

Re-establishing the Northwest MI Network: Enhancing collaboration and support

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Focal points

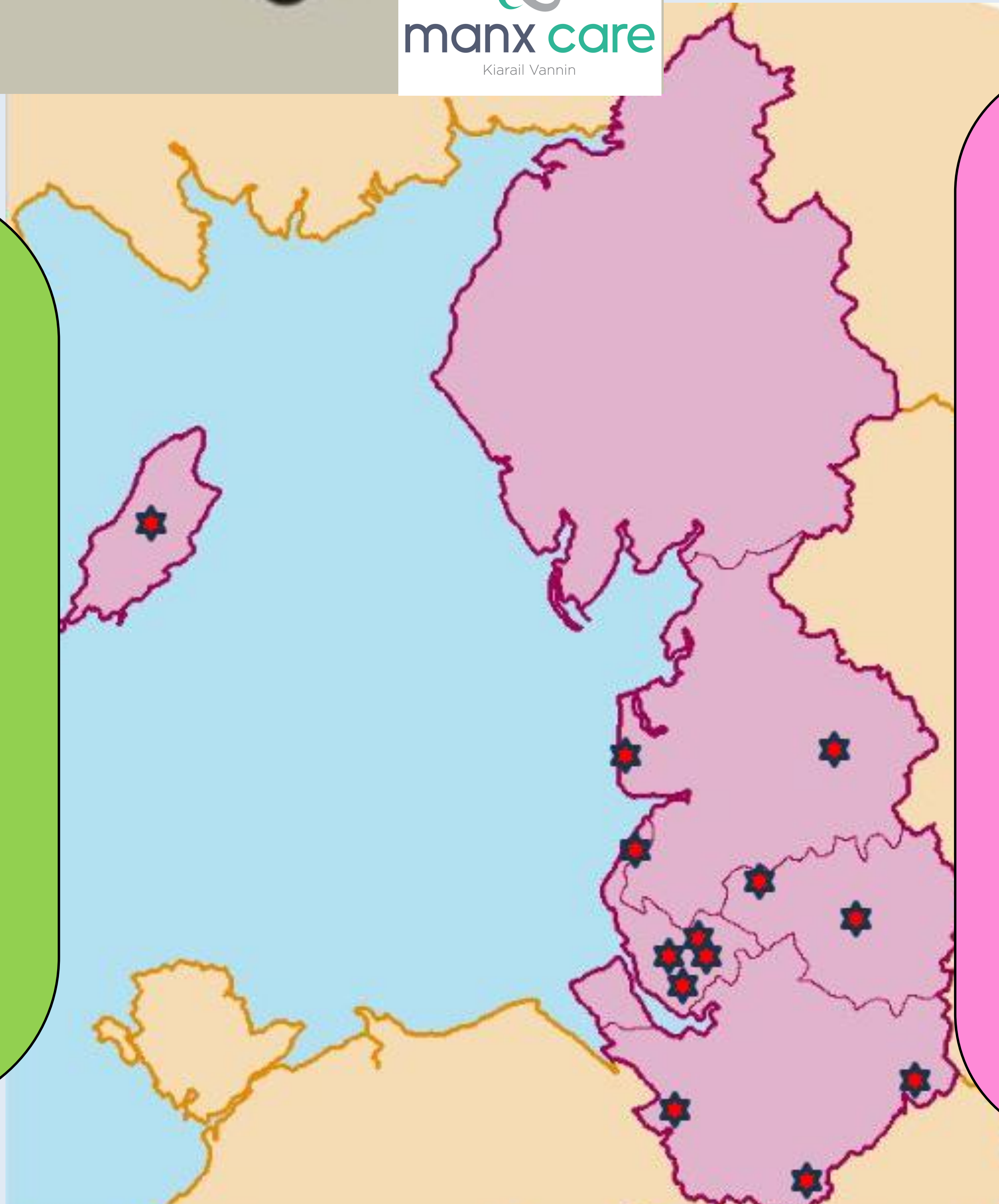
- **Pre - 2020:** The Northwest MI Centre held regular face to face network meetings.
- **2020-2022:** Meeting frequency reduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- **Post 2022:** NWMIC meetings ceased entirely due to SPS transformation
- **June 2023:** Three senior MI pharmacists in Northwest re-initiated regular networking meetings

What did we do?

- 3 senior pharmacists met for a series of planning meetings and agreed to act as co-chairs to share organisational responsibilities
- The co-chairs assessed online platforms to create a virtual hub for document sharing and messaging
- A preliminary list of members was created from the UKMI directory

Where are we now?

- The first meeting was held in June 2023
- To date a total of five meetings have taken place
- Meetings are held virtually every 3-4 months
- Meetings are well attended with broad and active discussions
- NHS Futures was chosen as online platform to share ideas and host resources
- The group has 24 individual members from 13 different NHS organisations – see map
- Questions and suggestions from our group have been emailed to the UKMI Executive Committee on an ad hoc basis



What do we talk about?

Meetings are informal but there is a set agenda to prompt discussions. The main items are listed below:

- Resource issues / subscriptions and new resources
- ADR reporting
- Sharing of interesting enquiries
- QRMG and IRMIS latest communications/documents for sharing
- Peer Review – setting up of smaller groups outside of the meeting
- KPIs, user surveys
- Training and staffing issues

Discussion and Recommendations

- This group was re-established in June 2023 to regain regular peer support and networking among Medicines Information staff across the region
- We explored different platforms for a shared space, and the NHS Futures platform was felt to have advantages over Microsoft 365
- Since 2023, there have been some notable successes such as support for external peer review, see also some of the feedback we have received from members below
- We feel that the time commitment to arrange and attend these meetings is sustainable, and the benefits are clear
- We would strongly encourage other Regions to duplicate this work. There are benefits to be gained from membership of a supportive community and sharing challenges and ideas among a local network of Medicines Information staff
- It is hoped that we can establish formal communication channels with the UKMI Executive Committee to strengthen awareness of challenges facing local centres
- The authors are happy to be contacted for advice and help in setting up similar groups around the UK.

See email and telephone details via <https://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/Contacts>



Feedback from the new NWMi group

I feel less isolated. I have somewhere to check if my service aligns with others in the region

It is very helpful to ask questions and raise concerns with like-minded individuals. It's also good for establishing relationships across different Trusts

Being the only person working on MI at my Trust can be extremely isolating. I find our meetings very useful to find out about news and share good practice.

I am very grateful that I have access to the NWMi network, it has been very useful in keeping up to date with news within MI.



The network is very valuable. It is useful to meet with colleagues in the same position and realise everyone is in the same situation. It is always helpful to discuss problems with and gain ideas from colleagues

Very worthwhile. Great to network with colleagues in the area. Great forum to discuss issues, bounce ideas and learn. Very interactive.

I would like to commend the amazing work that went into starting this group by a group of pharmacists that are passionate about MI and who are keen to make sure pharmacists working in MI centres in the Northwest are not alone,

I think it is a great thing that the Northwest UKMi network has been re-established. In the past, the regular meetings had been extremely helpful - peer review, networking and just a general chat to get the opinions of MI pharmacists.