



Finance bulletin

October 2025

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

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Artificial Intelligence

The value of robotic process automation in NHS recruitment

How automated systems have improved recruitment services in the NHS across North Central London. In this blog, Jilly Jamieson, head of client services and GPO for recruitment, North London Partners Shared Services (NLPSS), and James Davies, head of digital productivity, Transformation Partners in Health and Care (TPHC), share their experience of how automation has helped to improve recruitment across an area of North London. See [here](#).

Source: NHS Employers

Capital Investment & Infrastructure

Another year, another leak: is a deteriorating NHS estate now a feature of national policy?

Another year brings another visit from ERIC (Estates Return Information Collection) – the important annual national report on the condition of NHS buildings, estate and equipment. The news isn't good. The cost of tackling the backlog has grown again to £15.9 billion in NHS secondary care facilities (ie NHS trusts providing NHS hospital, ambulance, mental health and community care). Of this, no less than £3.5 billion is for tackling problems with facilities and equipment that could lead to major disruption or 'catastrophic failure of services' for patients (Figure 1). See [blog](#).

Source: The King's Fund

Investing in the NHS: empowering the sector to drive productivity, renewal and growth

The NHS stands at a pivotal moment. The 10-year health plan makes clear that unless the service delivers sustained improvements in productivity, the long-term financial sustainability of the health service will be at risk. Trusts are already working tirelessly to ensure every pound is well-spent and focused on improving



outcomes for patients – but they are doing so within facilities that are too often outdated and unfit for purpose. There is broad recognition that the capital regime faces significant challenges and the case for reform is urgent and compelling. See [here](#).

Source: NHS Providers

Funding & Financial Frameworks

Public spending in local areas

This briefing examines how public spending is allocated and lists some of the resources for working out the amounts that have gone to local areas. See [here](#).

Source: UK Parliament

Reforming financial flows: lessons from systems

Guidance, case studies and key principles to support designing and implementing new payment mechanisms, as set out in the 10 Year Health Plan. With the right tools and support from the centre, healthcare leaders can reform financial flows to deliver value-based care that improves the lives of patients, staff and clinicians while ensuring taxpayers' money is used most effectively. See [here](#).

Source: NHS Confederation

Planning framework lays bare 'juggling act' trust leaders face

Daniel Elkeles responds to the publication of the medium-term planning framework by NHS England which sets out the NHS' priorities for the next three financial years. See [here](#).

Source: NHS Providers

National Health Service or National Safe Haven

The NHS operates on a clear statutory principle with regards to treatment: treatment is available to those ordinarily resident in the UK, with certain exemptions, but charges must be recovered from overseas visitors who do not meet those criteria. This paper explores what happens when that principle is put to the test, not in theory, but in the day-to-day practice of NHS trusts, integrated care systems, and clinical leadership teams. See [here](#).

Source: Policy Exchange

Value for money Costs of clinical negligence

Clinical negligence is a breach of a legal duty of care which directly caused harm to the patient. This report finds that the cost of settling clinical negligence claims has more than tripled in last two decades. Cost increases in the last ten years were largely due to a small number of high-value claims. It also discovers that there is a risk that government may be paying twice in some cases: first by settling a claim, and then again by paying for further treatment as patients could go on to



use publicly funded health or social care services, despite the settlement being paid with the assumption that they will use the private sector. See report [here](#).

Source: National Audit Office

Legislation & Policy

The 10 Year Health Plan for England

This briefing provides an overview of the government's 10 Year Health Plan for England, published in July 2025. It also includes a summary of some of the key stakeholder responses and analysis, and updates on implementation. See [here](#).

Source: UK Parliament

NHS priorities for 2026/27 to 2028/29: what does it mean for the system, staff and patients?

The government has published its national NHS planning guidance – rebadged this year as the Medium Term Planning Framework. This is a suite of documents that set out the national priorities and targets for local systems for the next three years. The King's Fund experts dissect the NHS planning guidance for 2026/7 to 2028/29, see [here](#).

Source: The King's Fund

Procurement

NHS procurement – why is buying power not exercised and why does unit price vary?

The final assessment for learners completing the MBA in healthcare finance requires them to complete a consultancy project on an aspect of healthcare finance. These projects have provided valuable research on a range of topics, which may be of interest to others. See [here](#).

Source: Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA)

Productivity

The outlook for public sector productivity

The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) examine the government's plans for public sector productivity and consider their fiscal and economic implications. See [chapter](#).

Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)

Can the NHS meet its 2% productivity challenge? Here's what experts think

Improving NHS productivity is a central focus of current health policy. Recent government funding increases for the NHS in England have been granted under the condition of meeting an ambitious target of 2% annual productivity growth to



the end of this parliament (2028/29), aiming to stretch constrained budgets further. See [here](#).

Source: The Health Foundation

Operation automation: how to achieve productivity gains in the healthcare system

As clinical demand grows both in volume and complexity, health systems worldwide are searching for efficiency quick-wins. Automation is one such innovation. From pharmacy to pathology, its potential is transformative, yet often overlooked. See [here](#).

Source: Re:State

Workforce & Staffing Costs

Pay for redundancies or risk waiting times rising

In a joint intervention with NHS Confederation, Daniel Elkeles and Matthew Taylor warn of the impact of unexpected cost pressures. See [here](#).

Source: NHS Providers