

NHS Reform Fortnightly Update

12th August 2021

Retrospective report: 30th July – 12th August

8 August

New [analysis](#) carried out by *The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)* suggests that up to 14 million people could be on NHS waiting lists in England by next autumn. The analysis assesses the plausibility of the Health Secretary's recent claim that waiting lists could top 13 million. It sets out how the numbers in England on the NHS waiting list changed before and during the pandemic and discusses the key factors that will affect how much they will grow in the near future. A record number of patients are currently waiting for surgery, with more than 385,000 patients waiting more than a year, compared to just 1,600 before the pandemic. The analysis concluded that the figure of 13 million underestimated the huge "hidden backlog" of patients who are still yet to come forward for treatment and added that "expanding capacity will be the only solution to cutting waiting lists in the future".

8 August

[Analysis](#) conducted by the *Nuffield Trust*, drawn from forthcoming research, shows that NHS trusts in England are on course to spend almost £5bn more next financial year than was anticipated when Theresa May set its funding levels in 2018. NHS trusts face ending this financial year, which ends in April 2022, with an overspend of £5bn or 5.2% of what was originally planned for, excluding the extra costs of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. Even if efficiency improvements return to planned rates, this will remain at £4.7bn in the 2022/23 financial year (4.8%), and £4.2bn the following year (4.1%).

12 August

On 12 August, NHS England [announced](#) that the health service is "continuing to make progress" on non-urgent care despite experiencing one of the busiest summer periods on record. New figures revealed today show that the number of patients waiting longer than 18 weeks for care has dropped by almost 25,000 while those waiting more than a year fell by almost 32,000. Average waiting times for elective care are also down for the fourth month in a row to 10.4 weeks, which is more than seven weeks lower than this time last year. This progress has been made despite A&E experiencing 70,000 attendances a day in July, an increase of nearly 20,000 from this time last year.

Lookahead: 13th August – 26th August (*Parliament is in recess until September*)

The Health and Care Bill was debated at second reading on Wednesday 14 July 2021 and has now been sent to a Public Bill Committee which will scrutinise the Bill line by line and is expected to report to the House by Tuesday 2 November 2021. The first sitting of the Public Bill Committee is expected to be on Tuesday 7 September. Written evidence can now be sent into the Public Bill Committee.

Relevant Select Committee Inquiries that are currently open

- **Public Accounts Committee** - [Digital Transformation in the NHS](#)
- **Public Accounts Committee** - [NHS nursing workforce](#)
- **Public Accounts Committee** - [Adult social care markets](#)
- **Public Accounts Committee** - [COVID-19: Government procurement and supply of personal protective equipment](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Clearing the backlog caused by the pandemic](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Social Care: funding and workforce](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Workforce burnout and resilience in the NHS and social care](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Coronavirus: lessons learnt](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Coronavirus: recent developments](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Department's White Paper on health and social care](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Treatment of autistic people and individuals with learning disabilities](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Safety of maternity services in England](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Supporting those with dementia and their carers](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [General Practice Data for Planning and Research](#)
- **Health and Social Care Committee** - [Cancer Services](#)
- **Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee** - [Plastic waste](#)
- **Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee** - [Long term funding of adult social care](#)

- COVID-19 Committee - [The long-term impact of the pandemic on parents and families](#)

Relevant Consultations that are currently open

- Department of Health and Social Care - [The Health and Social Care Act 2008 \(Regulated Activities\) Regulations 2014: extension of expiry date](#)
- Department of Health and Social Care - [Aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the State Pension age](#)
- Department of Health and Social Care - [Changes to giving free prescriptions to people aged 60 and over](#)
- Department for Work and Pensions - [Shaping future support: the health and disability green paper](#)
- Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency - [Point of Care Consultation](#)
- Migration Advisory Committee - [The impact of the ending of freedom of movement on the adult social care sector](#)

Upcoming events

- Tuesday 24th August: NHS Confederation - [InFocus – priorities in acute care](#)
- Tuesday 24th August: NHS England - [An introduction to working with people and communities](#)