



Department of Health

The Mandate explained

NHS England is the independent organisation now responsible for managing the budget and the day to day workings of the NHS. It supports clinical commissioning groups – local groups of GPs and other health professionals who now buy most NHS services – to improve patient care.

To make sure the taxpayer has a say in how this money is spent, the Government provides direction and ambitions for the NHS through a document called ‘the Mandate’.

By listening to the needs of patients, carers and families, NHS England is responsible for deciding the best way to achieve these ambitions, working across the health and social care system.

The Mandate is published every year to make sure it is up-to-date, but it also sets long term ambitions to make sure the NHS is always there and always improving. NHS England must try to achieve these ambitions and the Secretary of State for Health will hold them to account for improving care for people.

Ambitions for the NHS

By March 2015, the Government expects NHS England to make improvements in the quality of care it offers. They should:

1. Help people live well for longer
2. Manage ongoing physical and mental health conditions
3. Help people to recover from episodes of ill health or following injury
4. Make sure people experience better care
5. Provide safe care
6. Free the NHS to innovate;
7. Support the NHS to play a broader role in society;
8. Make better use of resources.

‘The Mandate - at a glance’ provides a summary of what the Mandate should mean for patients and the public.

You can find the current version of the Mandate and additional documents at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-mandate-2014-to-2015> or get in touch at: mandate-team@dh.gsi.gov.uk

The Mandate 2014/15 at a glance

The Government wants NHS England to:

1. Help people to live well for longer

NHS England should play its part in the ambition to save an additional 30,000 lives per year by 2020 by:

- helping ensure patients receive an early diagnosis to prevent people developing more serious conditions;
- working to give people the right treatment when they need it;
- making sure all hospitals are as good as the best hospitals;
- supporting NHS staff to make every contact with patients an opportunity to help people stay in good health.

2. Manage ongoing physical and mental health conditions

The NHS should be amongst the best in Europe at supporting people with long term health conditions so that people can experience a better quality of life. NHS England should:

- involve people in their own care and treatment to ensure vulnerable people receive safe, appropriate, high quality care;
- make better use of technology so patients can, for example, order prescriptions online;
- work to improve care across different services;
- improve diagnosis, treatment and care for people with dementia.

3. Help people recover from episodes of ill health or following injury

NHS England should shine a light on variation in care and unacceptable practice in the NHS, share best practice and improve services. They should:

- Improve transparency by publishing more data and involve local people in decision-making;
- put mental health on a par with physical health, close the current health gap and support people who fall into crisis;
- work on developing access and waiting time standards for all mental health services for a rolling implementation beginning in April 2015.

4. Make sure people experience better care

Patients should experience better care, not just better treatment, particularly older people and those at the end of their lives. NHS England should:

- measure how people feel about their care by asking if you would recommend a service to your friends or family;
- improve the standards of care and experience for women during pregnancy;
- support children and young people with specific health and care needs;
- provide good quality care seven days of the week;
- implement the lessons learnt from the Mid-Staffordshire and Winterbourne View scandals.

5. Provide safe care

NHS England should continue to reduce the number of incidents of avoidable harm and embed a culture of patient safety through improved reporting of incidents. They should also take action to identify those groups known to be at a high risk of suicide.

6. Free the NHS to innovate

NHS England must get the best health outcomes for patients by:

- strengthening local autonomy;
- promoting innovation in the NHS;
- controlling financial incentives to drive up the quality of NHS services;
- lead the continued drive for efficiency savings
- ensure there is a fair playing field for providers of NHS care.

7. Support the NHS to play a broader role in society

NHS England should promote and support participation by NHS organisations and patients in research, to improve outcomes and contribute to economic growth. They should also make partnership working with local councils, the police, job centres, housing associations and others a success to improve care for all.

8. Making better use of resources

NHS England will be given £98 billion in 2014/15 to achieve the objectives in the Mandate. They must ensure good financial management of this money.