Patient Experience Bulletin

October 2026

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

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Latest Evidence

Best Practice, Guides and Toolkits

Checking your chest if you're disabled

Chest checking should be accessible to everyone. CoppaFeel want everyone to check their chests monthly, be aware of the symptoms of breast cancer and speak to their GP if they notice an unusual change. The information on this page is for people who may experience reduced movement or sensation in their upper limbs or body. Informed by disabled people, it aims to reduce barriers to finding accessible chest checking guidance and getting support. See here.

Source: CoppaFeel

Care

State of Care

State of Care is Care Quality Commission's annual assessment of health care and social care in England. The report looks at the trends, shares examples of good and outstanding care, and highlights where care needs to improve. See here.

Source: Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Digital Technology

From AI receptionists to patient recovery: agentic AI's emerging role in health and care

Organisations across health and care are using and experimenting with AI to solve problems in clinical and non-clinical settings. This includes redesigning workflows, reducing pressure on staff and existing NHS services, and improving patient experience. Some organisations are also using larger-scale AI technologies from the likes of Microsoft and Anthropic to develop agentic AI solutions for more complex problems. See here.

Source: The King's Fund

Screen use, artificial intelligence and social media: Impact on children and young people

Screens, social media and AI are a key and increasingly common part of children and young people's lives. The use of these technologies may include both positive and negative effects, with concerns focused on the overall impact on young people's health, development and safety. The government has announced it will introduce new guidance and restrictions to attempt to tackle these issues, including plans for a ban on under-16s using social media. See here.

Source: UK Parliament

NHS worker told woman she had cancer after accessing records

A woman was told she had breast cancer by an NHS hospital employee who accessed her medical records before she received her diagnosis from a consultant. See here.

Source: Digital Health

Health Literacy and Misinformation

ChatGPT missing gynaecological cancers when asked about 'red-flag' symptoms

The eve appeal's testing of ChatGPT found serious concerns, with it missing gynaecological cancers as potential causes of leading symptoms, giving inaccurate or outdated information and giving inappropriate medical advice. See here.

Source: the eve appeal

National Policy and Guidance

Future Minds: mid-term report card

Future Minds's mid-parliament report card is an assessment of the Government's progress over the past two years in improving the mental health of children and young people. See here.

Source: Centre for Mental Health

What does the health and care system look like for children in England?

Children and young people's health outcomes are mixed. Some areas are improving, such as cancer survival and sexual health, whereas other areas are stalling or even declining, including infant mortality and mental wellbeing. Wider determinants of health are a key part of the picture. Diet, housing, participation in education, air pollution, and parental health behaviours are all powerful drivers of children's health outcomes. The government has committed to creating the 'healthiest generation of children ever'. This comes at a time when concerns are growing about demand for services, rising waiting times and widening inequalities. See here.

Source: The King's Fund

Patient Safety

National Patient Safety Improvement Programmes

This report summarises the progress across the National Patient Safety Improvement Programmes (NatSIP) in 2025/26, and the impact of the PSC's work in this area to date. See report.

Source: Health Innovation Network

Learning from suicide-related compensation claims: an updated thematic review

NHS Resolution's latest thematic review explores learning from suicide-related compensation claims made against mental health trusts in England. The report highlights opportunities to strengthen communication, support effective family involvement, improve risk assessment processes and address organisational factors that can influence patient safety and care. See here.

Source: NHS Resolution

Independent review into mental health conditions, ADHD and autism: final report

Final report detailing the findings of the independent review into the prevalence and support for mental health conditions, ADHD and autism. See here.

Source: Department of Health and Social Care

Patient Experiences

Patients' experiences of social prescribing

Social prescribing can make a significant difference to people's health and wellbeing. Our research, commissioned by the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), found that patients valued the time, listening and individual support they received from Social Prescribing Link Workers. See here.

Source: Patients Association

Knowledge is power: tackling myeloma inequalities in Black communities

Black communities in the UK are two to three times more likely to develop myeloma than white populations and are diagnosed at younger ages. Despite this elevated risk, these communities face systemic barriers: delayed diagnoses, underrepresentation in clinical trials, limited culturally relevant information, and poorer treatment outcomes. See here.

Source: Myeloma UK

Making decisions together: Supporting conversations about bladder and bowel products and services

In this recorded webinar, you'll hear about patients' experiences of accessing bladder and bowel products and services, including some of the challenges people face in getting care that meets their individual needs. See Webinar. Listen to the Podcast.

Source: The Patients Association

Mental health crisis care: care of patients in emergency departments

This report considers the care of people experiencing mental health crisis and includes discussion about self-harm, suicide and death. See here.

Source: Health Services Safety Investigations Body

What are people telling us about cardiovascular disease care?

Healthwatch's latest insights into people's experiences of cardiovascular care and how it can be improved. See here.

Source: Healthwatch

Generational differences in attitudes towards the NHS

There is growing interest in whether young people think differently about the NHS compared with older people. Young people today have grown up with an NHS that is very different from previous generations. Older generations will have seen both improvement and deterioration in NHS performance and finances at some point in their adult lives. Young people today, on the other hand, have primarily grown up with an NHS in decline. See here.

Source: The King's Fund

Service Delivery

Pressures on maternity services: understanding the full picture

Failures in NHS maternity care have become all too well-known. Ahead of an action plan to address service failures, Sarah Scobie looks at three common explanations of what might be causing pressures on maternity services and argues that it's important not to oversimplify what is happening. See here.

Source: Nuffield Trust

Achieving excellent patient experience

This document defines what excellent experience looks and feels like across NHS-funded care, through the NHS experience excellence framework. See here.

Source: NHS England

All or nothing? Access and variation in NHS continuing health care

NHS continuing health care provides funded health and social care support for people with very complex needs outside hospital. Yet our comprehensive new report shows this system is highly inconsistent, with wide regional variation in eligibility, spending and practice. Families can face a bruising process to access

CHC at the most difficult time of their lives, navigating opaque rules and financial cliff-edges. CHC shines a light on the wider fractures between health and social care: a system under pressure, struggling to deliver fair, timely and sustainable support – and one that urgently needs reform. See here.

Source: Nuffield Trust

Waiting Lists and Other Data

One in four children on a community health services waiting list now waiting a year or more for treatment - with children nearly 40 times more likely to experience these long waits than adults

27% of children currently on a community waiting list have been waiting for at least 52 weeks for treatment, making them 38 times more likely than adults to be enduring these long waits with the situation deteriorating further in recent years, new analysis by The King's Fund has found. See here.

Source: The King's Fund

NHS key statistics: England

Summary of NHS demand, performance, backlogs, and capacity of services in England. It covers A&E waiting times, hospital waiting lists, cancer waiting times, ambulance response times, staffing levels including doctors and nurses, vacancies, and more. See here.

Source: UK Parliament

A&E Attendances and Emergency Admissions

The Weekly and Monthly A&E Attendances and Emergency Admissions collection collects the total number of attendances in the specified period for all A&E types, including Urgent Treatment Centres, Minor Injury Units and Walk-in Centres, and of these, the number discharged, admitted or transferred within four hours of arrival. See here.

Source: NHS England

A cycle of invisibility: how older people are overlooked in data and research

As our population ages, good data is essential for designing policies, services and products that meet people's needs. Yet ageism often leads to data gaps that overlook older people, influencing everything from healthcare and technology to public spaces. Without a better understanding of older people's experiences, needs and preferences, governments and businesses risk making decisions that exclude a growing proportion of the population. Centre for Ageing Better's new short report explores these data gaps that cause real issues for older people in daily life, as well as perpetuating the ageism that is so harmful to all of us. See here.

Source: Centre for Ageing Better

Corridor Care – Urgent and Emergency Care Daily Situation Reports

Publishing corridor care data provides consistent national visibility on the extent to which patients are experiencing care in non-designated areas, which compromises patient privacy and the ability to provide safe, dignified care. The monthly publication of data will be used to track progress of interventions and ensure the right behaviours and system responses are in place to deliver sustained improvement. See here.

Source: NHS England