



NHS Monthly Insight Report

August 2026

Monthly Insight Report

August 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	
NHS England (NHSE) - Assessing provider capability: guidance for trust boards	Updated guidance on assessing provider capability, and the 2026 self-assessment template are now available. Provider boards should complete their self-assessment and submit their return to their regional oversight team by 5pm on Wednesday 30 September. https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/assessing-provider-capability-guidance-for-nhs-trust-boards/ For information ahead of the 30 September deadline for submission of self-assessments
NHSE - Framework for NHS boards: monitoring research activity	This framework defines what NHS boards need to do to monitor research and describes what a high-performing, research-active organisation looks like. https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/framework-for-nhs-boards-monitoring-research-activity/ For information and action as necessary
NHSE - Maternity and Neonatal 10 Point Plan assurance process	Developed in response to recent independent reviews of maternity and neonatal services, these documents set out the assurance process for the Maternity and Neonatal 10 Point Plan and the expectations for Trusts. https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/maternity-and-neonatal-10-point-plan-assurance-process/ For information and action by Trusts providing maternity services
DHSC - Care continuity between midwifery and health visiting services: principles for practice	This guidance sets out practical, practice-focused principles to strengthen continuity between midwifery and health visiting services across pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. It reflects current policy, evidence and learning, with a particular focus on relational continuity, shared professional oversight and co-ordinated working at points of transition. It aligns with national priorities for integrated, community-based postnatal care. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-continuity-between-midwifery-and-health-visiting-services For information
Office for Equality and Opportunity and Equality and Human Rights Commission - Equality Act 2010: Code of Practice for services, public	The Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) Code of Practice for Services, Public Functions and Associations (the Services Code) came into force on 5 August 2026. The Code provides statutory guidance on the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and has implications for NHS organisations, as both service providers and employers. NHS England will publish supporting guidance shortly. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-code-of-practice-for-services-public-functions-and-

Developments in the NHS	
functions and associations, 2026	associations-2026 For information - all hospitals should continue to review their local guidance against the EHRC Code and ensure all patients are cared for with dignity and respect and in line with the law
Health Services Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB) Electronic patient record systems – electronic referrals for ongoing care: advice and guidance	This report is an interim publication as part of HSSIB’s focus on electronic patient record systems. In light of concerns about patient safety heard by HSSIB, this report focuses on advice and guidance (A&G) services in the NHS in England, which enable clinicians in general practice to seek specialist advice from secondary care. It also considers where A&G services are used as part of single point of access models. The report makes two safety recommendations to NHSE and the DHSC. https://www.hssib.org.uk/patient-safety-investigations/electronic-patient-record-systems-electronic-referrals-for-ongoing-care/interim-report/pdf/ For information
Public Policy Projects - Delivering the single patient record: from vision to reality	This report summarises the insights from an online roundtable on delivering the Single Patient Record (SPR), convened by Public Policy Projects. The discussion explored how the national ambition for an SPR can be translated into practical decisions for local systems, suppliers, clinicians and patients. It was informed by contributions from NHS digital leaders, clinicians, policy experts, suppliers, academics and standards specialists. The session was chaired by Alex Kafetz, Non-Executive Director for the Care Quality Commission. https://media.publicpolicyprojects.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/PPP-Delivering-the-Single-Patient-Record.pdf For information
Kings Fund - Key facts and figures about the NHS	This briefing sets out to answer some of the most frequently asked questions which the Kings Fund receives about the NHS, such as: What's the NHS annual budget? How many doctors and nurses are there? What's the cost of an operation? https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/data-and-charts/key-facts-figures-nhs For information
Health Foundation - General practice funding in England: a comprehensive overview and implications for policy	This report argues that the challenges facing general practice are complex, but funding lies at their core. It brings together multiple national data to provide a comprehensive overview of general practice funding in England. https://www.health.org.uk/sites/default/files/upload/publications/2026/Health_Foundation_General%20practice%20funding%20in%20England.pdf For information
Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) - National Audit of Care at the End of Life (NACEL): State of the Nations report	The sustainable delivery of high quality end of life care requires ongoing review and continuous improvement to ensure compassionate and appropriate treatment. This report shows encouraging improvements in several aspects of care, with overall access to specialist palliative care remaining stable at 97% of hospital providers. It also highlights areas requiring further attention, such as the recording of spiritual, religious, and cultural needs. As a result, it recommends further national research into inequalities in end of life care and stronger system-level oversight of provider quality improvement plans. https://www.hqip.org.uk/report/nacel-712/

Developments in the NHS	
	https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/nhsbn-static/NACEL/2025/NACEL%202025%20State%20of%20the%20Nations%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf They have also issued another report specifically focused on EOLC in a mental health setting: https://www.hqip.org.uk/report/nacel-mh-764/ For information
HQIP - National Maternity and Perinatal Audit (NMPA): State of the Nation report	This report presents findings from almost 600,000 singleton births in NHS maternity services across England, Scotland and Wales during 2024 - highlighting inequalities in timely access to maternity care and changing patterns of birth. It examines key measures of maternity care and outcomes, identifies national trends and variation, and makes recommendations to support quality improvement across maternity services. Local level initiatives and campaigns targeted at improving rates of timely pregnancy booking should be co-designed with groups and communities most likely to receive care after 10 weeks to ensure their needs are met. https://www.hqip.org.uk/report/nmpa-734/ https://www.hqip.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Ref-734-NMPA-State-of-the-Nation-Report_FINAL-V2.pdf For information (maternity service providers)
Centre for Health Economics - Productivity of the English National Health Service: 2023/24 update	This report extends previous investigations into NHS productivity growth carried out at the University of York. Embedded in National Accounting Systems, it uses an index number approach to calculate growth in both NHS inputs, outputs and productivity. Outputs are also adjusted for the quality of care provided. This report has two objectives: to provide an update on NHS productivity between 2022/23 and 2023/24, and, similarly to last year's report, to evaluate whether the NHS system has recovered from the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic by determining the productivity growth between 2019/20 and 2023/24. https://www.york.ac.uk/media/che/documents/papers/researchpapers/CHE%20RP%202023%20Final%20July%2026%2016.56.pdf For information
Nuffield Trust - Long waits for a hospital bed in an emergency: will urgent care policies make a difference for patients?	Stories and images of large numbers of people waiting in overcrowded A&E departments are not new. However, there has been growing concern in recent years about the number of patients who are being treated in areas that are not designed for clinical care. This long read assesses whether this is affecting particular groups of patients more than others, and discusses whether current policies – including a new definition for corridor care – could make a difference. https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/news-item/long-waits-for-a-hospital-bed-in-an-emergency-will-urgent-care-policies-make-a-difference-for-patients For information
Age UK - The longest wait to leave: tackling the delayed discharges that help to drive	This report examines how delayed discharges contribute to long waits in A&E; what is causing them; and what this means for the older people caught in the middle. It also looks at how this challenge can be tackled and why this issue needs to be given greater priority in debates about tackling 'corridor care'. It also includes case studies of places that have started to

Developments in the NHS	
corridor care	make a positive change. https://www.ageuk.org.uk/siteassets/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/care--support/the-longest-wait-to-leave.pdf For information
Cancer Research UK - Cancer in the UK: age 2026	Age plays a significant role in shaping cancer outcomes – from cancer risk and screening to treatment access, survival and mortality. This report aims to support a more nuanced understanding of how cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment and outcomes vary by age. This will help inform future service planning, research and policy development, in order to improve cancer outcomes for people of all ages. https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/our-reports-and-publications/cancer-in-the-uk-age For information
HFMA Briefing - Patients monies and belongings	This briefing provides practical guidance for NHS organisations on the management of patients’ cash, valuables and personal property. It outlines responsibilities for safeguarding patients’ belongings, managing monies held on behalf of patients, supporting individuals who may be unable to manage their own financial affairs, and handling unclaimed property and the estates of deceased patients. It also highlights key governance, accounting and internal audit considerations, helping organisations develop robust local policies and controls while protecting both patients and the organisation. https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/patients-monies-and-belongings For information (requires HFMA login)
HFMA Briefing – Pathway review for specialized services	This briefing examines how the delegation of 70 specialised services to integrated care boards (ICBs) creates opportunities to review and redesign whole patient pathways, with a stronger focus on prevention, earlier diagnosis and community-based care. It argues that historically fragmented commissioning arrangements have made it difficult to optimise pathways leading to specialised services, often resulting in delayed diagnosis, poorer outcomes and higher costs. Drawing on published research, HFMA roundtables and NHS case studies, the briefing demonstrates how pathway reviews can improve patient access, reduce variation, support earlier intervention and potentially reduce demand for high-cost specialised care, while highlighting examples from interstitial lung disease, renal services, lung cancer screening and cardiovascular care. The paper concludes that although evidence of benefits from delegated specialised service reviews remains limited because the reforms are still at an early stage, successful transformation will depend on aligned funding, strong cross-system collaboration, sufficient commissioning capacity, robust data and evaluation arrangements, and a long-term commitment to investing in prevention while maintaining essential specialised services. https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/pathway-review-specialised-services For information (requires HFMA login)
HFMA Briefing – Sickness to prevention	Sickness to prevention is one of three transformations that the governments of all four nations of the United Kingdom (UK) conclude is necessary to ensure that the NHS can be sustained. In an ageing population and with limited resource growth the need to prevent people becoming ill is a key to both better patient outcomes and more efficient solutions. This briefing

Developments in the NHS

summarises the approach to prevention taken by each of the four nations, the issues that the prevention and early diagnosis agenda raises and the role that finance staff have in securing delivery.

The briefing also summarises case studies that are available in a new area of the HFMA website dedicated to the three transformations sickness to prevention, analogue to digital and hospital to community. This 'library' of ideas is intended to be a dynamic resource of projects that have successfully delivered transformation.

<https://www.hfma.org.uk/publications/sickness-prevention>

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.

