Business Manager
Accountable Director	Nick Smith, Chief Operating Officer
Previous committees/groups	Operational Resilience Oversight Group on 11 June 2024 Operational Leadership Group approval on the 22 July 2024 Trust Executive Group Approval on 5 August and 1 September 2024 Quality Committee on the 17 September 2024.
Recommended action(s) Approval, Assurance, Information	Approval
Purpose of the paper	Two linked documents are presented to Trust Board for approval.  The <b>Winter Strategic Approach</b> provides a horizon scan of the 6 month period from October 2025 until the end of March 2026, using intelligence and data to inform the strategic approach YAS will take to mitigate risks over that period.  The <b>Winter Tactical Plan</b> sets out what the pre-emptive actions are, who is responsible and when these will be implements. It also identifies tactical options for consideration to manager surge in demand.
Recommendation(s)	To review and <b>approve</b> the <b>Winter Strategic Approach</b> covering the Autumn/Winter period from October 2024 to March 2025  To review and <b>approve</b> the <b>Winter Tactical Plan</b> for 2024/25

**Executive summary (overview of main points)**

The **Strategic Winter Approach** document has been developed to horizon scan the risks likely to impact on operational delivery between October 2024 and March 2025.

From these actions have been developed to manage the identified risks and this is captured in the **Winter Tactical Plan**.

The Winter Tactical Plan also includes tactical options to be considered by the organisation if escalation is required. These are captured in the Trusts existing, but recently updated, Clinical Safety Plan (CSP) and Surge Plan.

The Winter Tactical Plan will remain a live plan with ongoing review throughout the period by the Operational Resilience Oversight Group (OROG). TEG will receive updates by exception on its ongoing delivery.

<b>Trust Strategy Bold Ambitions</b> Select the most relevant points from the bold ambitions.	Our Patients	Deliver high-quality patient care and achieve the Ambulance Clinical Outcome measures. Deliver the national, regional and local performance targets for 999, NHS 111 and PTS. Deliver the highest standards of emergency preparedness, resilience and response and continually improve, to ensure we provide the best possible response to the most complex incidents impacting the region.
	Our People	Choose an item.
	Our Partners	Listen and respond to patients, partners and our communities to develop and deliver high-quality care, which is continuously improving. Work collaboratively with all our partners to achieve better experiences and outcomes for patients, optimising all of our collective skills and valued resources. Deliver the most appropriate response to patients requiring of out-of-hospital care. Collaborate with emergency service partners, not only to provide a great emergency response but to maximise our collective resource for the benefit of our populations.
	Our Planet and Pounds	Use our resources wisely and ensure value for money.
<b>Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)</b>		1. Deliver a timely response to patients. 3. Support patient flow across the urgent and emergency care system.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust is required to develop a Winter Plan by NHS England, providing assurance on the approach the Trust will take to maintain operational resilience through the winter period in 2024/25. In preparation for this, Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) has developed a Winter Strategic Approach document covering the period October 2024 to March 2025.

## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This **Strategic Winter Approach** document has been developed to horizon scan the risks likely to impact on operational delivery between October 2024 and March 2025.

Actions have been developed to manage the identified risks and as a result service line tactical plans have been produced to manage service specific impacts.

- 2.2 Key risks identified from this horizon scan are as follows:

- Increased demands on our services, driven by both the predictable impacts of winter (such as exacerbation of respiratory conditions) and the uncertainty of industrial action (as examples).
- Increased pressure on the available capacity, driven by:
  - increased acuity of patient needs impacting job cycle time,
  - increased pressure on partners impacting on handover time and our ability to direct patients into alternative urgent care settings,
  - increased loss of workforce capacity due to sickness absence and adverse weather events,
  - increased call handling times due to higher acuity of calls and call handlers having to remain on the phone giving pre-arrival instructions
  - increased travel times to scene in adverse weather events
  - increased vehicle off road time, linked to winter driving conditions

- 2.3 Our strategic approach has the aim of delivering the following:

- Maximise the available usable clinical capacity to respond to our patients across the service lines, with support from corporate teams and support services, using demand and forecasting data to support proactive targeted approaches
- Develop tactical approaches to understand the increased clinical demands on our services and support best utilisation of the available clinical capacity across urgent and emergency care systems
- Ensure a robust system to managing risk within the service lines and working with system partners

- 2.4 The following key areas of work have been identified and delivered by OROG to meet the strategic approach:

- A **Winter Tactical Plan** has been developed to support responding to identified risks. There is a clear ambition that wherever possible plans should be proactive and targeted at the identified risks.

- Completion of the ongoing review of the **Clinical Safety Plan** triggers and Actions, incorporating learning from other Trusts and ensuring there is better affiliation to the new devolved structure aligned to ICB's. The ambition is that this will support more localised response and escalation of the risks being experienced in one specific part of the organisation. This work has progressed and is currently being refined. Progress is being monitored via the Operational Resilience Oversight Group (OROG).
- Review of other planned **Surge Plan** work to release clinical capacity at periods of predicted operational pressure, has been progressing in the operational areas, some are reviewing the productivity in early October.

2.5 To support this the **Winter Tactical Plan** has been developed to respond to these identified risks. The plan is focused as follows:

- Preparation – actions we are taking in advance of the winter period to provide as much resilience across operational services and mitigate the identified risks
- Response - a set of tactical options that are being developed to be enacted in the response phase of the winter period to support
- Recovery – embedding a learning approach to debriefing throughout and after the winter period to inform future plans and response.

The tactical plan will be actively reviewed throughout the period and updates presented to TEG for assurance of the planning process.

As we move into periods of increased operational pressure OROG will increase its frequency of meetings to coordinate the delivery of the Trust response across all service lines.

### 3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There is no specific budget for winter outside of the capacity plan. No external funding from NHSE is expected. Therefore, any individual scheme that requires additional funding must be accommodated from within the existing operational budget.

### 4. **RISKS**

- 4.1 The seasonal planning approach is aimed at reducing the likelihood of a significant impact against risk to Operational Performance. The risks included in the plan are listed in the latest September Corporate risk register.
- 4.2 There are a number of co-dependent risks across each of the three operational service lines that OROG respond to informing the current risk rating for the Trust as the work progresses.

### 5. **LEGAL/REGULATORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The NHS Standard Contract Service Conditions require Providers of NHS-funded services to comply with EPRR guidance. The EPRR framework sets out a 'Critical Incident', "which is principally an internal escalation response to increased system pressures/disruption to services that are or will have a detrimental impact on the NHS funded organisation's ability to deliver safe patient care".

- 5.2 The aim of the Winter Strategic Approach is to avoid a critical incident, as well as avoiding a situation where pressure on the Trust is such that we could not response to a major incident.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 To review and **approve** the ***Winter Strategic Approach*** covering the Autumn/Winter period from October 2024 to March 2025.
- 6.2 To review and **approve** the ***Winter Tactical Plan*** for 2024/25.

## 7. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 7.1 The following papers make up this report:
- Appendix A Winter Strategic Approach v1.0
  - Appendix B Winter Tactical Plan v1.0

Liz Eastwood, Head of Service and Delivery (Central Delivery)  
Tasnim Ali, Business Manager  
17th September 2024