

NHS Constitution: 10 year review

June 2024

Department of Health and Social Care

Responding to deterioration

We propose adding the following new pledge for patients and the public under 'Involvement in your healthcare and the NHS':

The NHS pledges to provide patients (and their families, carers and advocates) who are in acute or specialist provider sites a structured approach to providing information about their or their loved one's condition at least daily and if they have concerns about physiological deterioration that are not being responded to, access to a rapid review by appropriate clinicians from outside their immediate care team.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

If you have any further views on the proposal, please provide these in up to 250 words, if possible.

We support this proposal. However, there must be recognition that in some sites this approach will not always be appropriate. There will be cases where the pace of physiological deterioration does not warrant daily updates and it could be too much for the patient and their loved ones. We should respond to the needs of patients and their loved ones, and the frequency of updates is central to this.

Health inequalities

The NHS Constitution currently sets out, under the value 'Everyone counts', that:

We maximise our resources for the benefit of the whole community, and make sure nobody is excluded, discriminated against or left behind. We accept that some people need more help, that difficult decisions have to be taken - and that when we waste resources we waste opportunities for others.

We propose adding the following sentence to the value 'Everyone counts' to provide further detail on how the NHS works to understand the needs of different people and reduce disparities:

NHS organisations work with statutory and non-statutory partners, using the best data available, to understand the range of healthcare needs within and between local communities and how to tailor services accordingly and fairly, reducing disparities in access, experience and outcomes for all.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Research

To better support our aim to embed research in the NHS, we propose strengthening the existing pledge ("to inform you of research studies in which you may be eligible to participate").

We propose adding an additional sentence to the pledge:

Health research and the offer to be part of research should be integrated into health and care across the NHS.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

Health and work

The only reference to employment in the current NHS Constitution is with regard to NHS employees' rights and this does not reflect the NHS's key role in supporting people to work.

We propose adding the following wording to the NHS value 'Improving lives':

We support people to remain in, and return to, work, reflecting the good impact that work can have on a person's health and wellbeing.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know

If you have any further views on the proposal, please provide these in up to 250 words, if possible.

For the most part, we agree with this proposal – the NHS has a key role to play in supporting people to remain in and return to work. However, it is important to recognise that some people's health simply means they cannot continue to work, even when it is their wish to do so. We recommend amending the proposal to the following:

“Where appropriate, we support people to remain in, and return to, work, reflecting the good impact that work can have on a person’s health and wellbeing.”

Person-centred care

We propose amending the existing pledge in ‘Access to health services’ from:

make the transition as smooth as possible when you are referred between services, and to put you, your family and carers at the centre of decisions that affect you or them

to:

support a co-ordinated approach to your care and make the transition as smooth as possible between services, including physical and mental health services, particularly if you have a number of health conditions, and to put you, your family and carers at the centre of decisions that affect you or them

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Don’t know

If you have any further views on the proposal, please provide these in up to 250 words, if possible.

This should include health services delivered by charitable providers, such as hospices.