

BHSCA NEWSLETTER

Buckinghamshire
Health & Social
Care Academy



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Foreword from the Service Director & Principal Social Worker at Bucks Council, a valued partner organisation
- In depth summary of our Academy's structure and operation
- Our Affiliated Agencies' news including new events
- Updates with ongoing projects across our Faculties and external stakeholders
- What's to come in Quarter 2

CELEBRATING 5 YEARS



New promo video released!

We would like to extend our utmost gratitude to our colleagues from across our partner organisations who participated in our newly released promo video, celebrating our fifth year as the Academy! Thank you again, Amir Khaki, Jennifer McAteer, Jenny Craig, Juliet Anderson, and Hoda Wassif for your contribution.

To view our video, please click [here](#)!



Health Inequalities Community Event

On 25th April a joint community session for parents and pre-school children called 'Language and Play' took place at BNU, Wycombe campus. This was a partnership event between BHT Children and Young People's SLT team, BHSCA AHP Faculty and BNU. The event combined a talk from Kim Price, SLT with interactive play examples, encouraging parents and carers to practice what they had learned first-hand. More info [here](#).



Connect and Celebrate: National AHP days

This quarter, the AHP celebrated multiple national days dedicated to specific AHP careers.

- 14th May: ODP Day
- 2nd June: World Orthoptic Day
- 9-13th June: Dieticians Week UK

AFFILIATED AGENCIES OF BHSCA

The Coaching
and Mentoring Pool

part of the Buckinghamshire Health & Social Care Academy



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
COMMUNITY WELLBEING HUB

OUR PARTNERS

The Academy is a non-profit partnership between Buckinghamshire Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Healthcare Trust, Buckinghamshire New University, University of Bedfordshire, NHS England, Buckinghamshire College Group, and FedBucks.

OUR PURPOSE

To optimise the Health and Social Care workforce's education, training and skills development through partnership-working across systems, ensuring the best possible delivery of care to the population of Buckinghamshire.



BHSCA NEWSLETTER



Foreword from our partner Buckinghamshire

Council: Jennifer McAteer, Service Director – Quality, Standards & Performance and Principal Social Worker

I am delighted to present to you the latest edition of the Health and Social Care Academy newsletter. In an ever-evolving landscape, our Academy stands as a beacon of knowledge, support, and innovation.

Each of you, through your dedication and tireless efforts, contributes to the success of the Academy. This newsletter is a tribute to the transformative impact we collectively have on the lives of individuals and communities.

The journey of health and social care is not without its challenges, but it is through collaboration, continuous learning, and an unwavering commitment to excellence that we overcome these obstacles. The stories and articles contained within the Newsletter reflect our shared mission and the unwavering spirit that drives us forward. Recent work on safeguarding and system resilience illustrates this collaborative spirit. We're developing integrated approaches that respond not only to immediate pressures, such as increased complexity of care needs, but also position us to deliver sustainable, person-centred support for years to come.

A key enabler of this is a truly integrated workforce and work has commenced with a range of partners to develop the framework and approach across Buckinghamshire. This is pivotal in meeting the current and future needs of our communities whereby we collectively attract, retain, and develop professionals across health and social care.

I hope this newsletter not only informs but also inspires you to continue striving for excellence in all your endeavours. Together, we are shaping the future of health and social care, one step at a time.

Thank you for your continued dedication and passion. Here's to another quarter of growth, learning, and positive impact.

Warm regards,

Jennifer McAteer



BHSCA NEWSLETTER



ABOUT US

Buckinghamshire Health & Social Care Academy was founded in 2019 as a non-profit partnership organisation, established by the Buckinghamshire NHS Trust, NHS England, Buckinghamshire New University, Buckinghamshire Council, University of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (*now part of the Bucks Council*), Buckinghamshire College Group, Primary Care & FedBucks.

Our aims are to unite the principal employers who commission and deliver health and social care in Buckinghamshire with local education and skills providers, key strategic public sector funders and others who work in alliance with the County.

Our vision is to optimise and integrate innovative health, social work and social care workforce education, training and development across Buckinghamshire. The Academy seeks to co-create a gateway enabling the provision of innovative and integrated careers advice, education, training and organisational/professional development for the health, social work and social care workforce in Buckinghamshire. Making Buckinghamshire the preferred destination and long-term base for our workforce to pursue vibrant, flourishing and fulfilling careers in primary, secondary and community health care, social work and social care.

The Academy's key objectives are to:

- Enable innovative, collaborative, inclusive evidenced based workforce-related learning and development activities, which are accessible to all informal and formal health, social work and social care workers in Buckinghamshire, including volunteers and carers.
- Be a key county-based delivery vehicle for system people plans that form part of the integrated care system in bob and which reflect key local, regional and national workforce priorities.
- Identify and convene planned and integrated education and training programmes that meet specific local workforce needs as identified by multi-agency services in Bucks delivered in collaboration with our partners.
- Ensure that the local economy attracts and retains the skills required to enable the Buckinghamshire population to benefit from the jobs created across the health and social care sector; and
- Lead the development, integration and embedding of new career frameworks and competencies for health, social work and social care workers, ensuring compliance with local, regional and national occupational and workforce competency frameworks and their associated workforce transformational requirements.

Watch our promo video here



ABOUT US

Our System-Wide Impact:

BOB Integrated Care System (BOB ICS)

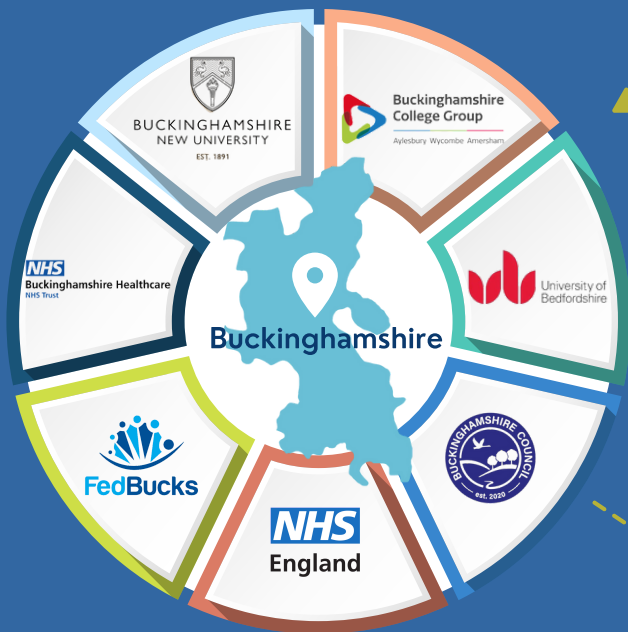


Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire
Berkshire West

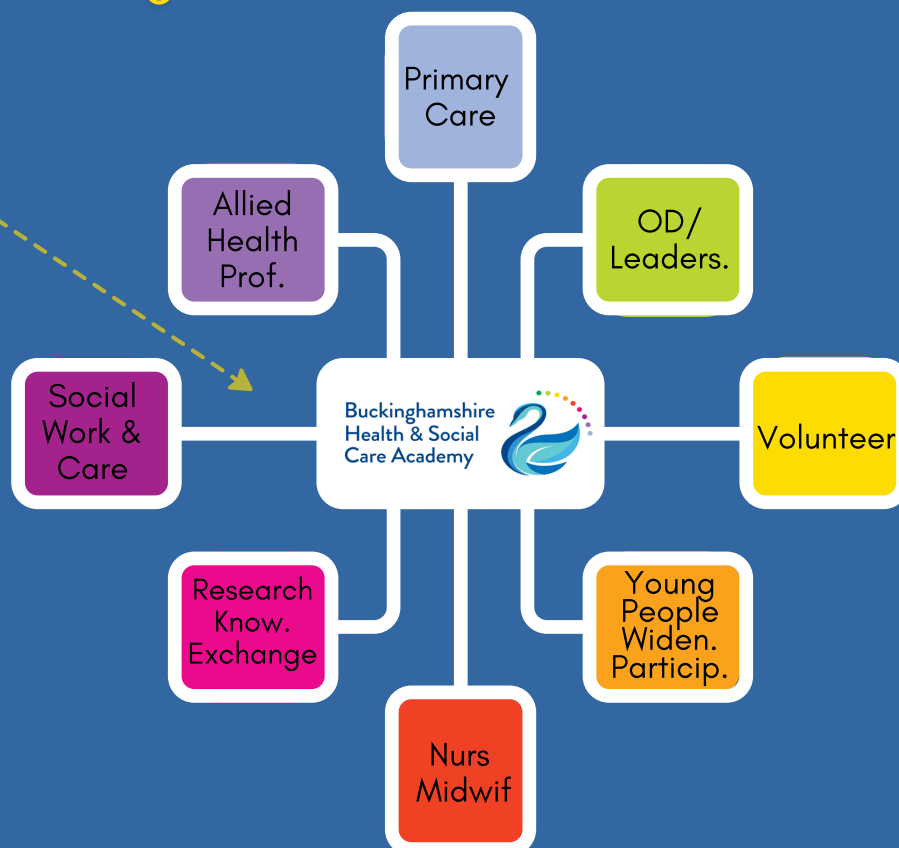
Our 'Place' of **Buckinghamshire** in the BOB ICS for education, training, & development of the County's health & care workforce



Convening programmes of work across the County through our **7 Partner organisations**



Carried out via our active **8 Faculties** which are voluntarily led by field experts within our Partner organisations





BHSCA 3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE: INNOVATION & INTEGRATION



On 3rd June, we were delighted to host our third annual Academy Conference at Missenden Abbey. The day commenced with a warm welcome from **Prof Anne Eden**, *Regional Director NHS England Southeast*, with an impressive insight into the critical success factors around innovation and integration. **Daniel Leveson**, *Director of Places and Communities at BOB ICB*, followed with a highly relevant and much needed keynote segment on developing partnerships in a complex and changing system. Our morning concluded with **Craig McArdle**, *Corporate Director Adults and Health (DASS) at Buckinghamshire Council*, leading a pivotal and thought-provoking segment on the relationship between Social Care and integration, with personal insights and a look to the future.



Our afternoon was expertly facilitated between two workshops focusing in on innovation, integration and transformation across place. **Gemma Thomas** and **Dr Penny Macdonald** ran their workshop on 'Integration at Place and Neighbourhood Working' focusing on discussing the benefits of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and how we might overcome the current barriers in place that block sufficiently implementing them as standard practice of preventative care.

Emma Wilton and **Christian Demaine-Stone** led a group focused discussion on 'Innovation and Workforce Transformation' examining the long-term workforce plan and using optimisation and expansion of Occupational Therapy as an example context for applying the STAR methodology as the analysis framework and then developing what successful projects could like for this change.



Korinne Leney, **Dan Flecknoe**, **Sandra Aaronson**, **Zoe McIntosh** and **Marcela Heime** collaborated on the Voluntary Sector and Innovation segment which highlighted key projects such as VCSE Communities of Practice, Bucks Women's Community Health Worker Service and HealthWatch Bucks Community Research Programme.

Jason Greasley closed out our conference with an engaging and active workshop on 'Collaborating for a Better Bucks - "Me" to "We"' showing how a successful system can only function if all moving parts work in collaboration, as well as having groups answer key questions on 'Self', 'Organisation' and 'System' to encourage critical thinking in those areas.



SEE MORE



EVENTS SPOTLIGHT



Safeguarding Summit Part 2 10th April 2025 at BCW Hub

Buckinghamshire Council Adult Social Care and the Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy were delighted to jointly host the second Adult Safeguarding Summit for Buckinghamshire on 10th April 2025. The summit was a follow on from the highly successful event held in June 2024 at Missenden Abbey, building on the excellent outcomes co-produced by key partner organisations.

The Safeguarding Summit Part 2, facilitated by Coco Operative CIC, united leaders across adult social care, health, commissioning, fire services, and providers and partners in Buckinghamshire for a day of reflection and co-creation. Through system coaching, legislative theatre, and positive intelligence practices, participants surfaced key cultural, digital, and practice-based barriers to effective safeguarding and generated collaborative solutions. The facilitation of combined legislative theatre, team-based coaching, and positive intelligence enabled leaders to explore the emotional, systemic, and organisational behaviours that influence safeguarding outcomes. Through live dramatizations and systems mapping, leaders reimaged safeguarding as a collaborative, relational, and curiosity-driven practice rather than one driven by fear, compliance, and bureaucracy.

The summit focused on:

- Reimagining safeguarding through team-based approaches
- Uncovering self-sabotaging system behaviours
- Elevating curiosity, empathy, and power-sharing
- Coproducing practical, visionary actions that challenge the status quo

[FULL REPORT HERE](#)



Research & Knowledge Exchange: May Writing Retreat



Our Research and Knowledge Exchange faculty hosted another really successful & engaging writing retreat, attended by professionals from across the system, including social care & VCSE.

Our fully funded retreats focus on honing the writing for publication skills of attendees. There are workshops, 1-1 peer support, focused individual writing time and the continued support of a mentor extending beyond the retreat to help attendees through to publication.

Keep an eye out for future retreat dates this year!



COMPLETED PROJECT REVIEW

Evaluating Work Readiness Amongst Young People: A Local Volunteering Project

In collaboration between:



PROJECT AT A GLANCE

The project was designed to evaluate whether structured volunteering experiences improve “work readiness” among students aged 16+. This initiative:

- Responded to skills gaps identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).
- Trialed a digital “skills passport” aligned with a regional employer-informed Work Readiness Framework.
- Incorporated ethics-approved data collection and robust impact evaluation.
- The goal wasn’t just to place students—but to evidence skill development, confidence gains, and readiness for future employment.

MIXED METHODS APPROACH



- Pre and post volunteering surveys using the digital skills record (based on employer-validated indicators)
- Expression of interest forms to understand student motivations
- Semi-structured interviews with supervisors from 10 partner organisations
- Case studies to showcase student journeys
- Research ethics approval granted by RJ4All International Institute’s board

KEY EVALUATION AREAS INCLUDED



- Changes in communication, digital skills, initiative-taking, and adaptability
- Barriers to volunteering uptake
- Supervisor observations of student growth
- Volunteer motivations and self-perceived benefits

KEY OUTCOMES



- **150+ students** attended training sessions
- **16 co-designed roles** across **10 organisations**
- Students brought “**new energy**” and **fresh perspectives**. Partners observed **increased student confidence, leadership, and team interaction skills**. **Digital skills and peer communication** were seen as standout contributions from students.

STUDENT INSIGHTS & CHALLENGES



- Limited readiness to onboard under-18s (insurance, DBS, safeguarding)
- Volunteer roles not always ready on time
- Younger students needing more supervision and encouragement
- Drop-off due to timing with exams and lack of immediate matching
- Volunteering preferences: 81% preferred evenings/weekends with flexible options
- Barriers: transport, scheduling, match quality

LESSONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



- Co-design works: students thrived where they had choice
- Early school and tutor engagement improves student follow-through
- Offer taster sessions and flexible volunteering structures
- Allow students to self-select roles that align with interests
- Ethical participation matters

To get involved, adopt the framework, or request further data:

Visit: [RJ4All Publications](https://www.rj4allpublications.com)

Email: contact@rj4allpublications.com

READ MORE





COMPLETED PROJECT REVIEW

Preparation for Practice Placements

In collaboration between:



AIMS OF THE PROJECT:

The Preparation for Practice Placements Project is designed to help further/higher education and practice educators prepare learners on pre-registration healthcare programmes for their practice-based learning experiences. It provides a set of resources, including an animation, ten short films, and a facilitator handbook. The content has been mapped to the Safe Learning Environment Charter Standards.

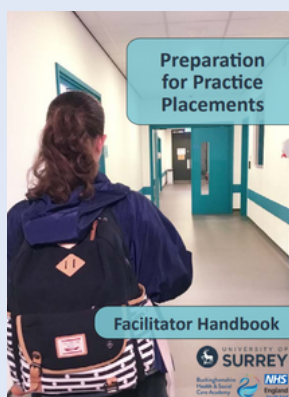
For nursing, midwifery and allied health professional learners, the resources aim to build understanding, confidence, and the behaviours necessary to thrive in practice environments and to deliver safe, effective care.

For educators, they serve as tools to enhance teaching efforts that support learner readiness for practice-based learning.

The project is a collaboration between NHS England South East, the University of Surrey, and the Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care Academy, involving contributions from learners, educators, and service users across South East England. You can find an animated video [here](#) from the project's findings.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE FACILITATOR HANDBOOK:



CLICK HERE



Research shows that a learner's experience during practice placements significantly influences their decision to continue their studies or leave the program. To address this, the NHSE SE RePAIR Team held a stakeholder event in November 2023 to identify the best ways to allocate funding to retain learners.

One recommendation was to develop a project focused on preparing nursing, midwifery, and allied health learners for their practice placements. This initiative recognises the challenges students face when transitioning from university to clinical and other practice settings, aiming to make this transition smoother. Therefore, the Facilitator Handbook was developed and launched to the South East on 17 March 2025 and can be viewed [here](#).

The "Preparation for Practice Placements" resource pack is a collection of learning materials designed to help educators in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and clinical practice to prepare healthcare students for their practice-based learning experiences. These resources may also benefit learners in Further Education programmes, such as healthcare-related T-levels.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT COMPLETED BY RJ4ALL



Inspiring Confidence in Healthcare Students for their Practice Placements
Evaluation findings from the pilot "Preparation for Practice Placements"



READ NOW



6545

Unique individuals (professionals, residents, and students) are engaged with the Hub's activities



30

BNU Hub Champions

2688

Residents regularly accessing the Hub



98%

Residents with improved wellbeing from accessing activities at the Hub

83

Total community groups and events have taken place



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COMMUNITY WELLBEING HUB

OUR SECOND YEAR



46

Number of volunteering, placement and work experience opportunities

6

Students on placement



100%

Professionals who are satisfied or very satisfied with the services and support provided

34

Training and awareness sessions have been run



18

Regular (weekly or monthly) health promotion activities offered to residents



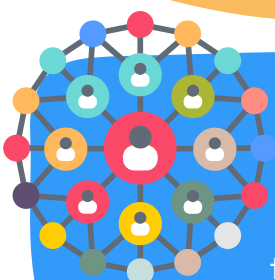
75%

Hub-based professionals in action



374

Stakeholders have been engaged to design, launch, and deliver the objectives



Q. 4 REVIEW



THE COACHING & MENTORING POOL AT A NUMERICAL GLANCE

16 New Students from BHT attended a day event for **Coaching Skills for Medical Students**

15 people completed posters and portfolios of work for the **Let's Talk about Vaccine Graduation** in Hampshire and Isle of Wight

40+ Senior Leaders from across Bucks were trained in two cohorts of the **senior leadership programme**

40 new coaches joined the pool following 3 cohorts of **Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring**

75 people total were trained over the course of 5 days for the **Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring** course, including 18 coaches

50 health coaches will now be fully supported and funded for training following the successful acquisition of future financing

3 sessions of Coffee, Cake and Coach CPD for coaches

3 days of training for IOW **vaccine hesitancy** and **MECC**

30+ attendees at two **Let's Talk about Vaccines Communities of Practice** for healthcare workers on HPV vaccines

2 award applications submitted for the **HSJ Awards** for the Health Coaching Programme

2-day course ran for **Let's Talk about Vaccine Change Coaches** for BOB ICB

4-day Health Coaching course scheduled for **University of Bedfordshire**

More funding has been secured for Let's Talk About Vaccines from HIOW and Kent & Medway ICBs



The Coaching and Mentoring Pool Annual Conference 2025

On 26th June, 40 coaches and mentors and partners representatives came together at Bucks Community and Wellbeing Hub in Aylesbury for their conference on "Thriving in a VUCA world".

Focus centred on empowering employees during times of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, as well as developing strategies and tools for career and wellbeing support through change.



LEARN MORE



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ACTIVE PROJECTS UPDATE

Multi-Faith & Mental Health Project

Vol Fac

- WISE mosque-NHS Bucks Talking Therapies community mental health project & evaluation with BNU – mid point review complete
- NIHR research bid scoping post pilot delivery

- In person workshop took place on 8th April which was well represented by colleagues across HEIs, FEs, Trusts and ICB.
- Items discussed ranged from peak placement periods, primary care needs, simulation key points, what's working well, and ideas for improvement
- Next steps include mapping current placements, placements following patient journey/pathway, and, in effort to not lose momentum now that the programme manager has left, future meetings were scheduled with a plan of succession.

Bucks Placement project

AHP & NMW Fac

ALIGNS programme

AHS/ BHSCA
Vol & AHP
Faculties

Three new volunteer role descriptions have been created to support and enhance AHP integration between social care and health, for the benefit of the people transitioning between hospital and home, these are:

1. Rehab Support volunteer
2. Rehab at Home volunteer, and
3. Wellbeing Check-in volunteer

These volunteer roles address gaps identified through insight gathering methods and are underpinned by evidence and informed by data from the Bucks case study site and more broadly.

3 BHT Speech and Language Therapy Assistants were trained as Practice Educator Assistants (PEAs) to be able to support degree level students alongside Practice Educators (therapists).

This was a joint pilot with BOB ICB and Reading University for Speech and Language Therapy students. 3 students attended the placements at BHT supported by 2 Practice Educators and 3 Practice Educator Assistants between February – May 2025. An overwhelmingly positive experience for students, Practice Educators, Practice Educator Assistants and Reading University.

Practice Educator Assistant (PEA) pilot

AHP
Fac



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ACTIVE PROJECTS UPDATE

Further BCW HUB Updates

BCW
Hub

Over 300 people attended an event at Bucks Community Wellbeing Hub, ranging from Bucks Data Exchange Workshop, BHSCA Coaching Pool Conference, two different HealthWatch Bucks Community Research Celebrations, Knit and Natter Celebration Event which was attended by local dignitaries, Aylesbury Vale Young Enterprise Event, and Heart of Bucks Community Forum.

The Hub continues to be the epicentre for collaboration, celebration, and integration.

This has proved incredibly popular amongst schools in Buckinghamshire (it sold out in 4hrs) and the feedback has been mainly positive. The Faculty is looking at recommencing this in the next academic year (subject to staffing). Being aimed at mainly year 10 students with the long-term effects hopefully being felt in the 2026/27 academic year with an increase in local students studying H&SC courses.

Health & Social Care Demo Sessions

YPWP
Fac

Writing Retreat/ Writing Community

RKE
Fac

RKE Writing Retreat

Successfully completed the 4th writing retreat with a multitude of attendees across the system, all with only positive feedback to give!

RKE Health & Social Care Writing Community

The final meeting took place on 9th June and was attended by 12 colleagues. Feedback was sent to all those who participated over the last 6 months and results showing a great interest in continuing with this initiative as they value the opportunity of having a protective, safe space to write and to exchange ideas.

This has now been refined with 'Positive Steps' still being the main vein, which has an employment conversion rate of 86%, but the hope is to introduce 'First Steps' which is a 12hr evening session based in BCG during August.

This is open to everyone and can act as a filtering system to give anyone a fun, easy introduction to H&SC careers.

Steps Programme

YPWP
Fac





COMING SOON IN Q.2!

RePAIR Project: Prep for Practice Placements

The pilots have been completed, and feedback has been provided by educators and learners via questionnaires and interviews. The evaluation is due to be published on the 1st June and a national launch is planned for July once the evaluation is published.

HEALTH COACHING

The next cohort of Health Coaching is now live and bookable, the next cohort is starting in October this year.

Link to book [here](#)

STEPS PROGRAMME: FIRST STEPS

Evening sessions to commence in August with Adult Skills Fund for an entry point into health and care careers with it being over the span of two weeks - three evenings. Info leaflet to be published soon.

OLIVER MCGOWAN MANDATORY TRAINING

The OMMT programme has gone to advert for a programme manager who should be able to start in Q2. Procurement shall also commence in Q2 for training to begin end of Q2 or early Q3.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE NURSING WORKFORCE

A joint Academy, Buckinghamshire New University and Royal Society for Public Health project will be running its first training pilot in May, with the second cohort scheduled for September. Book onto the training via [this link](#).

OD & LEADERSHIP THEMATIC REVIEW

The OD & Leadership Faculty's Thematic Review will take place on 23 July, exploring how leadership and OD practices can shape the future of health and social care in Bucks. If you would like to attend, please email bht.bhsca-info@nhs.net for an invite.

R&KE HSC WRITING COMMUNITY PUBLICATION LAUNCH

Launching a new monthly feature to highlight key health and care issues affecting diverse patient groups in The Dentist Magazine. If you work in health or care, share your insights on the challenges your community faces and help dental teams better understand the wider needs of their patients.



LEARN MORE



BHSCA

www.bhsca.co.uk

If you would like more info, please email
Dr Hoda Wassif (hoda.wassif@beds.ac.uk)