



## SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



Welcome to our Autumn newsletter. We hope you have had time over the summer to rest and relax with your family and friends. We are now focusing our work on preparation for winter so please do read on further to learn about our surge webinar series starting next week and for resources from the LTV Programme team. Receiving feedback from patients and their families is essential to our work to assess the impact of service development, and education and training, so if you work with surgical patients please share our preassessment survey. Essential members of any Paediatric team are the play specialists, details of the new NHSE guidance and standards are included in our update.

We are also looking for a parent rep to join our Board so if you know anyone interested please pass on the application information [Parent-Representative-Application.pdf](#)

Lastly, please use the link below to register as an STPN member so you can keep in touch with our work. We love to hear from you so if you have any questions, thoughts or ideas do get in touch.

# Become an STPN Member!

We would like any clinical staff, commissioners or other stakeholders within the South Thames Region to become a member of the [STPN](#).

Your feedback is of value and impacts the work carried out within the network. It is important to us that the right information gets to the right people, becoming a member means you opt into comms you want to engage in.

Scan the QR code to become a member.



## Surgery in Children

### Play in Hospital

New Play Guidelines and Standards have been released by NHS England, in collaboration with Starlight. Use the quality checklist to bench mark your services and play provision.



South Thames Paediatric Network  
Transforming Experiences for Children and Young People

**NEW!**

**PLAY WELL** NHS England  
**RESOURCES FOR HEALTH PLAY SERVICES**

- Play well: guidelines for commissioning and designing health play services
- Play well: recommended standards for health play services
- Play well: quality checklist for health play services

Scan the QR code or use the link to explore these new standards

OUR NEXT NURSING FORUM WILL FOCUS ON PLAY  
2ND OF OCTOBER

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/play-well-resources-for-health-play-services-for-england/#heading-3>

[NHS England » Play well – resources for health play services for England](#)

### Paediatric Pre-assessment

Well done to the SASH Day Procedure Unit team for launching their Paediatric Preassessment Service- they are now seeing all their ENT, Dental and Ophthalmology patients pre-operatively. Preassessment improves safety, supports efficiency on the day of surgery and supports the provision of individualised care for children.

#### Latest News



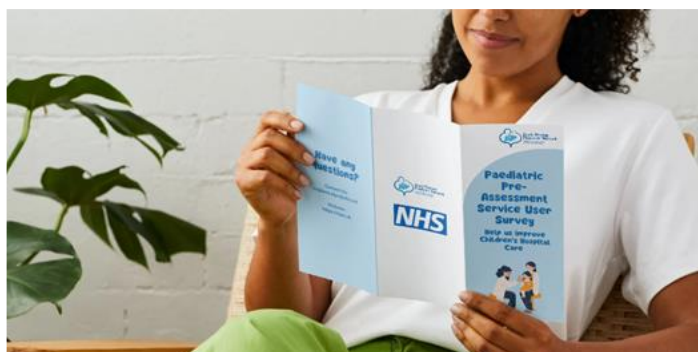
Trust launches new paediatric pre-assessment service to improve safety and personalised care for children

30 June 2025

Do you need support with developing your preassessment service for children? Get in touch; [england.stpn@nhs.net](mailto:england.stpn@nhs.net). Why not join our preassessment working group?

### Preassessment Service Parent Survey

We are launching a Network wide Preassessment Service User survey for Parents and Carers in September. Thank you for supporting this, we hope to gain valuable feedback, that will be shared back to participating Trusts in feedback reports. We hope to provide evidence of the positive impact that preassessment can have on the pre-op journey, and also direct further improvement.





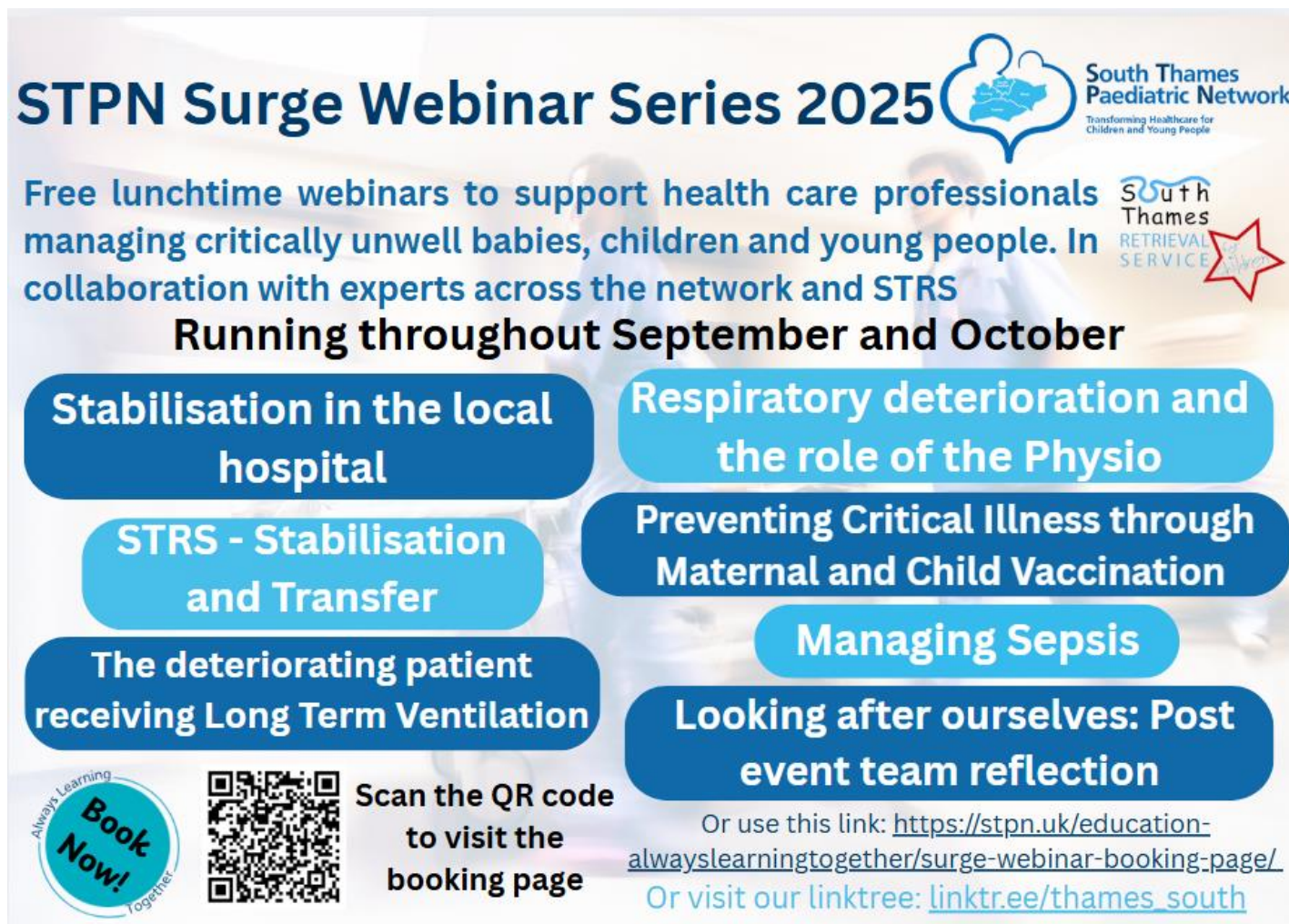
## Education Update

[@thames\\_south](#) | [Linktree](#)

The 2025 Surge webinar series is now available to book.

Free lunchtime webinars to support health care professionals managing critically unwell babies, children and young people. In collaboration with experts across the network and the South Thames Retrieval Service. For more details and to book your places please go to our bookings page: [Surge Webinar Booking Page](#) | [South Thames Paediatric Network](#)

Recordings of the 2024 Surge series and other useful learning resources can be found in the Critical Care and STRS areas of our Moodle platform [Log in to the site | STPN](#). If you have not used the Moodle before you will need to create an account using your NHS email address.



**STPN Surge Webinar Series 2025**

Free lunchtime webinars to support health care professionals managing critically unwell babies, children and young people. In collaboration with experts across the network and STRS

**Running throughout September and October**

**Stabilisation in the local hospital**

**STRS - Stabilisation and Transfer**

**The deteriorating patient receiving Long Term Ventilation**

**Respiratory deterioration and the role of the Physio**

**Preventing Critical Illness through Maternal and Child Vaccination**

**Managing Sepsis**

**Looking after ourselves: Post event team reflection**

Or use this link: <https://stpn.uk/education-alwayslearningtogether/surge-webinar-booking-page/>  
Or visit our linktree: [linktr.ee/thames\\_south](https://linktr.ee/thames_south)

**South Thames Paediatric Network**  
Transforming Healthcare for Children and Young People

**South Thames RETRIEVAL SERVICE**

**Book Now!**  
Always Learning Together

Scan the QR code to visit the booking page

## STPN Education events

The STPN Multi-Disciplinary Team Education forum is welcoming speakers from South London and Maudsley NHS Trust on Wednesday 24th September (3 – 4.40pm on Teams). They will be providing recommendations and signposting regarding Mental Health Training.

If you would like to be added to the invite list for September's meeting please email us: [england.stpn@nhs.net](mailto:england.stpn@nhs.net)

Videos of our previous speakers can be accessed in the educator's area of the Moodle. For access to these recordings please email us with your name and job role.



# Multi Disciplinary EDUCATION FORUM 2025

Meet with other clinicians with an interest in education

Hear from speakers from around the network

**April  
Video**

### Supporting Neurodiverse Learners

14.30 - 16.00

Charlotte Austin

Matron for post qualification programs  
Evelina Education

We are particularly  
interested in hearing  
from doctors and  
AHPs with an interest  
in education to join  
our MDT forum

**June  
Video**

### Developing Education Packages

14:30 to 16:00

Sadie Sullivan  
Clinical Lead for Education  
and Practice Development  
University Hospitals Sussex

Members of the  
STPN Difficult  
Airways working  
group

**24th  
Sept**

### Mental Health Education - Recommendations and Signposting

14:30 - 16:00

Samuel Jackson  
Integrated CYP Mental  
Health Practice  
Development Practitioner  
South London and Maudsley NHS Trust

Maria Anto  
Integrated CYP Mental Health  
Practice Development Lead

**26th  
Nov**

Topic and speaker to  
be arranged



To access videos and be added  
to the invite list please email  
[england.stpn@nhs.net](mailto:england.stpn@nhs.net)

## External webinars and Education events

### Martha's Rule National implementation support

As part of our continued offer of national support for both Phase 1 and 2 sites we will be facilitating a number of webinars:

**Dates for your diaries. Details to follow:**

**Tuesday 30 September 2025, 10:00-12:00 - Patient Wellness Component**

**Tuesday 11 November 2025, 13:00-15:00 - Topic TBC**

**Monday 19 January 2026, 13:00-15:00 - Topic TBC**

The webinars will be recorded and uploaded to [Futures](#) for anyone unable to attend. If you have any requests for specific webinar topics, please get in touch at [england.psimprovement@nhs.net](mailto:england.psimprovement@nhs.net)

### Overview of recent webinars:

#### Learning sessions for phase 2 sites with partial or no critical care outreach team (CCOT)

In phase 2, there are 36 sites that do not have 24hour CCOT cover. These sites have monthly webinars hosted by the national team to support implementation of Martha's Rule. Each session covers some of the quality improvement (QI) methodology needed to successfully implement Martha's Rule, alongside presentations from those with first-hand experience in implementation. This month focused on developing an implementation and testing plan, including measurement and communication plans. After the theory, sites enjoyed presentations from Imperial College Healthcare and University Hospital Southampton. Imperial showcased the in-depth way in which they checked that Martha's Rule was fit for their diverse communities. In particular, they spoke of how they used small tests of change to ensure they had the right information, presented in the right way. Leaders from University Hospital Southampton shared their wealth of experience in the testing and roll-out of an alternative model of response to calls, utilising the expertise of the site management team. This sparked much interest and discussion, with many phase 2 sites reflecting that it may be an approach well suited to their hospitals.

With thanks to those who presented and contributed to the group discussions. For those who couldn't attend, the recording and presenter slides are available on [Futures](#).

### Martha's Rule – Children and Young People's shared learning session

On Thursday 17 July, over 180 participants joined a session to hear updates from the three Paediatric ODN pilot sites, learn about Alder Hey's innovative approach to providing alternative ways for patients to escalate concerns, and explore the Maternity and Neonatal Martha's Rule pilot.

Together, these insights reinforced the core principle of Martha's Rule: that every patient – and their family – must have a clear, accessible way to raise concerns and be heard.

We are grateful to all who presented and contributed to the discussion and Q&A. For those who couldn't attend, the recording and presenter slides are available on [Futures](#). The Parent Awareness questionnaire from Alder Hey Children's Hospital and their presentation slides detailing their findings shared during the C&YP Shared Learning Session are now available on [Futures](#).

### Martha's Rule FAQs

Please note the Martha's Rule Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section has recently been updated and can be found on [Futures](#).

## Tony Hudgell Rehabilitation Programme

Project 2: “Developing standards of care across South London and South East England, for children and young people with neurological movement disorders, who require management of tone caused by spasticity and/or dystonia”



**We spoke to Sammy Randall, Clinical Lead AHP, to find out more about the work taking place.**

### **Can you tell us a bit about the project you've been leading since January?**

At present, there is no system-wide pathway that offers a joined-up, holistic approach for children and young people with hypertonia. Current models of care are often symptom- or intervention-specific, which can make it difficult for families to navigate between primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary services.

We will be developing consensus-driven, multidisciplinary standards of care for Paediatric tone management. The standards that are developed across the South Thames region will relate to children and young people (up to the age of 18), with hypertonia (inclusive of spasticity and/or dystonia).

The aim is to provide clearer guidance for clinicians across the region and ensure more consistent, equitable outcomes for children, young people and their families.



### What have you learned so far through engagement?

We've had some really useful feedback already. People have told us that clearer referral criteria is needed (for example, when secondary care should refer to tertiary centres). There's also been a lot of discussion about medication prescribing: who does what, and where the responsibility lies.

We've heard loud and clear that the best outcomes in tone management happen when a multidisciplinary approach is used. People have told us that clearer pathways and mechanisms need to be in place to improve collaboration within multidisciplinary teams. They've also highlighted the importance of an integrated approach to treatment planning, so that care is tailored to each child's needs.

We've also heard how important it is to strengthen collaboration across primary, secondary and tertiary levels of care. In particular, there is a need to make sure resources and training are being used effectively, so that we avoid duplication and make the best use of the workforce. There also needs to be a clear process or pathway that families can navigate, for when a child's presentation changes unexpectedly or they need an urgent review.

### What is coming up next?

Next up, we'll be launching a Delphi study. This is a structured way of gathering expert opinions to reach consensus, especially in areas where there isn't a lot of high-quality evidence. Once it's live, we'll be inviting professionals from a wide range of roles, settings, and locations to get involved. This stage is really important for developing best practice standards that work for clinicians and make a real difference for families.

**If someone reading this wants to get involved, what should they do?**

*We would love to hear from you!*

If you would like to take part in the Delphi study, just email me at [Samantha.randall3@nhs.net](mailto:Samantha.randall3@nhs.net) (cc [england.stpn@nhs.net](mailto:england.stpn@nhs.net)) with your name, role and organisation.

We will add you to the mailing list and make sure that you are invited to participate.



## Pan Thames Paediatric Long Term Ventilation Programme updates

### Education Team update:

The Pan London LTV education team aims to support multi-disciplinary staff to increase their confidence and competence in managing LTV children and young people closer to home, by delivering regular outreach training days across all Paediatric clinical areas and in turn gaining increased acceptance of LTV children and young people in DGH units. More recently, the education team have focused on delivering LTV training to level 2 clinical areas and emergency departments, supported multiple District General Hospitals, organised and delivered a Children's Community Nursing Study Day and created a tracheostomy e-learning package, which will be ready to share soon. We have also presented at the National ODN Conference and Great Ormond Street's LTV study day, and continue to collaborate with the STPN team for webinars, forums, training and updates. Please see our LTV poster for upcoming study days and resources, and contact [gstt.panthamesltveducation@nhs.net](mailto:gstt.panthamesltveducation@nhs.net) if you are interested in discussing your team's education and training needs.

### LTV Ethical Framework update

We have recently reviewed and updated our Ethical Framework for Decision Making in Long-Term Ventilation (LTV). Alongside the framework, the associated consent form and information booklet for parents carer and families have also been updated. These resources are intended to ensure that, when considering initiation of LTV, the best interest decision is made for the child and that the family are fully informed and involved in the decision-making process

Please use these updated versions, which are available on our website and share them with your colleagues.

[Clinical Guidelines and Pathways - Pan Thames Paediatric Long Term Ventilation Network](#)

### Winter 25/26

Please keep an eye on our [website](#) where we will shortly be sharing more details on what the winter offer from our team will be to help support colleagues across the network with upcoming winter pressures.

We have released new content on our website, including:

- [A baby bank finder](#)
- [Emotional and practical support](#)
- [Support with food](#) (food banks, food aid providers)

These come at a particularly poignant time, following a [recent report](#) by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, in which a survey with Pediatricians found that:

- among those working with hospital inpatients, 73% had struggled to discharge a child from hospital due to poverty-related reasons in the past six months
- 95% said poverty is preventing children from attending medical appointments, sometimes resulting in the need for emergency care
- 99% say poverty is contributing to ill-health among the children they treat

**Risk Update:**

The Pan Thames Paediatric LTV Programme are creating a Quality and Safety Governance Framework to promote a collaborative approach when managing LTV-related concerns, supporting safe care, training and incident learning to improve outcomes for children and young people on LTV. We will share this framework across the networks once finalised, however please continue to liaise with the Pan Thames LTV team via [gstt.panthamesltv@nhs.net](mailto:gstt.panthamesltv@nhs.net) to raise any concerns that may affect patient flow, pathways or communication between organisations and/or patient safety. Please see the table below for examples of concerns raised recently to the LTV Programme and our actions/responses.

LTV quality and safety concern raised	LTV Programme action and response
Community procurement issues obtaining sterile water bags for use with ventilator humidifiers	Clarified alternative products that can be ordered and investigating other companies to supply and deliver.
Field Safety Notices and warnings received	Safety information circulated across Pan Thames region, both acutely and within community settings.
ICB issues with continuing care packages being reviewed and reduced	Designing an 'Education Standards for Procurement of Care Providers' document, to help standardise and raise expectations for training and competence of carers caring for LTV/complex children.
LTV patient pathway and flow issues between organisations highlighted	Exploration and clarification of agreed pathways

