



Finance Current Awareness Bulletin

December 2023

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice. The scope of this bulletin includes the UK economy, finance, procurement, sustainability, and good working practices.

2024 voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing, access and growth: summary of the heads of agreement

This [publication summarises the key heads of the agreement reached](#) between the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), NHS England and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) on the 2024 voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing, access and growth (voluntary scheme). The 2024 voluntary scheme will be a non-contractual voluntary agreement between the DHSC (representing the UK government, the governments of Scotland and Wales, and the Northern Ireland Department of Health) and ABPI (representing the UK pharmaceutical industry). The voluntary scheme will run for five years from 1 January 2024.

All's well that ends well? Reflections on the consultant pay offer

With ministers and unions having reached a deal on pay, consultant doctor strikes look to have ended, but the details of the agreement are complex. This [long read from the Nuffield Trust](#) breaks down the key elements of the consultant pay offer and discusses the potential ramifications for NHS staff and the pay review process.

Engaging the private sector in delivering health care and goods: governance lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic

Engaging the private sector in delivering health care and goods requires a sound understanding of how to align resources with the strategic priorities of a health system. This [report from the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies](#) analyses governance evidence from the Covid-19 pandemic. It explores a selection of case studies that describe real-life private sector engagements in service delivery, procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE), and advance purchase agreements for Covid-19 vaccines during the pandemic.

Hospital discharge funds: experiences in winter 2022–23

[In this report, The King's Fund](#) hears from commissioners and service providers in six local areas to find out how they experienced the process of receiving additional funding to reduce delayed discharge in 2022–23.

Investing to save: the capital requirement for a more sustainable NHS in England

This [report from the NHS Confederation](#) finds that NHS capital budgets need to nearly double from £7.7 billion to £14.1 billion – an extra £6.4 billion – if the NHS is to clear the building repairs backlog and overhaul the estate to enable greater productivity and faster patient care. Capital funding drives productivity but the NHS has lagged behind other countries in terms of capital investment for more than five decades. The NHS now has the sixth lowest number of CT and MRI scanners per million people of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. NHS



leaders have said that increasing capital funding is their top financial priority ahead of the next election, alongside reform of how the capital regime operates.

Partnering with purpose: how integrated care systems and industry can work better together

This [report from the NHS Confederation](#) describes how cross-sector partnerships are essential in helping the NHS to overcome the challenges faced by local organisations, bringing in additional capacity to enable systems to improve the quality of care and introduce expertise, skills and resources, and reducing the uptake of NICE-approved medicines. It outlines four priority areas which could support partnership working and improve patient outcomes, make more efficient use of NHS resources and deliver economic growth.

Review of the scheme to control the cost of branded health service medicines

This [consultation response is from the Department of Health & Social Care](#). Having considered the consultation responses and wider engagement with key stakeholders, the UK government has decided to: continue to operate the statutory scheme in a way that is broadly commercially equivalent to the voluntary scheme; set amended payment percentages for 2024 to 2026 based on an allowed growth rate that has been increased to 2%; implement an exemption from payment for medicines containing a new active substance; and include exemptions from payment for exceptional central procurements and centrally procured vaccines.

Strategic framework for NHS Commercial

This [strategic framework](#), developed in partnership with NHS commercial professionals and aligned to the Government Commercial Function, seeks to bring together the efforts of the NHS commercial community, drive collaboration across commercial teams, leverage NHS collective buying power and provide clear, consistent guidance on how to contract with the NHS.



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Online Resources

- **BMJ Best Practice** is a clinical decision support tool that provides step-by-step guidance on diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and prevention of a wide variety of conditions:
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- **ClinicalKey** is a database which supports healthcare professionals by providing access to the latest evidence across specialties: <https://www.clinicalkey.com/>