

A Quick Guide To: The Health Policy Environment in England

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Introduction

As a health journey partner, Sanofi UK appreciates the important work that patient organisations do to benefit the lives of patients. As outlined in our Patient Charter, we recognise the importance of working collaboratively with patient organisations and strive to adopt an inclusive and supportive approach to everything we do.

This booklet is designed to help patients and those advocating on their behalf to navigate the health policy environment in England and advocate effectively for improvement.



Setting the Scene

THE NHS FIVE YEAR FORWARD VIEW (FYFV)

- This document – released in 2014 – set a **clear vision for the future of the NHS** in England.¹
- At the heart of the vision was the **need for the NHS to adapt to new challenges and opportunities** to allow the NHS to continue delivering high quality care into the future.¹
- Crucially, the strategy explains how the **NHS should work to close the three widening ‘gaps’ that will otherwise threaten the sustainability of our current NHS.**¹
- Updates to this document, including ‘Next Steps on the FYFV’ (March 2017)², have been published, building on the vision and setting out what the NHS needs to do to deliver on its ambitions.

THE NHS LONG-TERM PLAN

- In July 2018 the Prime Minister, Theresa May MP, confirmed that the **NHS will receive extra funding of £20.5 billion in real terms per year for the next five years (to 2023).**³
- In return for the funding commitment, the Government agreed with the NHS **a Long-Term Plan**, led by Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England.³
- The plan was published in January 2019 and sets out how **NHS pressures will be tackled**, while making the **additional funding go as far as possible.**³
- **It builds on existing initiatives, including the FYFV**, and details Simon Stevens’ vision for the NHS for the next 10 years.³

Building on the FYFV, the NHS Long-Term Plan provides an overview of the following gaps that need to be addressed:³

The Health and Wellbeing Gap

Address major health risks through improved prevention

Support people to manage their own health

Engage communities in new ways, involving them directly in decisions about health and care services

The Care and Quality Gap

Reshape service delivery and make the most of new technologies by testing out new models of care

Putting local needs at the heart of service delivery

Learn from NHS Test Bed and Vanguard programmes (new models of care)

A funding and efficiency gap

Drive efficiency and increase investment

Address demand on services

10 Point Efficiency Plan in the 2017 update shows how to drive efficiency savings²

Tackling unwarranted variation and ensuring financial accountability for local NHS

Integration of Health and Social Care

For many years, the question of how best to deliver local health and social care services has been debated. **Delivering health and social care separately can lead to fragmented services that are difficult to access and not based on patient need.** When funding of these services isn't integrated, it can also lead to the financial benefits of better care not being realised.

However, more recently, many **local officials are working to close the divides** between care settings, joining up care to deliver services fit for local population need through programmes such as the Vanguard Programme.⁴ Two of the most significant national programmes designed to **support greater integration of health and care services** include:

Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs)

- STPs are **made up of all organisations involved in the delivery of health and care services** – from Clinical Commissioning Groups to Local Authorities⁵
- Upon creation, STPs created **5 year plans to transform local services** to make sure they are sustainable
- By working together, they aim to improve:⁵
 - the **health** of the local population;
 - the **quality** of local services;
 - the **efficiency** of services; and
 - **save money** for the NHS.
- STPs have been asked to create new five-year plans by autumn 2019, setting out how they will improve services and achieve financial sustainability.⁶

Integrated Care Systems (ICs)

- Across the country, **STPs have and will continue to evolve into integrated care systems.**⁷
- Integrated care means **local health services working more closely** to meet local population need.⁷
- In ICs, local NHS organisations will work closely with local authorities, whilst other organisations including **charities and community groups will be encouraged to share their expertise.**⁷
- Organisations involved in ICs will take collective responsibility for the services they deliver, including responsibility for service performance and managing the budget.⁷
- ICs aim to provide **better and more joined up care** and keep people well, avoiding unnecessary hospital stays.⁷
- **The NHS Long-Term Plan outlines that ICs will continue to develop.** By April 2021, ICs will cover the whole country, growing out of the current network of STPs.³
- ICs have been asked to **create five-year plans by autumn 2019**, setting out how they will improve services and achieve financial sustainability.⁶

Tackling unwarranted variation and driving financial savings

- With a drive for place-based and patient-centred care, local areas are **delivering care specifically designed for their populations**, which can lead to differences in services across the country. This is known as **'warranted variation'**.⁸
- **'Unwarranted variation'** is where variation is **unacceptable and detrimental to patient care**. Addressing unwarranted variation is a top priority for the NHS.⁸
- In 2016, it was estimated that £5 billion in efficiency savings could be made by acute hospitals every year if they were to reduce unwarranted variation.⁹
- To address unwarranted variation, NHS England and NHS Improvement have **rolled out initiatives to make sure that local decision makers are aligning with national best practice**.

The two key national policy initiatives aimed at addressing variation are:

NHS RIGHTCARE¹⁰



Encourages adherence to best practice standards in patient pathways and clinical practice

Produces local 'intelligence products' including atlases of variation and data packs for CCGs and STPs on performance and outcomes

Data supports areas to recognise where changes could be made

The RightCare programme is becoming increasingly important due to the national drive for efficiency savings and variation reduction

GETTING IT RIGHT FIRST TIME (GIRFT)¹¹



Over 30 GIRFT workstreams, in four categories: surgical speciality; medical speciality; clinical services; and cross cutting

Workstreams identify changes that will improve care and deliver efficiencies

They support local areas to tackle unwarranted variation and encourage sharing best practice

National data and insight-driven reports produced for each specialism

Patient Access to Treatment in the UK

- All new significant drugs and indications are assessed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to determine whether they will be provided by the NHS.¹²
- Decisions on whether to make treatments available take into account the **impact on patients, as well as the cost to the NHS.**
- In England, the NHS produced a **Constitution setting out the rights of patients, the public and NHS staff** and the pledges that the NHS commits to achieve.¹³

WHAT CAN PATIENTS EXPECT FROM THE NHS?

- NHS services to be **free at the point of use.**
- Care and treatment should be appropriate for the individual, **meet their needs and reflect their preferences.**
- All patients in England have the **right to treatments that have been recommended by NICE** for use on the NHS.
- The NHS in England is required to make all treatments that have been approved for use by NICE **available within 90 days** of the publication of NICE's final guidance.¹⁴
- Patients, with their families and carers (where appropriate) should be **involved in and consulted on all decisions about their care and treatment.**
- Services should **meet patients' needs** and the NHS encourages feedback from the public and patients on how services could be improved.
- Through the Industrial Strategy (December 2018) and the 'Life Sciences Sector Deal 2' (December 2018) the UK Government has committed to ensuring that NHS patients benefit from innovation and access to the best standard of care and novel treatments.¹⁵



How can you get involved to campaign for change and improvement?

The NHS is committed to engaging with communities and citizens in new ways, involving them directly in decisions about the future of health and care services.¹

Patient organisations play an invaluable role as part of this process, with an impressive history of supporting patients to advocate for themselves; listening to their needs; and calling for change on their behalf to ensure that experiences of care and health outcomes are improved.



There are a number of ways that patients and those advocating on their behalf can seek to shape the priorities of policymakers. Whilst the approach to campaigning will vary depending on the specific issue, some ideas for activities that can be undertaken to amplify the patient voice at local and national level are outlined in the box below:

- **Familiarise yourself with STP and ICS plans** that have been developed across different areas. Consider how they may link in with your priorities and how they are likely to affect your organisation and/or the patients you represent.
- Where your priorities align with those plans, you could **consider how you might be able to support implementation and patient involvement**.
- Where you plan to undertake specific activities or call for change, it helps to build an evidence base. You can do this by:
 - **Examining RightCare publications (e.g. atlases of variation)** to see what the metrics show about patient outcomes and variation in your disease area, if appropriate.
 - **Considering ways to gather information about the experiences of patients** in your disease area, including through interviews, case studies and surveys or questionnaires.
 - **Engaging with a wider group of patients**, carers and their families through social media, and considering use of campaigning tools such as thunderclaps to build awareness of your issue.
- **Check whether a specialist GIRFT programme exists for your disease area**, and whether there are projects you could work with. **Consider forging connections with the GIRFT clinical lead** for your disease area.
- **Share your experiences** or those of the patients you represent by engaging with your local Healthwatch.
- **Gain an understanding of the policy levers that exist** to improve treatment and care, including relevant Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) frameworks and NHS Outcomes Framework indicators.
- **Familiarise yourself with NICE quality standards** and other guidance documents outlining best practice for treatment and care in your area. Does this match up with real life?

Useful links

NHS England:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/>

NHS Five Year Forward View (2014):

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-five-year-forward-view/>

Next steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View (2017):

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/next-steps-on-the-nhs-five-year-forward-view/>

NHS Long Term Plan (2019):

<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/nhs-long-term-plan.pdf>

NHS Improvement:

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/>

Care Quality Commission (CQC):

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/>

Public Health England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

NHS RightCare Intelligence products (CCG data packs, STP packs, long-term condition scenarios, atlases of variation, casebooks and NHS RightCare Pathways):

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/rightcare/products/>

Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT):

<http://gettingitrightfirsttime.co.uk/>

Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) plans:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/systemchange/view-stps/>

NHS Outcomes Framework:

<https://beta.digital.nhs.uk/publications/ci-hub/nhs-outcomes-framework>

Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) Scheme:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/cquin/>

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE):

<https://www.nice.org.uk/>

Healthwatch:

<https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/our-values-and-behaviours>

The Patients Association:

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/>

National Voices:

<https://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/>

The King's Fund:

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/>

Nuffield Trust:

<https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/>

The Health Foundation:

<http://www.health.org.uk/>

About Sanofi in the UK

Sanofi is a global life sciences company committed to discover, develop and distribute therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi in the UK partners with a number of different patient organisations to pursue goals which benefit patients. Our Patient Charter outlines our pledges for working with patients and patient organisations. To view the Patient Charter and learn more about our work with patient organisations, please visit www.sanofi.co.uk.

Life is a health journey, with ups and downs, which can be big or small, lifelong or momentary. We, at Sanofi, are there for those challenges, **as a health journey partner**. Many patients are depending on us. We aim to protect, enable and support people facing health challenges, so they can live life to its full potential.

References

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