

POLICY BRIEF

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

07 Sept 2022



The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant recent announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.

GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

[Health overview and scrutiny committee principles](#)

This sets out the expectations on how health overview and scrutiny committees should work with integrated care systems (ICSs) to ensure they are locally accountable to their communities.

[Health and wellbeing boards: draft guidance for engagement](#)

This draft guidance for engagement sets out the role of health and wellbeing boards following publication of the Health and Care Act 2022.

[Guidance on the preparation of integrated care strategies](#)

This is guidance for integrated care partnerships on the preparation of integrated care strategies. This document contains an introduction, 2 sections of statutory guidance on the preparation of the integrated care strategy including involvement and content, and a section of non-statutory guidance relating to the publication and review of the integrated care strategy.

[Government's first ever Women's Health Strategy for England](#)

Women and girls across England will benefit from improved healthcare following the publication of the first ever government-led Women's Health Strategy for England (Wednesday 20 July).

The strategy includes key commitments around:

- new research and data gathering
- the expansion of women's health-focused education and training for incoming doctors
- improvements to fertility services
- ensuring women have access to high-quality health information
- updating guidance for female-specific health conditions like endometriosis to ensure the latest evidence and advice is being used in treatment

[NHS staff to receive pay rise](#)

Government accepts recommendations in full from the independent NHS pay review bodies. Over one million NHS staff – including nurses, paramedics and midwives – to get a pay rise of at least £1,400 with lowest earners to receive up to 9.3%. Eligible dentists and doctors will receive a 4.5% pay rise. Pay rise recognises the contribution of NHS staff while balancing the need to protect taxpayers, manage public spending and not drive up inflation.

[Better Care Fund policy framework: 2022 to 2023](#)

The document sets out the agreed way in which the Better Care Fund (BCF) will be implemented in the financial year 2022 to 2023. BCF plans are jointly developed by health and social care partners in every area in England and support integrated, person-centred care in communities.

The policy framework is intended for use by those responsible for delivering the Better Care Fund at a local level (such as integrated care boards, local authorities, health and wellbeing boards) and NHS England. The document should be read alongside the [BCF planning requirements for 2022 to 2023](#), which are published separately by NHS England and the Local Government Association.

Over 50 new surgical hubs set to open across England to help bust the Covid backlogs

The Department for Health and Social Care has confirmed that over 50 new surgical hubs will open across the country to help reduce the Covid backlogs and offer hundreds of thousands more patients' quicker access to procedures.

The hubs will:

- Provide at least 100 more operating theatres and over 1,000 beds so people get the surgery they need.
- Deliver almost two million extra routine operations to reduce waiting lists over the next three years. This breaks down to over 200,000 extra procedures in 2022-23, over 700,000 extra procedures in 2023-24, and one million extra procedures by 2024-25.
- Focus on providing high volume low complexity surgery, with particular emphasis on ophthalmology, general surgery, trauma and orthopaedics, gynaecology, ear nose and throat, and urology.

The hubs are separated from emergency services and surgical beds will be kept free for patients waiting for planned operations, reducing the risk of short-notice cancellations and improving infection control. The surgical hubs are funded as part of the £1.5 billion allocated at the Spending Review in 2021.

Parents whose babies require neonatal care to receive paid leave under new law

The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Bill, introduced by Stuart McDonald MP and backed by government, will allow parents to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave, in addition to other leave entitlements such as maternity and paternity leave.

Once in law, neonatal care leave will be available to employees from their first day in a new job and will apply to parents of babies who are admitted into hospital up to the age of 28 days, and who have a continuous stay in hospital of 7 full days or more.

Workforce Development Fund has been extended for an additional year 2022/23.

The government is working in partnership with the social care sector on plans for staff training and support. This includes creating a new knowledge and skills framework to ensure clear paths to progress. It is funded by using some of the £500 million announced in the Spending Review.

More healthcare professionals can certify fit notes from today

Nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists and physiotherapists can now certify and issue fit notes in addition to doctors. [Updated fit note guidance](#) for healthcare professionals has been published.

Consultations

Adult social care charging reform: distribution of funding 2023 to 2024

The government is introducing a new adult social care charging framework from October 2023.

This consultation seeks views on proposals for distributing funding to support the first year of delivery of adult social care charging reform in 2023 to 2024. There are proposals for:

- distributing funding for needs and financial assessments
- the extension to the means test
- the cap on care costs

This consultation closes at 11:45pm on 23 September 2022

Government seeks views to improve lives of people with Down's syndrome

The Down Syndrome Act, supported by the government and Dr Liam Fox MP, requires the Health and Social Care Secretary to issue guidance on how to meet the needs of people with Down's syndrome. Authorities including the NHS, health commissioners and integrated care boards – who will also appoint a named lead to oversee implementation – will then be required to follow the

guidance. The call for evidence is focused on Down's syndrome but will also test whether the guidance can benefit other people too. Those with a different genetic condition, as well as their families and carers, are invited to contribute.

The [call for evidence](#) consultation closes at 11:45pm on 8 November 2022.