

# Key comms

## Social Partnership Forum (SPF) Wider Group

19 March 2025

### **Welcome and introductions**

Minister of State for Health Karin Smyth chaired the meeting and introduced Claire Stewart, government director of trade union relationships, who was observing.

### **System changes – Matthew Style, DHSC**

The meeting took place in the week following several announcements, including the abolition of NHS England and the government's intention to reduce operating costs across the NHS. Trade union members of the partnership requested the agenda be amended to make time to discuss both the manner and substance of those announcements.

Matthew Style said Secretary of State for Health and Care Wes Streeting had announced the changes to NHS England and DHSC to address duplication and ensure coherent national leadership. The 50 per cent reductions in ICB costs and provider trusts being asked to further reduce their corporate costs aims to stabilise NHS finances and reduce the NHS deficit. The secretary of state has asked the NHS England 'transition' chief executive Sir Jim Mackey to set up a transformation team to guide the process and oversee the changes.

Trade unions raised serious concerns around the impact caused on partnership working and NHS industrial relations. The minister and Matthew Style acknowledged those concerns and committed to work in partnership with the SPF on changes arising from the announcements. This will include early engagement between the SPF and the transformation team.



## 10 Year Health Plan (10YHP) – Sally Warren and Gavin Larnar, DHSC

In response to the recommendations set out in the [Darzi report](#), the government invited the public, healthcare workforce and organisations to submit their input into the plan which will focus on three main shifts: hospital to community, treatment to prevention, and analogue to digital. As part of the 11 workstreams set up, the people workstream, co-chaired by Gavin Larnar and Ali Griffin, London Councils, had met regularly. A deep dive SPF workshop was held on 4 February and various other workshops and round table events have been held across the NHSE regions. A national 10YHP summit is scheduled for April.

Submissions are under review which will form future policy. Key themes include:

- empowering patients as partners in their care
- devolved and decentralised systems
- digital revolution
- a more empowered and flexible workforce enabled by technology and innovation
- delivering more individually personalised services to patients.

The 10YHP will reflect the current fiscal situation and the three-year spending review. The SPF aims to work in partnership to positively influence the implementation of the plan. The SPF will also actively support the refresh of the Long Term Workforce Plan which will be adapted in line with the 10YHP.

## Urgent and emergency care plan – Emily Roche, DHSC

The government set out in [Road to recovery: the government's 2025 mandate to NHS England](#), a clear objective around reform to improve urgent and emergency care. DHSC is developing a new strategy on urgent and emergency care (UEC) and publication of the UEC plan is due shortly. The first part will include the aim to reduce unnecessary conveyance to A&E, reduce ambulance waits outside hospitals, improve links to community urgent response teams, review 999 call prioritisation and consider vaccination uptake.

The second part will include a focus on patient discharge, expanding co-located urgent treatment centres, same day emergency care, mental health crisis centres, moving patients out of emergency departments more quickly and publishing data on corridor care.

Trade unions highlighted the impact of corridor care on both patients and staff. They emphasised the need to improve social care provision to reduce pressure on NHS services and learn from best practice implemented since the Covid pandemic.

## Neighbourhood health service plans – Paul Maubach, DHSC

[New guidance](#) issued in January focuses on three main areas: NHS and social care working together, strengthening primary and community based care, and connecting people's access to health care provision. A national implementation plan will be published with a focus on better supporting people frequently admitted to hospital with comorbidities and collaborative working across organisational boundaries, which is already happening in some areas due to aligned leadership and culture.

Trade unions emphasised the opportunity to train new staff in community settings, introduce consistent workforce terms and conditions to encourage the shift from acute to community, and increase focus on the prevention agenda using solutions such as dietary support for illnesses relating to obesity and increasing the number of allied health professions working in primary care networks.

## Non-pay programme board recommendations - chair

The [Agenda for Change](#) pay deal agreed in 2023 between the government and the NHS Staff Council included a commitment to work on ten non-pay areas aimed at supporting the NHS workforce. The minister confirmed that she and the secretary of state have come to a conclusion on all the recommendations and would be reporting to the NHS Staff Council.