



The NHS England Five Year Forward View

Key summary

1. The NHS has dramatically improved over the past fifteen years. Cancer and cardiac outcomes are better; waits are shorter; patient satisfaction much higher. Progress has continued even during global recession and austerity thanks to protected funding and the commitment of NHS staff. But quality of care can be variable, preventable illness is widespread, health inequalities deep-rooted. Our patients' needs are changing, new treatment options are emerging, and we face particular challenges in areas such as mental health, cancer and support for frail older patients. Service pressures are building.
2. Fortunately there is now quite broad consensus on what a better future should be. This 'Forward View' sets out a clear direction for the NHS – showing why change is needed and what it will look like. Some of what is needed can be brought about by the NHS itself. Other actions require new partnerships with local communities, local authorities and employers. Some critical decisions – for example on investment, on various public health measures, and on local service changes – will need explicit support from the next government.
3. The first argument we make in this Forward View is that the future health of millions of children, the sustainability of the NHS, and the economic prosperity of Britain all now depend on a radical upgrade in prevention and public health. Twelve years ago Derek Wanless' health review warned that unless the country took prevention seriously we would be faced with a sharply rising burden of avoidable illness. That warning has not been heeded – and the NHS is on the hook for the consequences.
4. The NHS will therefore now back hard-hitting national action on obesity, smoking, alcohol and other major health risks. We will help develop and support new workplace incentives to promote employee health and cut sickness-related unemployment. And we will advocate for stronger public health-related powers for local government and elected mayors.
5. Second, when people do need health services, patients will gain far greater control of their own care – including the option of shared budgets combining health and social care. The 1.4 million full time unpaid carers in England will get new support, and the NHS will become a better partner with voluntary organisations and local communities.
6. Third, the NHS will take decisive steps to break down the barriers in how care is provided between family doctors and hospitals, between physical and mental health, between health and social care. The future will see far more care delivered locally but with some services in specialist centres, organised to support people with multiple health conditions, not just single diseases.
7. England is too diverse for a 'one size fits all' care model to apply everywhere. But nor is the answer simply to let 'a thousand flowers bloom'. Different local health communities will instead be supported by the NHS' national leadership to choose from amongst a small number of radical new care delivery options, and then given the resources and support to implement them where that makes sense.
8. One new option will permit groups of GPs to combine with nurses, other community health services, hospital specialists and perhaps mental health and social care to create integrated out-of-hospital care – the Multispecialty Community Provider. Early versions of these models are emerging in different parts of the country, but they generally do not yet employ hospital

consultants, have admitting rights to hospital beds, run community hospitals or take delegated control of the NHS budget.

9. A further new option will be the integrated hospital and primary care provider – Primary and Acute Care Systems – combining for the first time general practice and hospital services, similar to the Accountable Care Organisations now developing in other countries too.
10. Across the NHS, urgent and emergency care services will be redesigned to integrate between A&E departments, GP out-of-hours services, urgent care centres, NHS 111, and ambulance services. Smaller hospitals will have new options to help them remain viable, including forming partnerships with other hospitals further afield, and partnering with specialist hospitals to provide more local services. Midwives will have new options to take charge of the maternity services they offer. The NHS will provide more support for frail older people living in care homes.
11. The foundation of NHS care will remain list-based primary care. Given the pressures they are under, we need a ‘new deal’ for GPs. Over the next five years the NHS will invest more in primary care, while stabilising core funding for general practice nationally over the next two years. GP-led Clinical Commissioning Groups will have the option of more control over the wider NHS budget, enabling a shift in investment from acute to primary and community services. The number of GPs in training needs to be increased as fast as possible, with new options to encourage retention.
12. In order to support these changes, the national leadership of the NHS will need to act coherently together, and provide meaningful local flexibility in the way payment rules, regulatory requirements and other mechanisms are applied. We will back diverse solutions and local leadership, in place of the distraction of further national structural reorganisation. We will invest in new options for our workforce, and raise our game on health technology – radically improving patients’ experience of interacting with the NHS. We will improve the NHS’ ability to undertake research and apply innovation – including by developing new ‘test bed’ sites for worldwide innovators, and new ‘green field’ sites where completely new NHS services will be designed from scratch.
13. In order to provide the comprehensive and high quality care the people of England clearly want, Monitor, NHS England and independent analysts have previously calculated that a combination of growing demand if met by no further annual efficiencies and flat real terms funding would produce a mismatch between resources and patient needs of nearly £30 billion a year by 2020/21. So to sustain a comprehensive high-quality NHS, action will be needed on all three fronts – demand, efficiency and funding. Less impact on any one of them will require compensating action on the other two.
14. The NHS’ long run performance has been efficiency of 0.8% annually, but nearer to 1.5%-2% in recent years. For the NHS repeatedly to achieve an extra 2% net efficiency/demand saving across its whole funding base each year for the rest of the decade would represent a strong performance – compared with the NHS’ own past, compared with the wider UK economy, and with other countries’ health systems. We believe it is possible – perhaps rising to as high as 3% by the end of the period – provided we take action on prevention, invest in new care models, sustain social care services, and over time see a bigger share of the efficiency coming from wider system improvements.
15. On funding scenarios, flat real terms NHS spending overall would represent a continuation of current budget protection. Flat real terms NHS spending per person would take account of population growth. Flat NHS spending as a share of GDP would differ from the long term trend in which health spending in industrialised countries tends to rise as a share of national income.

16. Depending on the combined efficiency and funding option pursued, the effect is to close the £30 billion gap by one third, one half, or all the way. Delivering on the transformational changes set out in this Forward View and the resulting annual efficiencies could – if matched by staged funding increases as the economy allows – close the £30 billion gap by 2020/21. Decisions on these options will be for the next Parliament and government, and will need to be updated and adjusted over the course of the five year period. However nothing in the analysis above suggests that continuing with a comprehensive tax funded NHS is intrinsically un-doable. Instead it suggests that there are viable options for sustaining and improving the NHS over the next five years, provided that the NHS does its part, allied with the support of government, and of our other partners, both national and local.