

Upcoming Meetings

Sustainability meeting - 18th
August 2026 @ 11:30am

Practice Educator meeting -
7th Sept 2026 @ 1pm

Clinical Forum - 8th Sept
2026 @ 9.30am

Rehab & Follow Up Meeting -
10th Sept 2025 @ 2pm

Outreach Meeting - 18th Sept
2026 @ 2pm

KSS ACC Conference - 21st
Sept 2026 All Day

Matrons Meeting - 5th
October 2026 @ 1pm

Transfer Meeting - 20th
October 2026 @ 12 midday



Please remember to
complete DoS twice a
day (Morning by 9AM
and evening by 9PM)



Share your content in our next
newsletter!

For example; forthcoming
study days or completed or
ongoing QI projects,

please send an email:
[KSSCriticalCareNetwork@uhs.
nhs.uk](mailto:KSSCriticalCareNetwork@uhs.nhs.uk)

Welcome to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex adult critical care network quarterly newsletter

Sepsis Modern Service Framework Published

NHS England has launched the new Sepsis Modern Service Framework, providing a whole-system approach to sepsis care from prevention and recognition through to rehabilitation and follow-up.

For further information and access to the Sepsis Modern Service Framework, please refer to these links NHS England » Sepsis modern service framework, NHS England » Sepsis modern service framework

The framework aims to:

- Improve consistency of care
- Reduce inequalities
- Promote innovation and best practice
- Support measurable improvements in outcomes

The KSS Network will be hosting discussions and updates to support local implementation.

From Data to Action: Reducing Delayed Discharges from Critical Care

The KSS Adult Critical Care Network is working with the South West and Thames Valley & Wessex Critical Care Networks to reduce delayed discharges from critical care and improve patient flow across the region. Participating organisations are contributing data to a regional benchmarking dashboard, helping identify variation, share good practice and support service improvement. The project is particularly focused on patients who remain in critical care for more than 24 hours after being declared medically fit for discharge.

Critical care teams have an important role to play in supporting this work through engagement with executive and operational colleagues, helping to:

- Highlight the impact of delayed discharges on patient flow and capacity
- Identify local barriers and improvement opportunities
- Support development and implementation of Trust action plans
- Ensure critical care representation within operational improvement groups

Early findings suggest that organisations achieving timely discharges share several common characteristics, including strong collaboration between critical care and bed management teams, proactive escalation processes, routine attendance at operational meetings and clear discharge pathways. The project remains focused on improvement rather than performance management, providing an opportunity for organisations to learn from one another while ensuring critical care capacity is used as effectively as possible. The Network would like to thank all participating units for their continued engagement and looks forward to sharing further learning and outcomes as the work progresses.

As part of the next phase of the programme, Trusts with more than 15% of patients experiencing delays greater than 24 hours have been asked to submit a local action plan by 1 September 2026. These plans will help organisations identify barriers, strengthen collaboration across teams and improve the timely transfer of patients to the most appropriate care setting.

New South East Surge Guidance in Development

Nationally there is significant focus on Emergency Preparedness both for surge and major incidents. The KSS ACC & TV&W Critical care network are working together to develop a regional Adult Critical Care Surge Guidance.

The guidance will provide a coordinated approach to:

- Escalation and surge management
- Capacity and patient flow
- Mutual aid arrangements
- Regional operational resilience

As the work progresses, the Network will continue to engage with clinical and operational colleagues to ensure the guidance reflects both national principles and the practical realities faced by critical care services across the region.

Further updates will be shared through future network communications and meetings as the South East Surge Guidance moves towards finalisation and implementation.

Mike Carraretto – Consultant PAG

The network is delighted to confirm that Mike Carraretto has been appointed to the ICS consultant professional advisory group (PAG). These advisory groups help shape UK practice across all areas of intensive care and help the ICS better understand the areas which need their support. They are the mechanism through which the views and expertise of each profession are represented at Council. The PAG members are responsible for providing advice and expertise in matters relating to their profession to the ICS Council. The consultant PAG represents consultant intensivists in critical care, championing their interests, expertise, and development and shapes policy, guidance and resources that reflect the real-world experiences and needs of the multi-professional critical care community.

Mike is motivated to champion the role of consultant intensivists, represent them and support their work, and through this to improve intensive care for both patients and for the staff working there. Please do get in touch with Mike via the PAG if you have any matters to raise or be represented to the ICS.

You can contact any of the PAGs by email: PAGSupport@ics.ac.uk

GPICS V3 Audit Toolkit Now Available

The GPICS V3 Audit Toolkit is now available to support Adult Critical Care Units in assessing progress against GPICS V3 standards. Nationally, all units are being asked to complete the audit by 31 January 2027, with findings reviewed by the Intensive Care Society and the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and shared through national reports and events. The CC3N are also looking to collect and analyse the nursing data. The KSS Adult Critical Care Network strongly encourages all units to participate in the national exercise. We will also be discussing the audit and its potential benefits at the upcoming Clinical Forum, including how the results may support quality improvement, service development and shared learning across the region. Following completion of the national analysis, the Network is exploring opportunities for local and Tri-Network benchmarking during 2027 to better understand regional variation, identify examples of good practice and support future improvement initiatives. Units may therefore be asked to review and update their submissions as this work develops.

For further information and access to the toolkit, visit the Intensive Care Society website: GPICS V3 Audit Toolkit.

ARCC KSS Q1 2026/27 Update

The Adult Regional Critical Care Transfer Service (ARCC KSS) continues to enhance specialist critical care transfer provision across Kent, Surrey and Sussex. During Quarter 1 (April to June 2026), the service managed 141 referrals, transferring 52 patients using ARCC KSS clinical teams and supporting a further 22 transfers with ARCC KSS vehicles and local clinical teams. Demand increased throughout the quarter, with referrals rising from 38 in April to 54 in June, and 65% of patients requiring Level 3 critical care support. Operational performance improved during the quarter, with reduced dispatch and transfer times and strong clinical team availability of 81%. Feedback from healthcare professionals has been overwhelmingly positive, with scores of 10/10 for communication and 9.8/10 for team interactions, reflecting the professionalism and expertise of the teams.

Since launching in July 2025, ARCC KSS has managed 318 referrals and completed 124 specialist critical care transfers, supporting equitable access to specialist care across the region.

Key developments in 2026 include:

- East Base, Maidstone, went live (January 2026)
- Service Administrator appointed (March 2026)
- Second clinical team launched (May 2026)
- Bespoke transfer vehicle design finalised (May 2026)
- RingCentral telephony introduced (June 2026)
- 24/7 Single Point of Contact (SPOC) launched within SECamb ICC (July 2026)
- Band 7 Base Lead commencing (August 2026)
- Daily availability of at least one clinical transfer team from July onwards

Looking ahead, ARCC KSS is progressing recruitment to several key roles, including Transfer Consultants, Resident Doctors, an Educational Lead and Deputy Clinical Lead, alongside the development of practitioner-led transfers and a regional engagement event with SECamb. These developments will further strengthen the service's ability to deliver safe, timely and high-quality transfers for critically ill patients across Kent, Surrey and Sussex.



Adult Regional Critical Care Transfer Service
Kent, Surrey and Sussex

Scope of the service: Transfer critically unwell adults (ICS Level 2 and 3 patients) referred from Hospitals within Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

SPOC (24/7)
0300 303 4147

Unsure? Call our Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All referrals are processed via the SPOC.

Please have the following information available when you call:

1. Patient's Name and DOB
2. NHS Number
3. Reason for Transfer
4. Type and Urgency of Transfer
5. Referring and Receiving Hospital/Unit Details
6. Referring and Receiving Consultant information
7. Clinical Details: including Current diagnosis and PMH
8. Current Organ Support
9. ABCDE Assessment – including invasive lines and infusions
10. IPC Status and known infections

Website: www.arccssstransferservice.nhs.uk
ARCC KSS generic email: rsch.arccss@nhs.net

ICS Levels of Care (information)

Preparing your Patient for Transfer

Feedback form for Healthcare professionals

Information and feedback form for Patients and Relatives

Website

Rehabilitation & Follow-Up Conference 2026 – Fully Booked!

Registration has now closed for the KSS Adult Critical Care Rehabilitation & Follow-Up Conference 2026, with a fantastic response from across the region and a full complement of delegates expected on 21st September 2026.

This year's conference, "Closing the Gap: Delivering NCEPOD Guidance Across the Recovery Journey", will bring together multidisciplinary colleagues to explore recovery after critical illness, including patient and family experience, rehabilitation and follow-up services, psychological recovery, swallowing and communication, and the use of innovative technologies and outcome measures.

Taking place at the Crowne Plaza London Gatwick Airport, RH11 7SX, the event promises a valuable opportunity for learning, networking and sharing best practice across the critical care community. We look forward to welcoming delegates to what is set to be another highly successful Network conference.

CC3N Steps 1-3 Proficiency Framework Version 2 Update

Following a comprehensive review by CC3N and CCNERF, the Steps 1-3 Proficiency Framework Version 2 (V2) will go live on the Digital Learning Solutions (DLS) platform on 7 September 2026. The framework will also be available for download from the CC3N website for units using paper-based documentation.

Staff currently undertaking Version 1 (V1) may continue with their existing framework but must complete it within 18 months. V1 will be retired on 3 April 2028, after which it will no longer be accessible. Learners who have not completed V1 by this date will need to restart on V2. Organisations may therefore wish to avoid enrolling new staff onto V1 during August 2026 and instead start them on V2 from September.

Key changes to Step 1 include:

- Setting up a bed space
- Fundamental care (including skin integrity, eye and oral care, joint positioning, and VTE prevention)
- Care of a surgical patient
- 12-lead ECG, moved from Step 3 to Step 1
- Updates to the Evidence-Based Practice section

Please ensure this information is shared with Critical Care Senior Nurses, Critical Care Clinical Educators, and providers of Critical Care courses across your network.

For further information, please contact Andrea Berry - andrea.berry2@nhs.net

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) Update

We are pleased to share a selection of recent achievements, quality improvement initiatives, and innovations from the Critical Care teams at East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust. From hosting a successful annual critical care conference and leading national audit activity, to driving sustainable healthcare initiatives and presenting improvement work on a national stage, colleagues across EKHUFT continue to demonstrate excellence, collaboration, and a commitment to improving patient care. Read on to learn more about these inspiring projects and achievements, along with contact details for colleagues who would be happy to provide further information.

East Kent Hospital annual critical Care Conference contact: moustafa.shebl@nhs.net

The third EKHUFT Critical Care Conference was held at the University of Kent, Canterbury, on 2 April 2026. Chaired by Professor Moustaf Zahra, QEQUH Lead Clinician, the event attracted delegates from across the Network and featured speakers from King's College Hospital, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, the National Institute for Health Research, and Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust. Planning is already underway for the 2027 conference, which will once again welcome colleagues from across the region.



Implementation of ICCQIP monitoring at QEQM. Contact: elaf.abdalla@nhs.net

The ICU team at QEQM led by ICU Clinical Fellow Elaf Abdalla, have been contributing to the National Audit Programme ICCQIP.

The Infection in Critical Care Quality Improvement Programme (ICCQIP) provides a standardised national surveillance system for bloodstream infections in adult critical care units. Regular review of local data allows monitoring of infection trends, identification of areas for improvement, and evaluation of infection prevention practices.

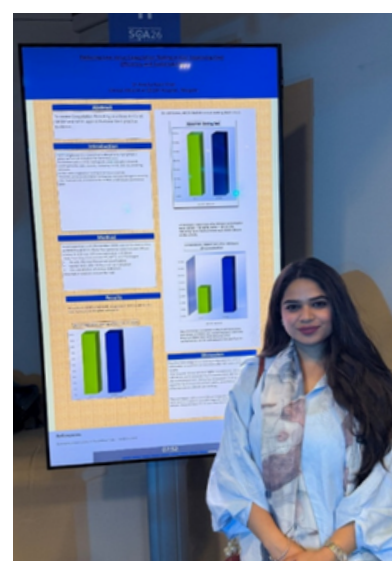
The team have gathered data and presented and discussed results at the Trustwide Governance meetings and also the Deteriorating Patient meetings. As a result of utilising this programme the unit has managed to reduce blood culture contaminants to 0% for 3 quarters and also have produced a guide to indications for taking blood cultures- a process which has reduced the number of duplicate costly blood cultures. As a result of the successful implementation at QEQM, the data collection is on target to be rolled out within the Trust.

Optimising Coagulation Test Requesting contact: ana.alegria@nhs.net

Poster presentation by Ayesha Nasir clinical attaché at QEQM ICU was accepted by SOA ICS Congress 2026

Optimising blood test requesting is a key priority highlighted in guidance from NHS England for secondary care. Recommendations include stress testing only when clinically indicated, avoiding routine daily repeats, reviewing trends, and documenting rationale. In ICU, daily coagulation testing is common practice; however, unnecessary repeat testing may increase iatrogenic anaemia risk, financial cost, environmental burden, and indicate governance gaps. An ICU audit identified a high number of routine coagulation tests being repeated despite normal results and with little impact on clinical management. Unnecessary testing increases cost, environmental impact and the risk of iatrogenic anaemia.

An action plan requesting clinicians to identify which blood tests are required on a daily screen has resulted in fewer unnecessary tests for patients and has also had a cost saving impact.



Contact Ana Alegria EKHUFT

Eco Bedspace contact: Jennifer.moon1@nhs.net charlotte.blanchard4@nhs.net

Congratulations to senior sisters Jen Moon and Charlotte Blanchard, whose Eco Bed-Space project has been shortlisted for two national awards. The pair, who work in critical care at QEQM, are finalists in the Sustainability in Nursing and Midwifery and Critical and Emergency Care Nursing categories of this year's Nursing Times awards. Winners will be announced in October, after a virtual judging session when the team will have to present their project and why they believe it should win. The Eco Bed-Space was introduced initially as a pilot at QEQM, to improve recycling and reduce the use of single-use items. It then developed into an Eco Med-Space, with a focus on anti-microbial stewardship and correct use of gloves. Jen and Charlotte said: "It is incredibly exciting to be shortlisted for this award, and we hope it will encourage others to think about changes they could make in their areas to become more environmentally sustainable. "We have been delighted with how well our project has been received – from an initial idea, to a pilot in critical care at QEQM, to now the introduction of both Eco Bed-Space and Eco Med-Space in the critical care units at K&C and WHH as well." The pair are now mapping out a Trust-wide roll out to all wards and departments.



Nursing Workforce Census 2026 – Supporting Future Workforce Planning

The 2026 Critical Care Nursing Workforce Census is now underway across KSS and Thames Valley & Wessex. This important survey will provide a current picture of the critical care nursing workforce and help inform future workforce planning, recruitment, retention, education and career development initiatives.

Following submission, the Networks will undertake regional analysis and benchmarking to identify trends, challenges and examples of good practice. Units that have not yet responded are encouraged to submit their return by 29 August 2026.

Thank you to all units supporting this important piece of work. A summary of findings will be shared once the analysis is complete.

Queries: KSSCriticalCareNetwork@uhs.nhs.uk

Upcoming Network Meeting dates:

Date	Time	Meeting	Location
18.08.26	11.30 – 12.30	Sustainability group	MS Teams
27.08.26	All Day	Brighton general & neuro ICU Peer Review visit	In Person
07.09.26	13.00 – 14.30	Practice Educators meeting	MS Teams
08.09.26	09.30 – 12.30	KSS ACC Clinical Forum	MS Teams
10.09.26	14.00 – 15.30	Rehab & Follow Up group	MS Teams
18.09.26	14.00 – 15.00	Outreach group	MS Teams
21.09.26	All Day	KSS ACC Network Conference	In Person
29.09.26	All Day	QVH Peer Review visit	MS Teams
05.10.26	13.00 – 14.00	Matrons meeting	MS Teams
12.10.26		Data Leads group	MS Teams
19.10.26	14.00 – 15.00	Sustainability meeting	MS Teams
20.10.26	12.00 – 13.00	Transfer meeting	MS Teams
02.11.26	All Day	QEQM Peer Review visit	In Person
24.11.26	All Day	WHH Peer Review visit	In Person
TBC		ACCP group	
TBC		Pharmacy group	
TBC		PNA group	

Upcoming Conferences

BACCN 2026 – Belfast

A great opportunity for nurses and MDT colleagues to learn, network and showcase innovative practice.

ESICM LIVES 2026 – Lisbon (10–14 October 2026)

One of the world's leading critical care congresses, featuring the latest developments in research, innovation, AI, education and patient safety.

Have news to share?

If your unit has a quality improvement project, award, publication, service development or conference presentation you'd like featured in a future newsletter, please contact the KSS ACC Network Team.