

FIT FOR THE FUTURE: NHS'S 10-YEAR HEALTH PLAN FOR ENGLAND

*Summary of the NHS's new vision and plan.
July, 2025*

Introduction and Context

- **When was it published?** The Plan was published on 3 July 2025
- **Who Introduced the Plan?** Introduced under Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Health Secretary Wes Streeting amid the NHS's "crisis" with hospital backlogs, low public satisfaction, and workforce strain.

A defining moment for the NHS

The National Health Service (NHS) stands at a decisive turning point in its history. Following the findings of Lord Darzi's in-depth investigation, it is clear that the NHS can no longer fulfil its founding mission in the way patients, professionals, and the public expect. **The stark diagnosis is that the NHS is in "critical condition."** GPs and dentists are increasingly inaccessible, waiting times for treatments are unacceptably long, and the outcomes for life-threatening conditions such as cancer are slipping behind other developed nations. NHS staff are now demoralised, exhausted, and departing in record numbers.

Therefore, this plan is a call to action and the NHS's declaration of renewal. Informed by the largest national consultation in the NHS's history, including over 250,000 contributions via the Change.NHS website and direct engagement with thousands of staff—this Plan commits to a bold transformation. **The aim is clear: to build an NHS that is once again world-leading, centred on the needs of people, empowered by data and technology, and supported by a resilient, motivated workforce.**

This Plan is not about tweaks to an outdated system. It proposes a complete redesign of how health and care are delivered across England, underpinned by the enduring values of universality, need-based care, and funding through general taxation.

Core Focus: The Three Transformational Shifts

As the NHS itself says: “We will reinvent the NHS through 3 radical shifts - hospital to community, analogue to digital and sickness to prevention. These will be the core components of our new care model.”

From hospital to community: the neighbourhood health service, designed around you

- Creation of Neighbourhood Health Centres—GP-led “one-stop shops” open at least 12 hours/day, 6 days/week
- Redirecting funding and focus from hospitals to out-of-hospital care over the next 3–4 years, extending to 2035
- A new model of integrated, multidisciplinary teams addressing holistic needs - medical, social, and preventive.

From analogue to digital: power in your hands

- Transform the NHS App into a digital front door: appointment booking, messaging, self-referrals, viewing care plans, and test results.
- AI integrated in hospitals and GP services, with all hospitals AI-enabled by 2035.
- Unified patient records accessible across primary, community, pharmacy, and dental care.

From sickness to prevention: power to make the healthy choice

- Target to halve the healthy-life expectancy gap between the richest and poorest regions and foster the healthiest generation of children.
- Enhanced cross-sector efforts tackling obesity, housing, air quality, and poverty.
- Introduce genomics population health, predictive analytics, and personalised prevention.

These foundational changes are necessary for the NHS to thrive in the face of future challenges: **an ageing population, rising chronic illness, widening health inequalities, and increasing global competition in healthcare innovation.**

The three shifts will be powered by a **new operating care model** for the NHS that redistributes power to local providers, enhances transparency, and refocuses funding to reward quality, outcomes, and patient empowerment.

From hospital to community: the neighbourhood health service, designed around you

The NHS often feels fragmented and hospital-driven, and that's because currently, care is siloed, disconnected from communities, and focused more on treating illness than on supporting people where they live. To fix this, a bold shift is needed, from centralised hospital care to a system that offers continuous, accessible, and integrated support.

The **Neighbourhood Health Service** is the proposed solution: a local, person-centred model that **places care back into the heart of communities.** It will bring professionals together into coordinated teams and rebuild access to general practice, while allowing hospitals to concentrate on delivering expert care when truly needed.

At its core, this new system follows a simple principle: **care should happen as close to home as possible, digitally by default, in people's homes when feasible, in neighbourhood health centres when necessary, and only in hospitals as a last resort.** To achieve this, the NHS intends to:



Redefine Spending

Investment will shift from hospital services to community-based care, with changes starting in the next 3–4 years as neighbourhood services expand.



End the '8am Rush'

Thousands of new GPs will be trained, and the NHS App will offer online advice and same-day GP booking for those who need it.



New GP Contracts

Present two new contracts allowing GPs to work across larger areas and lead new neighbourhood providers.



Care Involvement

People with complex needs will have an agreed personalised care plan by 2027, enabling people to be actively involved in their own care.



Expanding Personal Health Budgets

By 2030, 1 million people will have access to personalised funding for their care, with a universal offer in place by 2035.



Enhanced Digital Access

Through the NHS App, patients will be able to manage appointments, view care plans, message professionals, and refer themselves for services and tests.



Neighbourhood Health Centres

Beginning in areas with the lowest healthy life expectancy, these centres will act as fully staffed, 12-hour-a-day, six-day-a-week hubs for care.



Community Pharmacies

Taking a more active role in managing long-term conditions and being fully integrated into the patient record system.



Dental Care Reform

NHS dentistry will become more accessible, especially for children, with incentives to attract more NHS dentists.



Urgent & Outpatient Reform

More urgent care will be delivered in community settings, reducing reliance on hospital outpatients and aiming to phase them out by 2035.



Restoring Treatment Standards

The long-standing NHS goal - 92% of elective patients treated within 18 weeks - will be reinstated, ending the distress of corridor care.



Expanding Emergency Support

Same-day emergency care and urgent treatment centres will grow, with digital tools like 111 and the NHS App helping patients book the most appropriate services by 2028.



Mental Health Response

£120 million will go toward creating dedicated mental health emergency departments to guarantee fast, same-day support.



AI-enabled Hospitals

Freed from low-priority tasks, hospitals will focus on cutting-edge, tech-enhanced care. Every NHS hospital will be AI-enabled by the end of the Plan.

This reimagining will reduce pressure on hospitals, enabling them to focus on advanced, specialist interventions while freeing community systems to manage the broader health of populations proactively.

From analogue to digital: power in your hands

Today's NHS has not kept pace with the digital transformations seen in other sectors. The Plan addresses this by making the NHS a fully digital-first system by 2030. Key to this transformation is the reinvention of the **NHS App**, the vision of a **'doctor in your pocket'** into the central access point for all health and care services. This app is meant to evolve into a central hub for personalised, proactive, and patient-led care. It will provide:

- Faster access for healthier individuals
- Prioritise physical appointments for those with complex needs
- Enhance long-term financial sustainability

Personalisation will be central to the digital experience, with **patients encouraged to choose their providers, give real-time feedback, and co-produce care plans**. New features will include:

- Receive real-time advice for non-urgent issues through **My NHS GP**
- Choose care providers based on location, outcomes, or reviews via **My Choices**
- Book specialist tests and consultations through **My Specialist** and **My Consult**
- Manage prescriptions and vaccinations with **My Medicines** and **My Vaccines**
- Monitor chronic conditions via **My Care**, upload personal data to **My Health**, and access extra support through **My Companion**.
- Organise family care with **My Children** and **My Carer**
- Leave meaningful feedback, which will be compiled into actionable insights for providers and clinicians

The Plan also introduces continuous patient monitoring to enable early clinical intervention, reducing emergency admissions. A new HealthStore will offer access to vetted digital health tools, supporting collaboration between the NHS, innovators, and regulators.

For staff, burdensome admin tasks will be reduced through AI scribes and single sign-on systems. These innovations will allow clinical professionals to focus more time on patient care, not paperwork.

The intention is that by 2028, the NHS App to serve as a digital front door to the entire NHS.

From sickness to prevention: power to make a healthy choice

Preventing illness before it occurs is one of the NHS's most urgent goals. The gap in healthy life expectancy between the richest and poorest communities continues to grow, and nearly 20% of children leave primary school with obesity. **The NHS aims to halve this inequality while improving health outcomes for all and creating the healthiest generation of children yet.**

To achieve this, the Plan sets out a bold, cross-society movement focused on prevention, bringing together local authorities, businesses, employers, investors, and civic leaders. Together, they will drive a new culture of health promotion and disease prevention.

Tobacco and vaping control:

No child turning 16 or younger will ever be legally sold tobacco. The government will also ban advertising and sponsorship of vapes and nicotine products to address rising youth vaping rates.

Ending the obesity epidemic:

A national strategy will restrict junk food advertising to children, ban high-caffeine energy drinks for under-16s, and reform the soft drinks levy. In a world-first move, large food companies will be required to report on the healthiness of their food sales, with mandatory targets set to drive healthier food options.

Supporting healthy eating for children:

The value of Healthy Start vouchers will be restored from 2026–2027, eligibility for free school meals expanded to all children whose parents receive Universal Credit, and school food standards updated to ensure access to nutritious meals.

Expanding access to weight-loss treatments:

New partnerships with industry will make breakthrough weight-loss medications available through the NHS, using outcome-based payment models tied to health improvements.

Incentivising healthy lifestyles:

A new national health reward scheme will encourage individuals to make healthier choices. In partnership with the Great Run Company, a campaign will be launched to get millions of people moving regularly.

Reducing alcohol harm:

New labelling standards will be introduced, alongside support for the no- and low-alcohol market to promote healthier drinking habits.

Health and employment integration:

Through collaboration between the health, work, and skills systems, “Health and Growth Accelerators” will be established in partnership with Integrated Care Boards to help people stay in or return to work.

Supporting young people’s mental health:

Mental health support in schools and colleges will be expanded, with additional investment in **Young Futures Hubs** to improve access to early intervention and community-based care.

Personalised, predictive prevention:

A new Genomics Population Health Service will be launched by the end of the decade. It will include universal newborn genomic testing and polygenic risk scoring to detect individuals at higher risk of common diseases, enabling earlier and more personalised interventions.

Preventing cancers and chronic diseases:

HPV vaccination uptake will be increased among young adults to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040. Lung cancer screening will be fully rolled out for individuals with a history of smoking.

A New Operating Model for a Decentralised and Diverse NHS

To achieve the vision in the 10-Year Plan, the NHS intends to adopt a bold **new operating model that decentralises power and fosters greater local accountability**. Currently, too much control is held at the national level in Whitehall, limiting responsiveness to local needs. **The reformed model will shift decision-making closer to communities, giving more autonomy to local providers, patients, and frontline staff.**

The goal is to make the NHS not only more diverse and devolved, but also the most collaborative public healthcare system in the world. This transformation will involve:

Merging the NHS and Department of Health and Social Care headquarters , reducing central management by half.	Raising leadership standards , linking executive pay to performance and rewarding effective, values-driven leadership.
Empowering Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) as the principal commissioners of local services, phasing out old commissioning support units.	Expanding partnerships with the private sector , where necessary, to increase access, particularly in underserved communities.
Introducing earned autonomy for high-performing areas, while intervening decisively where services consistently fall short, especially in places with the poorest health outcomes.	Forging stronger ties with local government and public services , aligning ICB boundaries with strategic local authorities by the end of the Plan.
Modernising the NHS Foundation Trust (FT) model , allowing providers to retain and reinvest their financial surpluses and borrow for infrastructure, with a focus on improving overall	Introducing a new Patient Choice Charter that ensures individuals have more voice and control over their care, especially in high-need areas.
Creating Integrated Health Organisations (IHOs) , where top-performing FTs will be given full control over local health budgets. The first IHOs will be launched in 2026, with plans for widespread adoption by 2027.	Piloting 'Patient Power Payments' , a new funding model that gives patients a say in whether providers receive full payment based on the quality of care delivered.

Restoring Trust Through Transparency and Quality

Past failings have shown the need for greater transparency and accountability in care quality. This Plan sets a clear course to make the NHS the most transparent healthcare system in the world, where quality is visible, accountability is standard, and patient voice is central.

To achieve this, a new era of high-quality care will be underpinned by open data, patient empowerment, and rigorous oversight. Key actions include:

Publishing clear league tables ranking NHS providers by key quality indicators starting this summer.

Using patient-reported outcomes and experiences to guide care choices and feedback loops.

Enhancing the NHS App to let patients compare and choose providers using real-time data on wait times, clinical outcomes, team performance, and patient reviews.

Launching a national investigation into maternity and neonatal services alongside a new taskforce to develop a reform plan with input from bereaved families.

Overhauling complaints handling to ensure faster, more responsive action on safety concerns.

Reforming the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to act faster, with the legal power to hold providers accountable and use expert-led inspections.

Strengthening the National Quality Board (NQB) to lead on a new quality strategy, starting with cardiovascular disease, mental health, frailty, and dementia.

Rewarding clinical excellence, allowing providers to offer bonuses to teams with outstanding results or rapid improvement.

Holding all providers to account, whether NHS or independent. Persistently poor care will result in contracts being terminated, regardless of the care setting.

Building the Future NHS: Powered by People and Innovation

To truly transform the NHS for the future, two forces must work in harmony: a dynamic, supported workforce and a relentless drive for innovation. To deliver its future vision, **the NHS will invest in a smaller but more skilled, motivated, and digitally enabled workforce, supported by personalised career development, modern employment standards by 2026, published at the employer level, and AI integration.**

Recruitment will focus on **local talent, with reduced reliance on international hires and expanded training routes** like **nursing apprenticeships** and medical school places, prioritising disadvantaged applicants. Managers and executives will be held to higher standards, with pay linked to performance, delivery, and public value.

In parallel, **the NHS will lead in health innovation, embedding AI in clinical care, expanding genomics to predict and prevent illness, mainstreaming wearables, and scaling robotic surgery.** Backed by £600 million in data research investment, faster clinical trials, and reforms to NICE, the NHS will harness cutting-edge technologies to improve outcomes, productivity, and sustainability.

Building a Financially Sustainable NHS: Productivity and Reform

The NHS currently consumes 38% of the government's day-to-day spending—a share expected to rise to nearly 40% by the end of this Parliament. But it is now clear that simply increasing funding does not guarantee better care. The historic cycle of “more money, less reform” is no longer viable.

This Plan introduces a **value-based financial model**, where investment is tied to outcomes, efficiency, and innovation. The goal is to drive resources from hospital-based care into more cost-effective community services, leverage digital tools to boost productivity, and prioritise prevention to reduce long-term demand.

To secure a stable future, the NHS will

- **Target 2% annual productivity growth** over the next three years.
- **End reliance on deficit bailouts** and support providers to return to surplus by 2030.
- **Adopt five-year financial planning**, shifting away from reactive budgeting.
- **Replace block contracts with outcome-based payments** that reward high-quality care.
- **Introduce “year of care” payments** to encourage continuity and value in community-based treatment.
- **Align funding to local health needs**, with extra support for underserved areas.
- **Allow NHS trusts to retain and reinvest 100% of land sale receipts.**
- **Explore public-private partnerships (PPP)** to fund Neighbourhood Health Centres.
- **Tap into low-risk pension capital** to unlock new investment.
- **Move toward lifetime funding models**, where providers are rewarded for improving long-term health outcomes and involving patients in their care.

In short, this financial overhaul aims to make the NHS more accountable, equitable, and effective, spending smarter, not just more.

Our take on the Plan:

This plan is the most comprehensive NHS reform proposal in decades, and it reflects long-desired shifts: moving care into communities, patients having digitalised access, and prioritising prevention. Yet, ambition must be matched by execution, backed up by details on how to deliver the shifts, fund the workforce, and coordinate across sectors, remains thin.

We admire the Plan’s clarity of purpose. If this bold vision is accompanied by **robust financing, clear accountability**, and commitment to **cross-sector collaboration**, it could mark a turning point. The question is, **‘Can this plan genuinely overcome decades of underinvestment and structural inertia?’**