



NHS Monthly Insight Report


February 2025


Monthly Insight Report

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Introduction

Audit Yorkshire is a member of The Internal Audit Network (TIAN), which comprises of seven NHS internal audit consortiums and in house teams operating in England. These organisations collaborate across a number of areas to leverage their collective knowledge and expertise and drive efficiency and effectiveness. The NHS Monthly Insight Report highlights key publications and is intended as a useful update and reference tool. This report is produced by TIAN and shared by Audit Yorkshire.

Developments in the NHS	
Road to recovery: the government's 2025 mandate to NHS England 	<p>The government's mandate to NHS England sets out the objectives it should seek to achieve. This mandate will apply from 30 January 2025, until it is replaced. The objectives cover reforms to: cut waiting times; improve primary care access; improve urgent and emergency care; the operating model; and drive efficiency and productivity.</p> <p>https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/679a2712a77d250007d3144f/Road-to-recovery-the-government-2025-mandate-to-nhs-england-30-january-2025.pdf</p> <p>For information</p>
Department of Health and Social Care - Better Care Fund policy framework 2025 to 2026	<p>For 2025 to 2026, the objectives of the Better Care Fund (BCF) reflect the government's commitment to reform via a shift from sickness to prevention and from hospital to home. This policy framework is intended for use by those responsible for delivering the BCF at a local level, such as integrated care boards, local authorities, and health and wellbeing boards.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-care-fund-policy-framework-2025-to-2026/better-care-fund-policy-framework-2025-to-2026</p> <p>For information and implementation</p>
NHS England - Revenue finance and contracting guidance for 2025/26	<p>This guidance sets out the revenue finance and contracting frameworks for 2025/26 (1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026) and should be read in conjunction with the 2025/26 priorities and operational planning guidance and the capital guidance for 2025/26.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/revenue-finance-and-contracting-guidance-for-2025-26/</p> <p>For information and implementation</p>
NHS England - Neighbourhood	<p>This document sets out guidelines to help integrated care boards (ICBs), local authorities, and health and care providers continue to</p>

Developments in the NHS	
health guidelines 2025/26	<p>progress neighbourhood health in 2025/26 in advance of the publication of the 10 Year Health Plan. Neighbourhood health aims to create healthier communities, helping people of all ages live healthy, active and independent lives for as long as possible while improving their experience of health and social care, and increasing their agency in managing their own care.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/neighbourhood-health-guidelines-2025-26/</p> <p>The NHS Confederation has provided a helpful briefing and analysis of these guidelines which aims to summarise “what you need to know”: https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/neighbourhood-health-guidelines-202526-what-you-need-know</p> <p>For information and implementation</p>
NHS England - Green plan guidance	<p>In 2020, the NHS became the first healthcare system globally to commit to reaching net zero carbon emissions, in response to the health risks posed by climate change. This updated guidance is to help NHS organisations develop robust plans to support world-leading patient care, save money and minimise waste – continuing the NHS’s journey to achieving net zero. Refreshed green plans should be approved by the organisation’s board or governing body, published in an accessible location on the organisation’s website, and shared with NHS England by 31 July 2025.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/green-plan-guidance/</p> <p>For information and implementation</p>
NHS England - National elective access policy	<p>This policy will support implementation of the updated Recording and reporting guidance. It covers the core principles that all providers and systems should include in their local elective access policies, to support consistent application of waiting times rules and guidance. Local policies should reflect local pathways and implementation plans. E-learning training materials are available to support the consistent use of referral to treatment rules.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/national-elective-access-policy/</p> <p>For information and implementation</p>
<p>Care Quality Commission - Addressing health inequalities through engagement with people and communities: a self-assessment and improvement framework for integrated care systems</p>  <p>Addressing health inequalities through engagement with people and communities</p> <p>A self-assessment and improvement framework for integrated care systems</p> <p>February 2025</p>	<p>The CQC, in partnership with National Voices and the Point of Care Foundation, has developed this self-assessment and improvement framework. It is a voluntary resource to support integrated care systems in reducing health inequalities by improving how they engage with people and communities.</p> <p>https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-02/20250602-ICS-improvement-framework.pdf</p> <p>For information and consideration</p>
Health Services Safety	This report is intended for health care organisations, policy-makers and the public to help improve patient safety in relation to the

Developments in the NHS

Investigations Body (HSSIB) - Safety management: accountability across organisational boundaries



Investigation report

Safety management: accountability across organisational boundaries

Date Published:
13/02/2025

Theme:
NHS staff, Patient safety themes, Patient and family, Continuity of care

This PDF was downloaded from the Health Services Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB) website. To make sure you are reading the latest version, and for accessible reports, please visit <https://www.hssib.org.uk>

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management of patient safety risks across organisational boundaries. This has been explored through an understanding of the pathways of care for patients whose care involves engaging with providers in primary, secondary and community care and with integrated care systems. It makes reference to processes which exist within the health and care system relating to the management of safety.

<https://www.hssib.org.uk/patient-safety-investigations/safety-management/investigation-report/>

For information

King's Fund, National Voices and Healthwatch England - Lost in the system: the need for better admin

Poor administrative practices in the NHS are leaving patients in a state of uncertainty and risking their health, according to a report from The King's Fund, National Voices and Healthwatch England. The report says almost two-thirds of patients and carers have experienced at least one admin problem over the past year, such as lost test results, difficulties in changing or cancelling appointments, or receiving incorrect information. One-fifth of people who had used the NHS in the past 12 months said they had received an appointment invitation after the date of the appointment. The report calls for NHS bodies to put admin higher on their agenda.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/lost-in-system-need-for-better-admin>

For information

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) - The role of the chief financial officer (CFO) in the NHS



This report aims to provide a definitive statement on the role of the CFO in NHS organisations. The report explores the nature of the work of the CFO in NHS organisations at national, regional and local level across the UK. It considers the competencies required and key themes, such as the opportunities and challenges they face, the nuances of operating within a political environment, and the importance of accountability, stewardship and sound ethical values.

<https://www.cipfa.org/members/the-role-of-the-chief-financial-officer>

For information

Developments in the NHS

NHS Providers - 2025/2026 priorities and operational planning guidance



2025/2026 priorities and operational planning guidance

On 30 January 2025 NHS England (NHE) published the 2025/26 priorities and operational planning guidance. Key priorities include reducing the time people wait for planned care, improving long and emergency waiting times and ambulance response times, and improving access to mental health services, particularly for children and young people. In the longer term, the government remains committed to transforming the health service by delivering on its three shifts from hospital to community, sickness to prevention and analogue to digital.

This briefing highlights the key points from the guidance document and includes NHS Providers' view. It also summarises updates to the financial framework, including the revenue finance and contracting guidance for 2025/26, capital guidance for 2025/26 and NHS Payment Scheme 2025/26.

Introduction and key priorities

NHS has reduced the number of national priorities for 2025/26, reflecting the government's commitment to streamline objectives for the NHS. The intention is that this will give local systems greater flexibility about how funding is deployed, and support them to focus on outcomes for patients and communities.

There is a recognition that NHS finances continue to be very challenging. Local leaders may therefore make choices to reduce or stop lower value activity to enable the service to live within its means and deliver value to taxpayers. The guidance states that NHS and government will "lead behind" local leaders doing this.

Integrated care boards (ICBs) will lead the planning and arranging of services to deliver the priorities set out in this guidance. To do this, ICBs are positioned as "strategic commissioners".

From 2025/26, ICBs and trusts will be able to earn greater freedom and flexibility. In "mature, highly performing systems", providers will be able to take on more responsibility for leading the planning

<https://www.nhsproviders.org/media/700046/otdb-2025-26-planning-guidance.pdf>

This briefing highlights the key points from NHS England's recent 2025/26 priorities and operational planning guidance, and includes NHS Providers' view. It also summarises updates to the financial framework, including the revenue finance and contracting guidance for 2025/26, capital guidance for 2025/26 and NHS Payment Scheme 2025/26.

<https://nhsproviders.org/media/700046/otdb-2025-26-planning-guidance.pdf>

The NHS Confederation has also issued a briefing providing a summary and analysis of NHS England's 2025/26 priorities and operational planning guidance. It analyses the priority areas and suggests ways of measuring whether they are successful.

<https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/202526-nhs-priorities-and-operational-planning-guidance-what-you-need-know>

In addition, the HFMA has issued a briefing which pulls out key points from the planning guidance, as relevant to NHS finance staff.

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/summary-nhs-operational-planning-and-contracting-guidance-202526>

For information

NHS Providers - Governance survey 2024



NHS Providers governance survey 2024

Introduction

The NHS Providers annual governance survey was completed by chairs, company secretaries and other corporate governance leads in NHS trusts and foundation trusts (FTs) in November and December 2024.

It sought to explore views in relation to boards, their assurance processes and how trusts are developing in relation to the systems they are part of. This summary details the key messages from the survey results and highlights notable themes and areas for further exploration.

A full briefing is also available, which includes detailed analysis of the survey data and highlights notable variation by role, region and trust type.

Many thanks to those of you who completed the survey. If you would like further detail or to discuss any of these findings, please contact Izzy Allen, senior policy advisor (governance) and David Williams, head of policy and strategy at izzy.allen@nhsproviders.org and david.williams@nhsproviders.org.

This report details the findings of the NHS Providers' 2024 governance survey, exploring the views and experiences of chairs, company secretaries and governance leads in NHS trusts and foundation trusts.

<https://nhsproviders.org/media/700040/gov-survey24.pdf>

For information

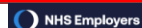
NHS Employers - Get your board onboard to improve staff experience

This guide has been developed in collaboration with NHS staff experience and health and wellbeing leads, as well as NHS People Promise managers. Its purpose is to empower those responsible for elements of the staff experience agenda to engage senior leaders and board members in promoting a positive and supportive staff experience.

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/system/files/2025-02/get-your-board-onboard-to-improve-staff-experience-2946.pdf>

For information

Developments in the NHS



Get your board onboard to improve staff experience

February 2025

NHS Confederation - Capital efficiency: how to reform health care capital spending



Capital efficiency

February 2025

How to reform healthcare capital spending

This report finds that the NHS is being held back from most effectively spending the investment it has been given to repair its estates, purchase vital equipment and build new facilities due to the 'bureaucratic hurdles' that are slow, unclear and duplicative. The report sets out how the capital regime can be improved to deliver on the government's missions for health and economic growth.

https://www.nhsconfed.org/system/files/2025-02/Capital%20efficiency%20report%20Feb%202025_0.pdf

For information

Socitm - Public sector digital trends: beyond borders

This report covers the leading technological and digital trends influencing local public services innovation, change, and reform in the face of a "perfect storm" of social, economic, and environmental demands.

<https://socitm.net/resource-hub/collections/public-sector-digital-trends/>

For information

Information Commissioners Office - Employment records guidance

The ICO has published their latest guidance to help organisations understand best practice for storing employee records.

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/employment/employment-practices-and-data-protection-keeping-employment-records/about-this-guidance/>

For information

Developments in the NHS

HFMA - Guide to NHS finance



NHS finance

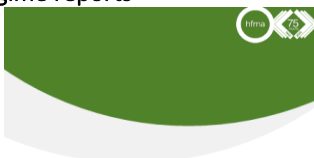
The HFMA's introductory guide to NHS finance is a comprehensive guide of how the NHS finance regime works, as well as the wider landscape in which it operates. It is designed to give readers a solid grounding in – and practical understanding of – all key aspects of NHS finance and will provide contextual background that helps explain how the NHS has developed over the years.

The guide is a vital resource for anyone who wants to understand NHS finance and get the maximum value from NHS resources. It will be of interest to finance staff at all levels, non-executive directors, clinicians, budget holders and general managers.

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/introductory-guide-nhs-finance>

For information

HFMA - Common themes from the investigation and intervention regime reports



Common themes from the investigation and intervention regime reports

26 February 2020

Investigation and intervention (I&I) reports led to significant improvements in the financial run rates of eight of the 10 systems engaged and some improvement in one of the other two. This briefing paper summarises common themes. These include a lack of triangulation (of finance with workforce and activity), a lack of system working and transformation, poor post implementation review, and controls that included workarounds or overrides

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/common-themes-investigation-and-intervention-regime-reports>

For information

HFMA - Market forces factor (MFF): The impact of changes to NHS funding flows



Market forces factor (MFF)

The impact of changes to NHS funding flows

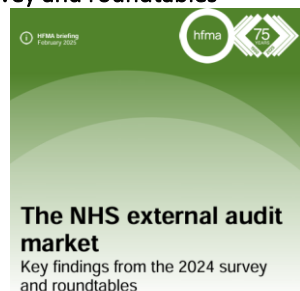
17 February 2020

This briefing provides an overview of the calculation and use of the MFF, along with the reported challenges to the MFF and the potential impact of changes. The briefing is designed to be a helpful introduction or a refresher to the topic for the NHS finance community or others with an interest in this area.

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/market-forces-factor-mff>

For information

HFMA - The NHS external audit market: Key findings from the 2024 survey and roundtables



In July 2024, in response to growing concerns about difficulties NHS bodies are facing to appoint and retain auditors, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) launched a comprehensive market study into the audit market for NHS providers and integrated care boards (ICBs). The HFMA worked with the FRC to engage with finance directors and non-executive directors through a survey and two roundtables in October 2024. This briefing summarises the findings from the survey and roundtables.

Overall, the audit market would mostly benefit from more choice and competition. There is a lack of choice in the NHS audit market, supported by the survey findings that 47% of respondents only received one bid and 7% received no bids at all in response to recent procurement exercises. A total of 70% of respondents had concerns about their next audit tender, with a further 17% having serious concerns.

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/nhs-external-audit-market>

For information

CIFAS - Fraud Behaviours Survey



The latest research by CIFAS shows that almost half (48%) of adults believe it is 'reasonable' to commit first-party fraud. The 2024 survey results make clear that first-party fraud, when someone knowingly misrepresents their identity or provides false information for financial or material gain, is on the rise.

<https://www.cifas.org.uk/secure/contentPORT/uploads/documents/Fraud%20Behaviours%202024%20-%20First%20Draft.pdf>

For information

Disclaimer: This briefing paper is intended to highlight recent developments and issues within the NHS that may be of interest to non-executive directors, lay members and NHS managers. It is not exhaustive and TIAN cannot be held responsible for any omission.

