



NHS Monthly Insight Report

March 2026

Monthly Insight Report

March 2026

Introduction

'The Internal Audit Network' (TIAN) comprises the seven NHS internal audit consortiums and in-house teams operating across England. These organisations collaborate across a number of areas to leverage their collective knowledge and expertise and drive efficiency and effectiveness. This monthly insight report produced by TIAN highlights key publications and is intended as a useful update and reference tool for our clients.

Developments in the NHS	
Department of Health and Social Care - Neighbourhood health framework	<p>This framework defines neighbourhood health and sets out the challenges neighbourhood health and care services should address. It aims to establish clear metrics for success and maps out the process systems should go through to establish local metrics. It also defines the roles of integrated care boards, local authorities, health and wellbeing boards, and other partners in neighbourhood health's development and implementation.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-health-framework</p> <p>For information</p>
NHS England (NHSE) - Fit for the future: towards population health delivery models	<p>To realise the ambitions set out in the 10 Year Health Plan, services must be delivered in new ways that better meet patients' needs and provide care as close to home as possible. As set out in the Neighbourhood Health Framework, this means improving routine health care services, moving to a more proactive care model for people with multiple long-term conditions and delivering better alternatives to hospital care. This publication sets out new population health delivery models to facilitate these changes, supporting integrated care boards (ICBs) to commission providers around the needs of defined populations. ICBs – working with partners, including local authorities and health and wellbeing boards – will agree neighbourhood footprints that form clearly defined populations. Single neighbourhood, multi-neighbourhood and integrated health organisation contracts will be commissioned around these populations.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/fit-for-the-future-towards-population-health-delivery-models/</p> <p>The NHS Confederation has produced a briefing outlining the headline points and analysis of NHSE's blueprint for how the new population-level delivery models will operate.</p> <p>https://thenhsalliance.org/resources/towards-population-health-delivery-models-what-you-need-to-know</p> <p>For information</p>
NHSE – Transfer of Direct Commissioning	<p>This letter from NHSE confirms plans to transfer their direct commissioning functions to ICBs from next April (2027), including the services in scope. It sets out the role of new regional "Offices for Pan-ICB Commissioning" (OPICs), OPIC arrangements, and next steps for transition.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/direct-commissioning-update/</p> <p>For information of commissioners</p>

Developments in the NHS	
NHSE - Corridor care definition	<p>To ensure consistency in reporting of activity in relation to corridor care, this definition has been developed by NHSE to allow acute hospitals to accurately record and count corridor care. The guidance sets out definitions for ED and, general and adult beds, together with a table describing key criteria. These 'worked examples' support acute hospitals to operationalise the corridor care definition. Queries on corridor care can be emailed to england.uecooperationalflow@nhs.net</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/corridor-care-definition/</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/corridor-care-worked-examples/</p> <p>For information and adoption by acute hospitals</p>
NHSE - Martha's Rule: core standards	<p>New NHSE data has reported there were over 10,000 calls to Martha's Rule in first 16 months to trigger urgent review of care. The data shows that one in three calls to Martha's Rule by patients, families and staff identified rapid worsening of a patient's condition, helping the NHS to identify concerns more quickly and make crucial interventions to care.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/2026/03/over-10000-calls-to-marthas-rule-in-first-16-months-to-trigger-urgent-review-of-care/</p> <p>Martha's Rule has now been included in the NHS Standard Contract. This guidance helps providers to meet this requirement by describing what you should have in place for the safe, effective and reliable implementation of Martha's Rule.</p> <p>https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/marthas-rule-core-standards/</p> <p>For information</p>
NHS Survey Coordination Centre - NHS Staff Survey 2025: national results briefing	<p>The statistical results of the 2025 NHS Staff Survey give invaluable insight into the experiences of over 760,000 people working in the NHS in autumn 2025. Over 1.5m NHS employees in England were invited to participate in the survey between September-November 2025.</p> <p>https://www.nhsstaffsurveys.com/results/national-results/</p> <p>The NHS Confederation and NHS Providers have also produced a summary of the national-level findings, including their view of the 2025 NHS Staff Survey results.</p> <p>https://thenhsalliance.org/resources/nhs-staff-survey-results-2025-what-you-need-to-know</p> <p>For information</p>
National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation - Independent investigation into maternity and neonatal services in England: interim report	<p>This report sets out the background and changing context in which maternity and neonatal care is provided. It examines six factors that could be contributing to the pressures on the maternity and neonatal system. These are: capacity pressures; culture and leadership; racism and discrimination; poor responses and lack of accountability when things go wrong; the quality of estates; and workforce. The report concludes with next steps.</p> <p>https://www.matneoinv.org.uk/updates/independent-investigation-into-maternity-and-neonatal-services-in-england-interim-report/</p> <p>For information</p>

Developments in the NHS	
UK Covid-19 Inquiry Module 3: the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the healthcare systems of the United Kingdom	<p>This report, the third of the Inquiry’s ten investigations, has examined the impact of Covid-19 on health care systems across the four nations. It investigated how governments and society responded to the pandemic, the capacity of health care systems to adapt and the impact on patients, their loved ones and health care workers. It finds that, because health care systems were already overstretched and in a precarious state, the UK entered the pandemic ill-prepared. It concludes that the UK’s health care systems “came close to collapse”. Ultimately it “coped, but only just”.</p> <p>https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/documents/module-3-full-report/</p> <p>For information</p>
House of Commons Library - International recruitment in the NHS workforce	<p>The NHS uses international recruitment to fill staffing vacancies. This briefing summarises numbers and trends in international recruitment of the NHS workforce, concerns and recent policy.</p> <p>https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10568/</p> <p>For information</p>
Public Accounts Committee – Financial Sustainability of adult hospices in England	<p>This report calls for urgent reforms to be introduced to the independent hospice sector if it is to avoid financial crisis. The report states that integrated care boards largely fund hospices through grants and block contracts, meaning they are not collecting the data needed to assess whether these outcomes for patients are being achieved. It also says that hospices are facing a funding cliff edge from April if no new funding is injected into the sector before the new financial year, leaving hospices facing a further reduction in the services they can offer, and rounds of redundancies.</p> <p>https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/52190/documents/289940/default/</p> <p>For information</p>
NHS Confederation - Forging strategic partnerships: considerations for creating effective strategic partnerships to deliver the 10 Year Plan	<p>This guidance shares insights of leaders from at-scale primary care organisations and NHS trusts on how strategic partnerships can improve patient outcomes, strengthen neighbourhood delivery models and use collective resources more efficiently. Through expert presentations, panel discussions and thematic workshops, participants reflected openly on the cultural, operational and structural factors that make or break partnership working today.</p> <p>https://thenhsalliance.org/resources/forging-strategic-partnerships-considerations-for-delivering-the-10-year-health-plan</p> <p>For information</p>
Health Foundation - Unpaid care: the realities of caring in the UK	<p>This briefing analyses national survey data from 2018 to 2025 on caring in the UK. It finds that one in six of all UK adults – equivalent to 8.9 million people – provided unpaid care in the period 2023–25. However, it acknowledges that the true extent of unpaid care may be higher, since not all unpaid carers will identify as such. It finds that caring responsibilities did not fall equally: older people were more likely to be unpaid carers and women were 29% more likely than men to be unpaid carers. It also finds that almost two-thirds (61%) of carers provided less than 20 hours of unpaid care a week. More than one in five (22%) unpaid carers provided more than 35 hours a week in 2023–25. These carers were more likely to provide care in the home.</p> <p>https://www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/analysis/unpaid-care-the-realities-of-caring-in-the-uk</p> <p>For information</p>

Developments in the NHS	
NHS Providers - Navigating uncertainty around councils of governors	<p>Government proposals in the 10-year health plan for England are signalling a potential removal of the requirement for councils of governors in NHS foundation trusts. This briefing sets out considerations for foundation trust board members, governors and others who work with them to enable constructive conversations about the impact of the proposal. It also suggests practical approaches to sustaining an effective council of governors through this period of uncertainty and explores the potential for boards and governors to co-design next steps.</p> <p>https://nhsproviders.org/resources/beyond-councils-of-governors-rethinking-public-accountability</p> <p>https://nhsproviders.org/resources/navigating-uncertainty-around-councils-of-governors</p> <p>https://nhsproviders.org/resources/event-insights-beyond-councils-of-governors-rethinking-public-accountability</p> <p>For information of NHS Foundation Trusts</p>
Health Services Safety Investigations Body - Building investigation excellence: our strategy for strengthening the capability of healthcare investigations	<p>Through a targeted approach, this strategy focuses on strengthening capability in investigation skills, increasing accessibility to investigation resources, improving the professional connections between investigators and working in collaboration with the national health system to align priorities and reduce duplication.</p> <p>https://www.hssib.org.uk/about-us/corporate-publications/building-investigation-excellence/</p> <p>For information</p>
Information Commissioners Office – Guidance on handling data protection complaints	<p>All organisations must have a process for handling data protection complaints. The ICO’s new guidance sets out what you must, should and could do.</p> <p>https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/how-to-deal-with-data-protection-complaints/</p> <p>For consideration by all organisations and implementation as necessary</p>
Medical Technology Group (MTG) - A system that learns: embedding best practice across the NHS	<p>This analysis shows most NHS systems do not track outcomes, NICE adherence or pathways in gynaecology – despite more than 750,000 women waiting for care. The report warns that widespread failures to collect data and monitor best practice in gynaecology services are leaving women facing longer delays to diagnosis and treatment. The findings come as part of the MTG’s Commission on NHS Culture, an investigation into how organisational culture across the NHS affects the adoption and spread of innovation and technology to improve the delivery of services. The report looks at four clinical areas: diagnostics, orthopaedics, gynaecology, and continence care to assess variation in the quality of services.</p> <p>https://mtg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/A-System-That-Learns-Embedding-Best-Practice-Across-the-NHS.pdf</p> <p>For information</p>
CIFAS - Fraudscape 2026: Rising Threats and Record Fraud Cases	<p>Fraudscape 2026 draws on Cifas’ National Fraud Database, Insider Threat Database, and intelligence from members, partners, and law enforcement to provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges facing the fraud prevention community. The findings highlight the importance of robust fraud prevention measures and ongoing collaboration across the industry to safeguard individuals and organisations alike. Key insights from 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 444,000 cases recorded – a 6% increase on 2024 and the highest annual total on record • Over 1,200 cases recorded daily by Cifas members

Developments in the NHS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of cases linked to identity fraud and account takeover • AI and international crime networks are accelerating the scale and sophistication of fraud • Cifas members prevented £2.4 billion in fraud losses <p>https://www.fraudscape.co.uk/</p> <p>For information</p>
HFMA – Guide to NHS Governance	<p>Governance is the system by which organisations are directed, controlled and held to account, and it is fundamental to keeping services safe. It provides the framework for sound decision making, underpins trust, and depends on clear accountability, transparency and the effective triangulation of information to ensure resources are managed well and risks are understood. Strong governance is especially critical in times of pressure, providing the structure, discipline and clarity needed to make difficult decisions confidently and safely.</p> <p>This guide provides an understanding of what good governance means in the NHS, why it matters and how it can be embedded in organisational culture. It supports organisations to review, strengthen and evidence effective systems of governance, risk management and control, and is designed to be used alongside the HFMA’s NHS audit committee handbook. (Note: This new guide costs £20, or £15 for HFMA members.)</p> <p>https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/hfma-guide-nhs-governance</p> <p>For information</p>
HFMA – Year end reminders for NHS Audit Committees	<p>This paper provides NHS non-executive directors (NEDs) with key reminders as they review their 2025/26 annual report and accounts. It sets out the main issues to be aware of for this year, as well as key questions NEDs (particularly audit committee members) may want to seek assurance over.</p> <p>https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/year-end-reminders-nhs-audit-committees-0</p> <p>For information and consideration by NHS Audit Committees</p>

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.

