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[](https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/pexels-fauxels-3183197-2.jpg%22%20%5Co%20%22Could%20a%20wellbeing%20economy%20approach%20transform%20the%20NHS)

[**Could a wellbeing economy approach transform the NHS?**](https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/could-a-wellbeing-economy-approach-transform-the-nhs/)

* 29th June 2023
* [Rachel Laurence](https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/author/rachel-laurence/)
* [Blog](https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/category/blog/)

*In 2022 the NHS set out a bold new system to help deliver joined up health and care services in England.* ***Rachel Laurence*** *explains how Centre for Thriving Places is supporting this project across key areas of its work.*

From July 2022, 42 new statutory partnerships, known as [integrated care systems](https://www.england.nhs.uk/integratedcare/what-is-integrated-care/) (ICS) have been in place in England. These new bodies encompass an integrated care partnership (which brings together partners responsible for improving care, health and wellbeing) and an integrated care board (which manages the NHS budget and commissions health services). Within each ICS, broad partnerships across places and regions help to join up approaches within the complex systems that impact on our health.

The Thriving Places Index (TPI) is the UK’s leading local wellbeing economy framework, which provides a way of seeing, understanding and bringing together traditionally separate policy areas including health, climate, economy, communities and transport. The index, with its robust system of indicators can help align the strategic goals of ICS partnerships.

CTP is developing a body of work to harness the exciting opportunity ICS partnerships offer – to join up vision, strategy, resources and programme design, using a transparent data-informed process. This could transform care and rewire local systems, fit for the challenges of the 21st century and ready to deliver equitable and sustainable outcomes.

One of our partners, [Mid Essex ICS Alliance](https://www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/your-area/mid-essex/alliance/), says: ‘We are committed to the Mid Essex ICS Alliance driving systemic change in how the wider economy works to address health inequalities and build better health outcomes. Tools like the TPI offer a robust, data driven approach, making it easy for different parts of the system to connect and take a holistic view of our strengths and needs. This process will help us to collectively align and direct our resources to address the important wider determinants of health.’

 **CTP is currently offering support across seven key areas of ICS work**

1. **Bespoke Thriving Place/Wellbeing Framework –** helping ICS Partnerships develop a localised and tailored version of the TPI framework, building on our national indicator set and presenting these outcomes against local priorities.
2. **Data collection support –** to develop a plan for monitoring data against the framework, drawing in TPI annual data alongside sources within ICS geography.
3. **Integration and implementation strategy to embed a wellbeing economy approach** – supporting ICS partners to identify where the framework can shape decisions, intervention and connections across services.
4. **Building cross-sector/cross-policy-area budget and intervention approaches –** using the wellbeing economy framework approach to bring together stakeholders from council departments, health and voluntary and community sector partners and other bodies to facilitate pooling of budgets, resources, impact measurement and programme design.
5. **Thriving Place/Wellbeing Economy Narrative and Communication –** supporting the wellbeing economy narrative that accompanies such an outcomes framework, a guide to its role in economic recovery and a visual representation of the indicator set.
6. **Outcomes based commissioning design –** helping develop and design approaches that enable partnerships to fund shared outcomes.
7. **Anchor Network approach in partnership with CLES –** we work closely with CLES¹, the UK’s leading experts on anchor network development and community wealth building, who specialise in developing progressive anchor practice in health. [Their 2019 research](https://cles.org.uk/publications/health-institutions-as-anchors-establishing-proof-of-concept-in-the-nhs/) exploring the role of the NHS as an anchor institution in addressing the wider determinants of health, influenced the recent commitment in the NHS Long Term Plan to accelerate good anchor practice across the English NHS. Their recently published [new framework](https://cles.org.uk/publications/healthy-places/) for ICPs to drive a community wealth building approach through procurement, employment and land complements the CTP Wellbeing Economy support outlined above, and are working with them to dovetail the two offers.

We are excited about exploring the ways in which ICS Partnerships can innovate to shift wider outcomes in their local economic systems, and how these interventions can be tracked and learned from. As we develop new projects, we are keen to hear from ICS partnerships and those working with them interested in finding out how a wellbeing economy framework can provide a practical and robust structure for the work the ICS systems are setting out to achieve.

*1 CTP works closely with a range of excellent partners active in the place-based new economy / wellbeing economy /  inclusive economy space. One of our leading partners is CLES, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies. Just as CTP has been approached by emerging ICS partnerships because of the interest in the scope of our Wellbeing Framework offer for ICS systems, CLES has found an increasing level of interest from ICS partnerships in how their cutting edge work on building anchor networks of place based institutions, who collectively can direct their wider power as procurers, employers, land-owners and conveners, to drive forward system wide changes in a place based economy, can be applied at ICS system level. We’re working with CLES to bring together the two components of our respective experience and background in supporting ICS partnerships,  exploring joint work in 2023 within the Black Country, South Yorkshire and the North East in particular.*

*For more information, please contact us on* *hello@centreforthrivingplaces.org* *and look out for a blog next month sharing more details of our work across Mid Essex.*