Finance Bulletin

August 2026

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice on healthcare business finance in the NHS.

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Articles

The Trusts that failed to sign up to NHSE's financial plans
Ten trusts and one ICB had still not provided financially compliant plans for 2026-27 by the end of the first quarter.
HSJ, Zoe Tidman, 17 August 2026

Glove prices surge 75% on Iran war disruption
NHS supply Chain has warned trusts that the price of gloves is expected to rise by 75%
HSJ, Jack Serle, 11 August 2026

Trust's "off balance sheet" funding plan rejected by NHSE
Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust had been planning to create a new day surgery unit. NHSE had approved capital funding for a single-storey DSU, but the trust wanted to use commercial funding to expand the building to three stories
HSJ, Jack Serle, 25 August 2026

In-house EPRs can avoid "phenomenal" costs, says top CEO
Birju Bartoli, CEO of Northumbria Healthcare Foundation trust, said a custom EPR system the provider had developed itself showed there was an alternative to paying "phenomenal" sums to big external tech firms.
HSJ, Dave West and Matt Mathers, 24 August 2026

Slower recruitment and hospital activity growth help slash NHS top-up
Slower recruitment and hospital activity growth contributed to a much smaller budget top-up in 2025-26, the IFS has revealed.
Healthcare Management, 28 August 2026
Available from: Slower NHS Recruitment and Activity Cuts Reduce Top-Up Needs

News

Preparedness for early stages of future pandemics – Work in progress
This study will examine whether the UK's pandemic preparedness arrangements are likely to work effectively in the early stages of a future pandemic.
National Audit Office, Expected Publication 2027
Available from: Preparedness for early stages of future pandemics - NAO work in progress

NHS Rich List 2026
Over the past 50 years UK health expenditure has risen more than five-fold.
The Taxpayers Alliance, 27 July 2026
Available from: NHS Rich List 2026 - The TaxPayers' Alliance

Trusts pilot schemes to cut single-use products
At least 20 NHS trusts will pilot a government scheme to cut back on single-used products and increase the use of reusable alternatives for widely used items such as tourniquets, BP cuffs and sharps bins.
HSJ, Jack Serle, 17 August 2026

Trusts face £900m bill to end zero-hours contracts, employers warn
Government attempts to crack down on "exploitative" zero-hours contracts could adversely affect bank staff and cost the NHS £900m a year.
HSJ, Nick Kituno, 24 August 2026

Understanding the history, structure and value of NHS pay
The pay education hub helps employers understand the journey, history, evolution and key developments of NHS pay.
NHS Employers, 2026
Available from: Pay education hub | NHS Employers

NHS spending £240m a year storing paper medical records
According to analysis by The King's Fund, £239.5m was spent storing patient records in 2024/25, with previous research estimating £230m was spent on paper records 2023/24.
Digital Health, Jordon Sollof, 6 August 2026
Available from: NHS spending £240m a year storing paper medical records

Zero-hours contract reform could cost the NHS £900m
The government have finished consulting on proposals relating to zero-hours and low-hours contracts, making good a manifesto pledge to ban such arrangements that were considered to be exploitative.
Hfma, Steve Born, 26 August 2026
Available from: Zero-hours contract reform could cost the NHS £900m | HFMA

The NHS Alliance responds to IFS analysis on NHS budget top-ups
Analysis highlights the tension the NHS has been navigating between driving down waiting lists and staying within budget.
The NHS Alliance, David Williams, 28 August 2026
Available from: The NHS Alliance responds to IFS analysis on NHS budget top-ups

Reports

General practice funding in England
A comprehensive overview and implications for policy
The Health Foundation, Dr Luisa Pettigrew et al, August 2026
Available from: General practice funding in England | The Health Foundation

Annual report and accounts 2026
Annual report and accounts for financial year ending 31 March 2026.
NHS Providers, 13 August 2026
Available from: Annual report and accounts 2026

The NHS local technology spend report
What is the NHS actually spending its technology budget on – and is it buying the future the 10 Year Health Plan promises?
Baringa, 22 July 2026
Available from: The NHS local technology spend report | Baringa

The Price of Heat: What June 2026 cost the UK
June's 2026 record-breaking heatwave, which saw temperatures top 37 degrees in parts of the country has had an estimated direct economic cost of at least £2.36 billion.
Verdant, 13 July 2026
Available from: The Price of Heat: What June 2026 cost the UK — Verdant

Funding & Financial Frameworks

Key Facts and Figures about the NHS
Answers to some of the key questions that have frequently or recently been posed to the King's Fund.
The King's Fund, 11 August 2026
Available from: NHS: Key Facts And Figures | The King's Fund

2026/27 NHS Pay awards: revenue finance and contracting guidance
This guidance sets out how commissioner allocations have been updated for the impact of the NHS pay awards and resident doctors deal in 2026/27, as well as the impact on other areas of income and expenditure.
NHS England, 20August 2026
Available from: NHS England » 2026/27 NHS pay awards: revenue finance and contracting guidance