NHS Monthly Insight Report

April 2025

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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 - 2025 to 2026 financial directions to NHS England	The government's financial directions to NHS England confirm how its budget is broken down for the year ahead. The government's 2025 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. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67ea53664a226ab6c41b2086/dhsc-financial-directions-to-NHS-England-2025-to-2026-web-accessible.pdf **For information**
NHS England (NHSE) - Guidance on Board member appraisal	NHSE has published new guidance on Board member appraisal. The Board member appraisal guidance, for chairs, chief executives, executive directors and non-executive directors, establishes clear expectations and enhances consistency in standards for board-level appraisals. NHSE has written to all Chairs, CEOs and Chief People Officers to introduce the appraisal guidance and set out timelines and next steps. All stakeholders involved in a board member appraisal should familiarise themselves with the guidance. For further information email england.chairsappraisal@nhs.net. NHSE Letter: https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/new-board-member-appraisal-framework-with-submission-dates/ Guidance: https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/board-member-appraisal-guidance/ **For information and implementation by all NHS boards**
NHSE - Suicide and self-harm guidance	NHSE has issued guidance regarding safety assessment, formulation and management of suicide and self-harm risks. The guidance sets out an approach that puts safety assessment, formulation, management and planning in the context of relational, therapeutic engagement. This guidance applies to all mental health practitioners, working in both community and inpatient settings, and supporting people of all ages. It should be adopted by public, private and voluntary sector providers, including independent practitioners. https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/staying-safe-from-suicide/ **For information and implementation as required by all mental health practitioners**
NHSE - National mandatory learning people policy framework	From Thursday 1 May NHS staff are now able to move their statutory and mandatory training between all NHS organisations in England. The new agreement enables both employees and bank workers to transfer their core training. NHSE's National mandatory learning policy framework helps employers meet their statutory obligation to ensure a safe and inclusive work

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	environment. An overview of the policy is available for learners and for managers.
	This policy is for NHS organisations to adopt and adapt to help them meet their statutory obligation to ensure a safe and inclusive work environment. It is intended to reduce or prevent incidents, near misses, risks, and connected loss of productivity. It also aims to increase efficiency by ensuring that learners do not need to repeat learning unnecessarily.
	https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/national-mandatory-learning-people-policy-framework/
	For information and implementation
NHSE - Quality and Outcomes Framework guidance for 2025/26	This document provides additional guidance on the interpretation and verification of the QOF indicators for 2025/26 in England. It is effective from 1 April 2025 and replaces versions issued in previous years.
	https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/quality-outcomes-framework-guidance-for-2025-26.pdf
	For information
NHS England - Guidance for developing a healthy nursing staff bank	This guidance supports NHS trusts to develop and refine their nursing bank offer as one measure to reduce nurse agency use. It sets out the core elements they should consider in ensuring their bank provides high-quality temporary staffing solutions in a timely fashion to support safe, effective care, and identifies resources to help them do so.
	https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/guidance-for-developing-a-healthy-nursing-staff-bank/
	For information and consideration
NHSE – Guidance on requesting information from a public body (Freedom of Information)	This guidance from NHSE helps organisations manage Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. It provides information about how requests can be made, responded to, and times when information may be withheld. It includes guidance for patients and service users, health and care professionals and information governance professionals.
	https://transform.england.nhs.uk/information-governance/guidance/requesting-information-from-a-public-body-freedom-of-information-foi/
	For information
Care Quality Commission - Community mental health survey 2024	This survey of more than 14,000 people who accessed community mental health services found that 4 in 10 (40%) people are waiting too long for care. A third of people (33%) waited 3 months or more for their first treatment, and 4 in 10 people said they did not receive any support while they waited. It highlighted persistent gaps in care, including people struggling to access care, not feeling involved in their care, and not receiving support when they needed it.
	https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/surveys/community-mental-health-survey
	A-Z list of results by NHS trust: Each trust has been provided with a benchmark report, which provides: details of the survey methodology, headline results, the trust score for each evaluative question, and banding for how a trust score compares with all other trusts.
	https://nhssurveys.org/all-files/05-community-mental-health/05-benchmarks-reports/2024/
	For information
Committee on Standards in	This report aims to support public sector bodies to put in place the processes needed to recognise the early warning signs of

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Public Life - Recognising and responding to early warning signs in public sector bodies	emerging problems, and to facilitate a culture where speaking up about concerns and learning from mistakes are seen as a personal duty, and valued by everyone in the organisation. It is hoped that this will lead to better outcomes for the public by mitigating the risk of harm, saving taxpayers' money, and leading to the more effective delivery of public services. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67dadc79a87d546feeda0290/CSPL_Early_Warning_Signs_report_Final_WEB.pdf **For information**
The Guardian Service - Do we each have a voice that counts?	This report sets out the Guardian Service's response to the NHS Staff Survey results 2024. Specifically, the report looks at the responses to the NHS Staff Survey around opening up NHS culture and improving speaking up, to create an environment where all staff believe they have a voice. It calls for action to generate the change to make these improvements around: NHS employers and system leaders; empowerment; and professionalism of the Guardian role. https://www.theguardianservice.co.uk/user_uploads/02__do_we_each_have_a_voice_that_counts_-_gsls_response_to_nhs_staff_survey_docx.pdf **For information and consideration**
King's Fund - Place-based partnerships: challenges and opportunities	Place-based partnerships in integrated care systems aim to tackle health inequalities and improve care. This report, commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care, explores the key factors for success, including accountability, collaborative leadership and resources. https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/reports/place-based-partnerships-challenges-opportunities **For information**
King's Fund & Nuffield Trust - Public satisfaction with the NHS and social care in 2024	New research based on results of the latest British Social Attitudes survey has found that only 1 in 5 people said they were satisfied with the way the NHS runs, the lowest level since records began. And on social care, just 13% of people say they're 'very' or 'quite' satisfied, which is no improvement from 2023. https://assets.kingsfund.org.uk/f/256914/x/e2d53af58e/public_satisfaction_nhs_social_care_2024_bsa_2025.pdf **For information**
NHS Providers - Delivery of patient letters: an opportunity to improve patient access and productivity	This briefing aims to help NHS trusts to understand upcoming reforms, consider improvements to patient communications, and optimise their use of available postal services. https://nhsproviders.org/media/700253/delivery-of-patient-letters-an-opportunity-to-improve-patient-access-and-productivity.pdf **For information**
NHS Providers - Mental health: shifting the focus	This briefing sets out the current state of the mental health sector and why there is a need to provide more clarity, coherence and alignment on what needs to be prioritised in the short-to-medium term to deliver high-quality, sustainable mental health services in line with the government's three shifts (across treatment to prevention, hospital to community, and analogue to digital).

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	https://nhsproviders.org/mental-health-shifting-the-focus **For information**
NHS Providers - Impacts and benefits of provider collaboration at scale	This case study report shares examples of what provider collaboratives, across all sectors, are achieving together. https://nhsproviders.org/impacts-and-benefits-of-provider-collaboration-at-scale **For information**
The Patient Experience Library - Responding to challenge	This report aims to demonstrate what the warning signs of harmful cultures look like. It looks at 10 years of avoidable harm inquiry reports, and the organisational and professional cultures that lie at the heart of harm. It then tries to find patterns of behaviour that crop up time and again in health care disasters through the themes of teamwork, compliance, accountability, organisational learning and more. https://pexlib.net/?247061 **For information**
One London - A framework for the safe, efficient and effective implementation, use and maintenance of AI in health and care in London	This framework outlines the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) to the future of the NHS across the capital. Possible applications include improving diagnosis rates, faster automation of patient registrations and more accurate patient referral support tools. The framework aims to help the NHS to deliver safe and ethical pathways to use these tools effectively. It covers the agreed way of introducing, using and monitoring AI products across the NHS in London. https://www.onelondon.online/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/A-Framework-for-the-safe-efficient-and-effective-implementation-use-and-maintenance-of-AI-in-health-and-care-in-London.pdf **For information**
CIFAS – Fighting Fraud Toolkit	CIFAS has developed and published an Adult Social Care Fraud Toolkit in conjunction with Anti-Fraud teams working across local government. Fraud in adult social care has long been overlooked, but recent estimates suggest the financial loss is far greater than previously thought. To tackle this growing issue, "Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally" (FFCL) has launched an 'Adult Social Care Fraud Toolkit' – a vital resource designed to raise awareness and support fraud prevention efforts. https://www.cifas.org.uk/insight/fraud-risk-focus-blog/fighting-fraud-in-the-adult%20-social-care https://www.cifas.org.uk/adult_social_care_fraud_toolkit **For information and consideration against local counter-fraud arrangements**

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.