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1 Foreword

Synchronicity Care Limited (SCL) a wholly owned subsidiary of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT) was established in 2017 to provide procurement, facilities and estates services to the Trust.

The SCL (the Company) Strategy 2025/28 defines the Company commitment to providing excellent services to the Trust and supporting the Trust with the delivery of its corporate objectives. To support this overarching strategy our Procurement service will drive and deliver outstanding procurement, purchasing and materials management functions for CDDFT and SCL, using best practice, whilst driving value for money through collaboration ensuring delivery in a consistent approach.

The principle aim of the Procurement Team at Synchronicity Care (SCL) is to guide, influence and manage the entire chain of supply from the identification of need through to delivery and disposal, ensuring a compliant and competitive process provides the lowest total cost of ownership associated with goods, works and services, whilst at the same time ensuring the highest standards of quality patient care are delivered through embracing innovations.

The Procurement Team will promote collaboration between internal customers and our suppliers as well as with other NHS organisations. The team will work closely with our Regional partners such as North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS) and neighbouring Trusts via the newly formed Nested Collaborative Procurement Group where it benefits to do so.

CDDFT is one of the largest integrated care providers in England, serving a population of around 650,000 people.

Healthcare Services are provided from three acute sites; Darlington Memorial Hospital, University Hospital of North Durham and Bishop Auckland General Hospital. Services are also provided at hospitals across Chester-Le-Street, Shotley Bridge, Barnard Castle, Sedgefield and Weardale as well as over 80 other community based settings and providing care in patients' homes.

2 Executive summary



Synchronicity Care Limited
Associate Director of Procurement – Julie Warnett

“At Synchronicity Care Limited, everything we do in Procurement ultimately ties back to one core purpose - supporting the delivery of safe, high-quality care for our patients. As Associate Director of Procurement, I see our role not just as sourcing goods and services for CDDFT and SCL, but as a strategic partner to clinical and operational teams, helping to ensure the Trust gets the best possible value, not only in terms of cost, but in outcomes, resilience, and sustainability.

This strategy outlines the direction we’re taking to modernise and strengthen procurement across County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and Synchronicity Care Limited, in line with Government Legislation, NHS national priorities and the Trust’s long-term goals.

I’m proud of the progress we’ve made and excited about where we’re going. This strategy is about more than just process; it’s also about the people. It’s about enabling care, supporting our staff, and making sure every pound we spend delivers real quality and value for our patients and our Trust”



Synchronicity Care Limited (SCL)
Director of Finance – Rachel Morrissey

“This Procurement Strategy sets out a bold and future-focused vision for the role of procurement at CDDFT and SCL. As an essential enabler of high-quality, efficient, and sustainable healthcare services, procurement must evolve to meet rising demands, deliver best value, and support the wider health economy.

Over the next three years, our focus is on delivering quality and value for money, enhancing governance, building supply chain resilience, and embedding sustainability and social value in everything we do. Our ambition is to shift procurement from a transactional function to a strategic lever that contributes meaningfully to clinical, operational, and financial objectives.

As Director of Finance for SCL, I am committed to ensuring procurement continues to add strategic value across the Trust. Through clear leadership, cross-functional collaboration, and a focus on delivery, we will drive outcomes that support our patients, our workforce, and the sustainability of our health system”.

3 Strategic Context

This strategy sets out the strategic procurement aims and ambitions for CDDFT and SCL over the next three years.

The SCL Strategy 2025-28 defines the Company's commitment to providing excellent Estates, Facilities and Procurement services to the Trust and supporting the Trust with the delivery of its corporate objectives.

To support this overarching strategy this Procurement Strategy has been developed in consultation with colleagues and key stakeholders across County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) and Synchronicity Care Limited (SCL) and considers all current and previous government and legislative publications.

The Procurement team is an established team of 52 people who successfully deliver Procurement, Purchasing, Information, Business Support and Materials Management Services to CDDFT and SCL. The team also successfully deliver Procurement, Purchasing and Business Support Services to three other Trusts: Tees Esk and Wear Valley (TEWV), Oxleas and Queen Elizabeth Services (QEF).

The annual value of non-pay spend managed by the team for the CDDT Group is c£145m and the income generated from providing services to our third party customers is £0.65m.

This strategy focuses principally on our aims and objectives in relation to how we build on our current success, and strengthen and improve our delivery of an effective Procurement Service to CDDFT and SCL over the next three years.

4 Vision, Aims and Objectives

Vision

Our Procurement Vision is ***to deliver a compliant, effective and efficient procurement service, embracing collaboration and innovation to enable outstanding patient care.***

As a critical enabler of high-quality healthcare, procurement has a central role in supporting the Trust's vision of delivering safe, compassionate, and sustainable care. The procurement function is aligned with both national NHS priorities and the specific needs of our local communities across County Durham and Darlington. The following strategic aims guide the Trust's procurement activities.

Aims



Enhancing Patient Care

Procurement decisions are driven by clinical need and focused on improving patient outcomes. Products, services, and solutions procured must support safe, effective, and timely care across all our hospital and community settings.



Achieving Value for Money

We are committed to obtaining best value through effective sourcing strategies, price optimisation, and lifecycle cost analysis. This includes leveraging national frameworks, regional collaboration, and Trust-wide standardisation to drive efficiencies without compromising quality.



Promoting Supply Chain Standardisation

Procurement supports the harmonisation of products and processes across the Trust, reducing clinical variation and operational complexity. Standardisation contributes to improved patient safety, greater resilience, and increased efficiency.



Driving Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility

Aligned with the Trust's Green Plan and the NHS Net Zero agenda, procurement activity actively supports sustainability goals. This includes reducing carbon emissions, minimising waste, and sourcing from environmentally responsible suppliers and manufacturers.



Delivering Social Value

Procurement plays a key role in delivering wider social and economic benefits. The Trust Group seeks to support local businesses, promote inclusive employment, and embed social value criteria into tendering and contracting processes in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.



Enabling Innovation and Transformation

We aim to identify and procure innovative products, services, and digital solutions that support transformation across care pathways. Procurement acts as a strategic partner in facilitating innovation that improves clinical effectiveness and patient experience.



Ensuring Compliance and Robust Governance

All procurement activity is undertaken in accordance with NHS and public sector regulations, including Public Contracts Regulations and the Trust's Standing Financial Instructions. Governance, transparency, and accountability are embedded throughout the procurement lifecycle.

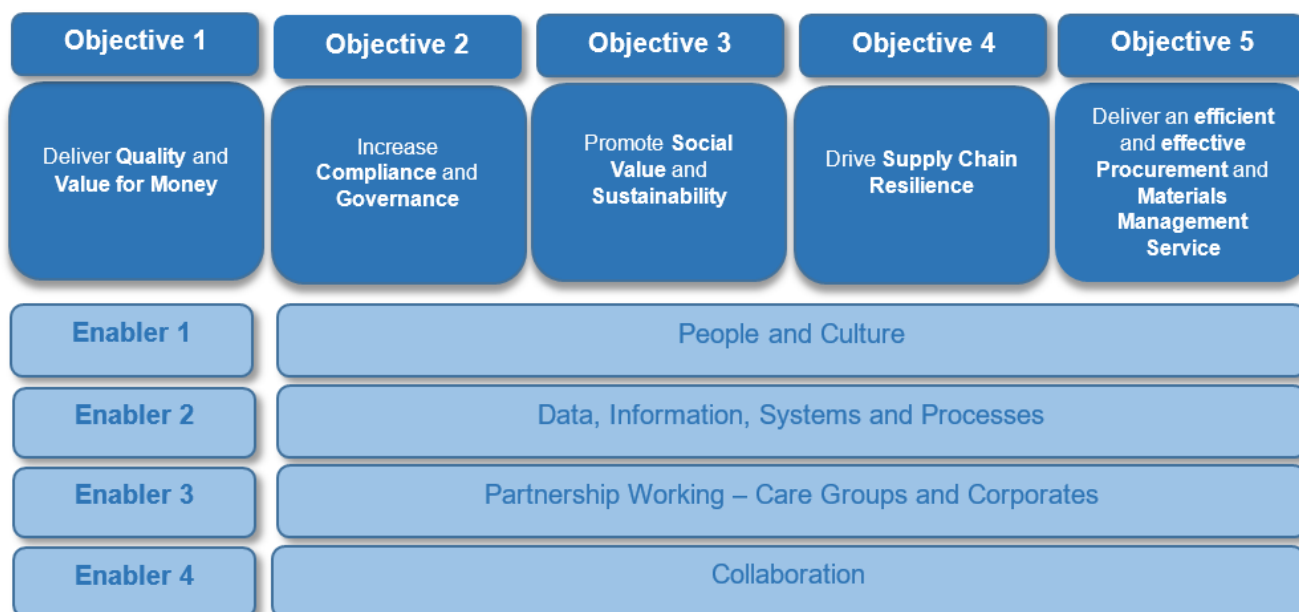


Building Resilient and Responsive Supply Chains

The Trust is focused on ensuring continuity of supply and minimising risk through proactive supplier management, effective stock control, and flexible procurement approaches. This includes learning from recent global supply challenges and enhancing local resilience.

Objectives

To deliver the procurement **vision and aims**, Procurement has developed a strategic framework which identifies 5 strategic objectives to be delivered through 4 key enablers.



The baseline data for all defined objectives can be found detailed in Appendix 2.

Objective 1: Deliver Quality and Value For Money

As part of Synchronicity Care Limited commitment to delivering *quality and value for money*, the Procurement Team is focused on a strategic approach that ensures the effective use of resources to deliver a more efficient, accountable, and sustainable procurement function, enabling us to reinvest savings into frontline services and patient care

Key drivers to achieve this include:

Procuring High-Quality Goods and Services: Ensuring all procurement activity delivers the right products and services that meet clinical standards, offer long-term value, and support positive patient outcomes.

Maximising Procurement via NHS Supply Chain: Optimising use of the NHS Supply Chain to leverage national buying power, access competitive pricing, and secure compliant, value-driven supplies and contracts.

Optimising Competitive Tendering: Running fair, transparent, and commercially robust tendering processes to ensure we achieve best value for money while maintaining service quality.

Promoting Supply Chain Standardisation: Reducing variation and duplication across products and suppliers to drive efficiency, improve reliability, and unlock potential cost savings.

Identifying, Driving and Measuring Savings: Embedding clear savings targets and reporting frameworks to ensure procurement activities deliver measurable financial benefits that can be reinvested into patient care.

Developing a Contract Management Guidance Framework: Providing a post-award supplier and contract management framework to support performance standards, manage risk, ensure continued value for money, and maximise contract outcomes.

Develop a Contract Management Service: In conjunction with SCL Business Development Team and the Trust, in year one of this strategy build a case to invest in a Contract Management Service to drive savings by maximising contract value and contract leakage avoidance.

Targets and Measures of Objective

- Develop a contract management guidance framework.
- Increase Procurement via NHS Supply Chain to 50% from 40% currently.
- Minimum 20% competitive tender opportunities per annum.
- Annual IQEW savings target identified and achieved. £1.25m for 25/26.
- Build a business case for Contract Management Service.

Objective 2: Increase Compliance and Governance

The Trust Group, we are committed to ensuring the highest standards of compliance and governance in our procurement processes, which are fundamental to maintaining trust, transparency, quality and value for money in the delivery of healthcare services. To achieve this, we have a robust framework that aligns with national legislation, Trust policies, and NHS guidelines.

Legislation and Frameworks: Compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, Provider Selection Regime, NHS Procurement policies and relevant Standing Financial Instructions. This ensures all procurement activities are carried out in a transparent and legally compliant manner.

Enhanced Governance: Strengthening our internal procurement governance by ensuring that procurement decisions are subject to rigorous oversight and scrutiny. This includes regular reviews by internal stakeholders to assess compliance and identify areas for improvement.

Training and Capacity Building: Ongoing training for procurement staff and relevant stakeholders to ensure that they are up to date with the latest regulations, best practices, and

technological tools, enabling them to execute procurement activities effectively and within legal boundaries.

Standard Operating Procedures: Consistently update clear and accessible SOPs, ensuring a standardised and consistent approach to procurement across all departments. These are designed to minimise risks, enhance efficiency, and maintain uniformity across procurement activities.

Supplier Engagement and Monitoring: Support ongoing monitoring and performance assessments are conducted for all suppliers and contracts, ensuring they meet contractual obligations and comply with relevant regulations and Trust Group standards. This ensures that all contracts are managed efficiently and deliver high-quality, value-for-money outcomes.

Reducing Breaches and Waivers: Promoting early engagement, forward planning, and adherence to procurement policies will strengthen compliance with Standing Financial Instructions, enhances transparency and reduces risk.

Targets and Measures of Objective:

- Ensure compliance with internal SFIs and external Procurement Legislation.
- Minimum 91% of identifiable spend is covered by a contract.
- Reduce the volume and value of breaches and waivers by 10%.
- 90% value of invoices matched to an electronic Purchase Order.
- 90% volume of invoices matched to an electronic Purchase Order.
- Deliver annual training to The Trust Group stakeholders.

Objective 3: Deliver Social Value and Environmental responsibility

Social Value

The Trust Group is committed to embedding social value at the heart of our procurement processes, in alignment with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the NHS Long Term Plan.

Our strategy ensures that procurement decisions deliver positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes for the communities we serve across County Durham and Darlington. We are focused on supporting local Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), encouraging inclusive employment opportunities, and working with suppliers who share our values around sustainability.

In support of the NHS Net Zero by 2040 target, we actively engage with our supply chain to reduce environmental impact and drive greener practices. Through this approach, we aim to create lasting value for our population, reduce health inequalities, and support a thriving, resilient local economy.

Sustainable Procurement

The Trust Group recognises the responsibility and opportunity to reduce the impact to the environment and lead on all aspects of sustainable development including sustainable procurement.

The Sustainable Procurement Policy sets out the areas and process whereby The Trust will ensure that sustainable procurement considerations are embedded in its requirements for products, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis. In addition to consider reducing demand, the circular economy and managing the supply chain effectively to support the achievement of the Trust's Green Plan and objectives.

The Trust Group is dedicated to ensuring that goods, services, works and utilities procured:

- are manufactured, delivered, used and disposed of in an environmentally-friendly, sustainable and socially responsible manner, and

- deliver long-term value for money for the NHS and the Public Sector as a whole.

The Procurement team will promote and raise the profile of sustainable procurement; focus and consideration will be given broadly to waste, energy, plastic, paper, timber, substances, carbon footprint, ethical procurement and whole life costing.

We recognise that climate change poses one of the greatest long-term risks to public health and the NHS. Our Green Plan sets out our commitment to reducing the Trust Groups environmental footprint, supporting the national NHS ambition to achieve Net Zero. Through sustainable procurement, smarter energy use, greener travel, and waste reduction initiatives, we are working to lower our carbon emissions and protect the environment for future generations.

Targets and Measures of Objective:

- Draft Corporate Social Value metrics and measurements toolkit.
- Include minimum 10% evaluation weightings for social value in all appropriate tenders over £50,000.
- Target at least 5% of total procurement spend with local SME's and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations by 2028.
- Introduce mandatory requirements for suppliers to submit carbon reduction plans for all contracts above £5 million.

Objective 4: Build Resilient and Responsive Supply Chains

To build resilient and responsive supply chains, The Trust Group will work collaboratively with NHS Supply Chain and other key partners. This includes improving stock visibility, diversifying sourcing routes, and strengthening supplier relationships to reduce risk and ensure continuity of supply by reducing single points of failure through supplier diversification. Leveraging the scale and capability of NHS Supply Chain will support more efficient procurement, enhance flexibility, and help the Trust respond quickly to changing clinical and operational needs.

The procurement team plays a critical role in supporting high-quality patient care and operational resilience through continuity of supply. Our team actively supports the Clinical Procurement Nurse Specialists in limiting supply disruption across the Trust, directly reducing the effect on patients. Through proactive identification and management of supply chain shortages, the Sourcing Officer ensures a continuous flow of essential products, particularly supporting Theatre Materials Management staff to maintain uninterrupted surgical services.

Stronger engagement with suppliers and the sourcing of alternative products has significantly reduced disruption to front-line services, resulting in a positive impact on patient care. Our focus on improved product standardisation, accurate sourcing register maintenance, and sustainability identification drives both compliance and operational efficiency.

Cyber Security Risk Management

Procurement activities, especially with the increasing use of digital systems and online platforms, are inherently linked to cyber security risks. These risks arise from the potential for data breaches, fraud, and identity theft within the procurement process. To mitigate these threats, organisations are being encouraged to implement robust security measures, including updating software and hardware, conducting vendor risk assessments, and ensuring adequate security measures are in place for digital data exchange. This risk will be proactively addressed within the system plan by developing and managing a cyber risk and mitigation control document - see section Enabler 2.

Targets and Measures of Objective:

- Maintain a critical supplier risk register, reviewed annually.
- Increase Procurement via NHS Supply Chain to 50% from 40%.
- Review business continuity plans.
- Introduce product standardisation work-stream
- Increase formal consignment agreements for Theatre inventory.

Objective 5: Deliver effective and efficient Purchasing, Information and Material Management Services

Synchronicity Care Limited provide an effective and timely procurement, purchasing, information and materials management services to patients, staff and visitors through robust processes, procedures and continuous improvement plans.

Purchasing and Information

The Purchasing and Information teams plays a pivotal role in ensuring the efficient procurement of goods and services essential for patient care and operational effectiveness. The teams provide purchasing and information services not only to The Trust Group but also to other trusts, including Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.

The Purchasing and Information team are responsible for:

Transactional Purchasing: The team handles low-value, high-volume purchases, ensuring timely and cost-effective acquisition and delivery of goods and services. This includes processing requisitions, generating purchase orders, and liaising with suppliers to expedite deliveries.

Compliance and Governance: All procurement activities are conducted in adherence to the Trust's Standing Financial Instructions, NHS legislation, and relevant audit requirements, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Supplier Engagement: Maintaining effective relationships with suppliers is crucial. The team negotiates contracts, monitors supplier performance, and ensures the Trust receives value for money.

System Management and Administration: Utilising the Cardea eProcurement system, the team manages supplier information, product catalogues, and approval structures, training of staff, facilitating efficient procurement processes across multiple trusts.

Materials Management Teams

The Materials Management Team plays a crucial role in ensuring the efficient top up of supply and availability of medical and non-medical supplies to Theatres, Wards and Departments across the Trust's hospitals and healthcare facilities. The team collaborates closely with clinical and non-clinical departments to manage inventory, streamline procurement process, timely ordering and replenishment and generally support patient care through effective materials management.

The Materials Management Teams are responsible for:

Inventory Management: The teams are responsible for maintaining optimal stock levels of essential supplies, ensuring that clinical and non-clinical areas have the necessary items readily available without overstocking or wastage.

Procurement Support: Working in tandem with the Procurement Department, the Materials Management Team assists in sourcing and replenishing stock, adhering to the Trust's procurement policies and Standing Financial Instructions.

Supply Chain Co-ordination: They coordinate with suppliers and internal departments to ensure timely delivery and distribution of materials, addressing any supply chain disruptions promptly.

Data Management: Utilising inventory management systems, the team monitors usage patterns, forecasts demand, and generates reports to inform decision-making and improve efficiency.

Compliance and Governance: Ensuring that all materials management activities comply with NHS regulations, health and safety standards, and internal policies is a key aspect of their role.

Targets and Measures of Objective:

- 90% value and volume of invoices matched to an electronically generated Purchase order.
- 80% purchase order spend on a catalogue.
- 75% of purchase order lines by volume transmitted through Electronic Data Interchange.
- 60% of e-invoice lines transmitted through Electronic Data Interchange.
- Provide a helpdesk service in line with the applicable Service Level Agreement KPI's.
- Undertake annual Ward stock reviews
- Research an Inventory Management System approach by 2028.

Enabler 1: People and Culture

We are dedicated to attracting, nurturing, and retaining a diverse and talented workforce, supported by strong investment in training, development, and the foundations of effective people management, including regular one-to-one meetings, high-quality annual appraisals, and personal development plans.

Our focus is on building an engaged, inclusive, resilient, competent, and adaptable workforce to meet the evolving needs of our patients and services. We strive to be an exceptional place to work and an employer of choice, fostering a culture that champions innovation, continuous improvement, and excellence in care.

Key objectives for the team are set out in our SCL People Matter Plan which was rolled out in 2023 and is continuously applied each year, key objectives include:

- Maintain a quality appraisal process and regular one to one's
- Seeking and acting upon both qualitative and quantitative data from staff surveys,
- Staff training and development plans in place
- Regular celebration of individual and team success

Targets and Measures

- High retention rate, staff turnover at or below target (9%)
- High participation in Employee Survey (>60%)
- Appraisal compliance at target (95%)

The Procurement team responsibilities and structure is set out at Section 6 below.

Enabler 2: Data, systems and processes

Data, systems and processes are critical enablers of effective procurement for The Trust Group. By harnessing accurate, real-time data and optimising procurement systems such as Procure to Pay, Procurement Tender & Contract Management, Spend Comparison and Supply Chain

platforms, the Trust can drive informed decision-making, improve compliance, and track performance. Streamlined processes and integrated digital tools will support greater efficiency, transparency, and agility across the procurement lifecycle, enabling the Trust to deliver better value and service quality.

Implement Procure to Pay system: Implementation of the new procure to pay system: Medius will bring significant benefits to The Trust Group by improving compliance, streamlining processes, and reducing costs. This will assist to eliminate unapproved purchases, ensuring all procurement is aligned with pre-existing agreements and supporting the Trust's No PO, No Pay policy.

Optimise Pipeline Management of Procurement Projects and Tender & Contract Management system: Building on the current platform the system delivers non-cashable efficiency savings by reducing duplication of effort and supporting the adoption of new legislation, such as the Procurement Act. It streamlines procurement activities with electronic contract signatures and makes it easier for suppliers, particularly SMEs, to work with The Trust Group. A standard NHS Procurement Value and Savings Methodology has been introduced to enable consistent planning, forecasting, and reporting at project and contract level.

Optimise the use of NHS spend comparison system: Continued use of the spend comparison service and business intelligence tool provides benchmarking and spend analytics on Purchase Order and Accounts Payable data from across all of NHS. The analytical information enables NHS procurement and finance stakeholders to identify areas of non-pay expenditure, common expenditure and potential areas for cost savings. The information enables us to reduce costs and improve the quality of our services.

Source and research an Inventory Management System: SCL Procurement currently provides a ward-level consumable stock top-up service using the NHS Supply Chain's electronic data capture system, which does not track stock usage at the point of care. Introducing a modern Inventory Management System (IMS) would deliver significant benefits, including improved inventory accuracy, cost savings through better stock control, increased productivity by automating tracking processes, and enhanced customer satisfaction through better product availability. It would also offer valuable insights for planning, simplify year-end stock takes by providing real-time stock data, and support the government initiative barcoding and scanning technology Scan4Safety project aimed at improving patient safety, reducing clinical errors, and increasing efficiency by enabling uniquely identify products, people, places, and assets enabling the adoption of GS1 coding and Pan-European Public Procurement On-Line PEPPOL standards

Develop a cyber risk and mitigation control document to manage cyber security risk: With the increasing use of digital systems and online platforms as mentioned above, this increases the risk of data breaches, fraud, and identity theft within the procurement process. Procurement will support the development of a risk and mitigation control document in year one working in conjunction with and being led by the Data Security and Protection Team. An action plan will be developed and actions implemented for any gaps identified.

Research Artificial Intelligence AI in Procurement: AI is playing an increasingly important role in NHS procurement by improving sourcing efficiency, automating repetitive tasks, and enhancing decision-making with real-time data analysis. AI tools can forecast demand for medical supplies, identify cost-saving opportunities, and flag supply chain risks, helping to ensure continuity of care while managing tight budgets. Beyond procurement, AI is being capable of being applied across wider NHS processes, from patient scheduling and diagnostics to workforce planning and administrative workflows thus enabling smarter resource allocation, reduced waiting times, and improved patient outcomes. As the wider NHS continues to adopt AI-driven solutions, it stands to benefit from greater operational efficiency, transparency, and strategic agility.

Enabler 3: Partnership working, Care Groups and Corporates

Engagement and collaboration within CDDFT to drive the key objectives will be on multiple levels for example:

Trust and SCL Board of Directors: The ADoP will report bi annually to the Trust and SCL Boards on progress towards the objectives outlined in this strategy.

Senior Leadership Team meetings: The ADoP will attend and present on a regular basis the progress against various procurement activities such as key work-streams, updates on legislative requirements, efficiencies, IQEW savings progress, updates from the Clinical Products Review Group, system update and breaches and waivers.

Care Group and Corporates: Each Care Group and departments at The Trust Group are supported by a dedicated procurement lead, providing a first point of contact and strategic procurement advice. The procurement team attend Care Group monthly meeting and routinely present quality management information, including contract pipelines to manage forward work-plans for priority projects. The team proactively identify savings, efficiencies, and added value opportunities, while promoting sustainability, innovation, and the broader benefits delivered through procurement processes.

Enabler 4: Collaboration

The identification and delivery of efficiencies and savings has never been more prevalent within the National Health Service, working collaboratively to achieve this is crucial. Collaborative working will achieve cost savings, improve efficiency, and enhance the quality of services.

The Procurement Service will not only engage collaboratively internally as detailed in enabler 3 section, but will actively engage with other organisations and likeminded partners nationally, regionally or locally to develop sourcing strategies for commonly procured goods, works and services where collaboration would bring benefit to the Trust. Regular meetings and terms of reference support the direction of travel in relation to all procurement activity.

Benefits of Collaboration in Procurement

- Cost Savings, reduced prices and discounts on unit prices can be secured by higher volume purchasing.
- Improved Efficiencies, collaboration reduces duplication of efforts across Trusts, leading to time and resource savings.
- Standardisation, collaborative procurement helps standardise products and services, making it easier to maintain quality and consistency across NHS services.
- Risk Mitigation, combining risks such as supply chain disruptions, can help protect the Trust Group from instabilities in demand or price increases.
- Innovation and Knowledge, collaborative working encourages the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas that can improve the procurement process and the products and services.
- Actively collaborate on procurement related matters at a regional level.
- Deliver joint projects with the Central Nested Collaborative Procurement.

Collaborative Buying Groups and Frameworks: The Trust Group uses *NHS Supply Chain* one of the largest collaborative procurement organisations in the NHS. NHS Supply Chain centralises the procurement of medical supplies, equipment, and services, aiming to deliver savings and improve value for money and *Collaborative Frameworks* to reduce procurement process time and allow for better pricing. These are agreements externally negotiated for use across multiple public sector organisations including the Trust Group.

Integrated Care System ICS: The procurement team have regular interaction with regional partners such as North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (NENC ICS) and neighbouring Trusts via the newly formed Nested Collaborative Procurement Group where it benefits to do so. The NENC ICS efficiency programme is currently funded over a 2 year interim basis (2024-2026): resourced with a leader and three Procurement Managers to programme manage, co-ordinate and deliver collective and collaborative efficiencies. The NENC Strategic Procurement Board (SPB) incorporates and represents all Trusts in North East and North Cumbria. The SPB has dual accountability to the NENC Provider Collaborative Leadership Board and the NENC System Recovery Board with the oversight of continued delivery of efficiencies and increased focus of the delivery of collective and collaborative efficiencies.

Regional Procurement Networks: The Trust Group actively collaborates on procurement related matters at a regional level. The NENC Integrated Care System Procurement Forum joins forces with other members from:

- County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Group represented by Synchronicity Care Limited
- Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust
- North East Ambulance Service
- Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust,
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust represented by City Hospital Independent Commercial Enterprises Sunderland.

Joint Procurement with Other Public Sector Bodies: The Trust Group collaborates with other public sector organisations such as local authorities and educational institutions for common goods and services. Joint procurement ensures better value for money and strengthens the collective bargaining power of the public sector.

Clinical Engagement: Alongside the previous Enabler 3 section, the procurement team work collaboratively with clinicians on clinical products procured and used throughout County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and other national guidance in the form of the Clinical Products Review Group.

The procurement team and the wider group provides support and guidance on proposed procurement or trials of new clinical equipment or consumables taking into consideration patient safety, governance, risk management, relative cost, effectiveness, sustainability, rationalisation and standardisation. Nationally Contracted Products proposed by NHS Supply Chain will be reviewed by the review group prior to being introduced into the Trust where possible.

5 Procurement Responsibilities and Structure

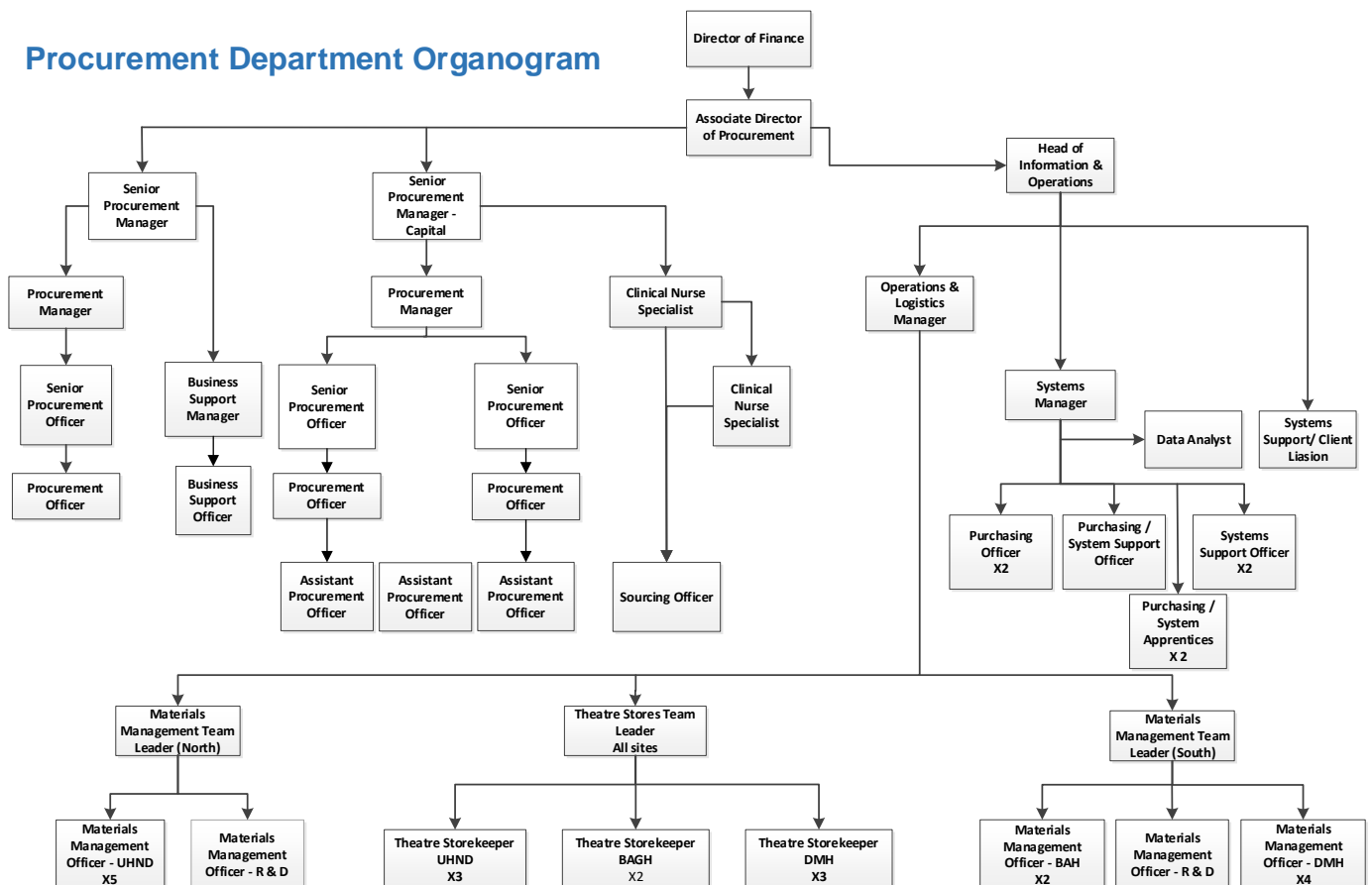
The procurement team at Synchronicity Care Limited is responsible for delivering strategic, value-driven purchasing and supply chain management across the Trust Group. Working closely with Care Groups and service departments to manage procurement activities, provide expert advice, and ensure the effective planning and delivery of contracts and projects.

Our duties include identifying savings and efficiency opportunities, supporting sustainability and innovation, maintaining contract pipelines, ensuring compliance with relevant statutory and mandatory regulations along with the various requirements of corporate governance such as Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation. Whilst promoting best practices in procurement to deliver high-quality, cost-effective outcomes for patient care.

The procurement service may also include income generation via commercial arrangements with external organisations, by hosting frameworks by acting as a contracting authority or providing services to other bodies who may require specialist support from a professional procurement function, either on an interim basis or under a more long-term arrangement.

To provide an efficient and effective procurement service to the Trust Group, the procurement team consists of 52 staff members across 4 multi discipline areas: Procurement which includes a business support functionality, Purchasing, Information and Materials Management. The below organogram details the roles in the full department.

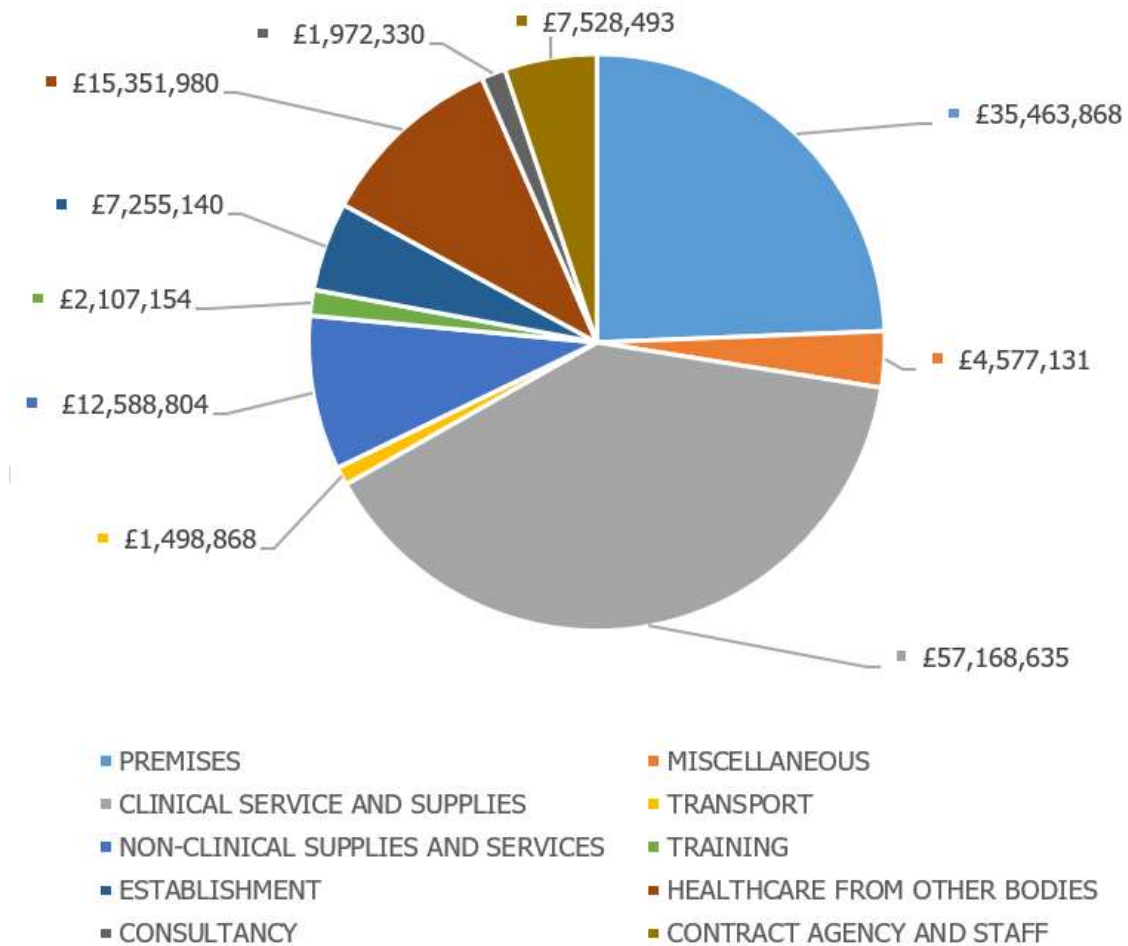
Procurement Department Organogram



6 Spend Profile

This strategy covers influenceable, non-pay expenditure excluding medicines including VAT. The profile per annum is circa. £145m.

The Trust Spend Profile



Across the Trust Group, CDDFT and SCL have 580 live contracts in place end of April 2025. This is made up of contracts procured through a traditional procurement route, including waivers, awards through external frameworks and National Pricing Matrices.

The number of contract renewals will vary year to year with additional contracts being awarded following a procurement process.

7 Risk Management

Key risks to the delivery of this strategy will be:

- The ability to attract and retain qualified and experienced Procurement staff
- Related to above the risk of supporting the Care Group and Corporate Teams in delivery of the Annual savings targets
- Inability to invest in key system infrastructure e.g. Inventory Management System
- Supply Chain disruption due to the macro geo-political environment.
- Possible reduction in external Procurement service provision to external Trusts.
- Service disruption with introduction of new procure to pay system.

All procurement risks will be identified and managed via the Trust's Safeguard system.

No	Strategic Procurement Objective	Overview	Actions/ Outcome Measures	Timescales
1	Deliver Quality and Value for Money	Ensure all procurement activities delivers value for money and maximises value through cost, quality outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a contract management guidance framework. Increase Procurement via NHS Supply Chain to 50% from 40%. Increase the number of competitive tender opportunities by 20%. Identification and realisation of efficiencies and savings realised through procurement. Annual IQEW savings target identified and achieved. £1.25m for 25/26. 	FYE 2025 FYE 2027 Annually Annually Annually
2	Increase Compliance and Good Governance	Maintain full compliance with all applicable procurement legislation, NHS regulations, and internal policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with internal SFIs and external Procurement Legislation. Minimum 91% of identifiable spend is covered by a contract. Reduce the volume and value of breaches and waivers by 10% 90% value of invoices matched to an electronic Purchase Order. 90% volume of invoices matched to an electronic Purchase Order. Deliver training to The Trust Group stakeholders. 	Annually Monthly FYE 2025/26 Monthly Monthly Quarterly
3	Promote Social Value and Sustainability	Embed environmental, ethical, and social considerations into all procurement decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Corporate Social Value metrics and measurements toolkit. Include minimum 10% evaluation weightings for social value in all appropriate tenders over £50,000. Target at least 5% of total procurement spend with local Small and Medium Enterprises Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations by 2028. Introduce mandatory requirements for suppliers to submit carbon reduction plans for all contracts above £5 million. 	FYE 2025/26 FYE 2025/26 FYE 2028 FYE 2027
4	Drive Supply Chain Resilience	Build agile, transparent, and adaptive supply chains that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a critical supplier risk register, reviewed annually. Increase Procurement via NHS Supply Chain to 50% 	Annually FYE 2027/28



		withstand disruption and fuel sustainable growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain up to date business continuity plans. • Introduce product standardisation work-stream • Increase formal consignment agreements for Theatre inventory 	Annually FYE 2025/26 FYE 2026
5	Deliver an efficient and effective Procurement, Purchasing, information and Materials Management Service	Ensure timely replenishment of inventory across 3 acute hospital sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% value and volume of invoices matched to an electronically generated Purchase order. • 80% purchase order spend on a catalogue. • 75% of purchase order lines by volume transmitted through Electronic Data Interchange. • 60% of e-invoice lines transmitted through Electronic Data Interchange. • Provide a helpdesk service in line with the applicable Service Level Agreement KPI's. • Undertake annual Ward stock reviews • Research an Inventory Management System approach 	Monthly Monthly Monthly Monthly Daily Monthly FYE 2028



No	Enabler	Overview	Work-streams
1	People and Culture	Ensure the procurement team and wider Trust stakeholders have the skills, tools, and resources to succeed in delivery of the Procurement Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in staff CPD /CIPS qualifications, NHS procurement training. Further develop a procurement talent pipeline and grown your own approach. Foster a culture of learning and best practice sharing.
2	Data, Information, Systems and Processes	Enhance efficiency and insight through digital tools and analytics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Procure to Pay system Optimise Pipeline Management of Procurement Projects and Tender & Contract Management system Optimise the use of NHS spend comparison system Source and implement an Inventory Management System Support the development of a cyber risk and mitigation control document Research Artificial Intelligence AI in Procurement
3	Partnership working – Care Groups and Corporates	Care Group and stakeholder engagement to align procurement strategies with clinical priorities and service delivery, supporting patient care outcomes to deliver high-quality, sustainable services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage stakeholders early in procurement planning. Regular engagement with Care Group and stakeholders Attendance with clinical procurement groups. Ensure timely availability of critical medical supplies and services.
4	Collaboration	Strategically collaborate with partners at national, regional, and local levels to identify and create unified sourcing strategies for commonly procured goods, works, and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align strategies with Integrated Care System procurement. Participate in NHS Supply Chain initiatives. Share procurement intelligence with regional partners. Value savings and efficiencies realised through collaborative working Identify any joint procurement project locally through Nested Collaborative Procurement Group



Procurement KPI's

Catalogue Coverage:

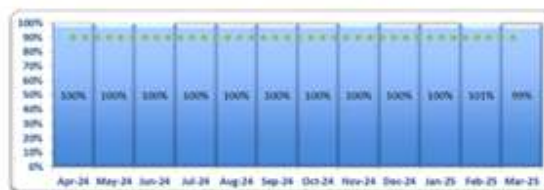
% of Order Lines created from Catalogue



..... Carter Threshold requirement 80%

No PO No Pay Policy:

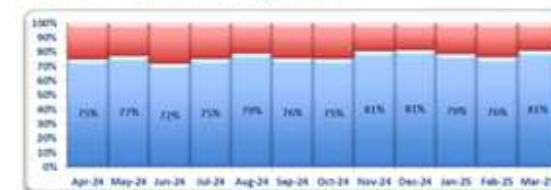
% of Invoices matched to an ePO



..... Carter Threshold requirement 90%

Electronic PO transmission:

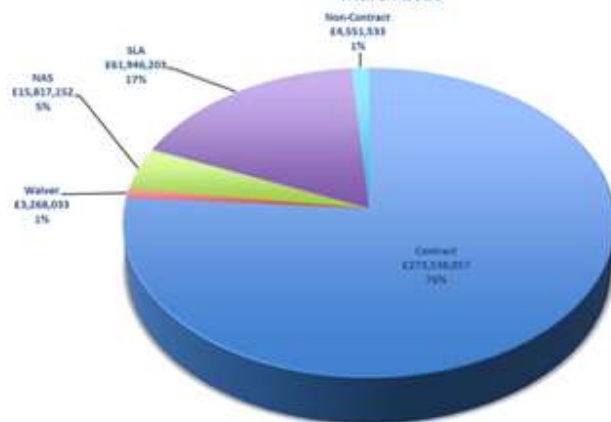
% of electronic purchase order lines transmitted through EDI



Contract Coverage:

% of addressable spend under contract

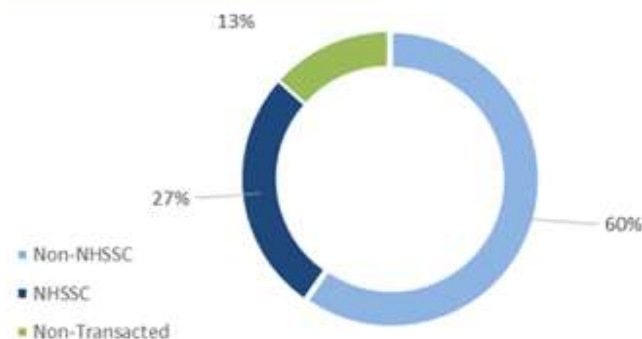
4: Carter Contracted Spend Analysis March 2025



NHSSC Coverage:

% of addressable spend via NHS Supply Chain

% Total Spend by Spend Type



NHSSC Coverage:

% of addressable eClass spend via NHS Supply Chain

