



Department
of Health

A guide to NHS Improvement Sponsorship

NHS Improvement Sponsorship Team
Department of Health

Purpose of this guidance

This is a guide to NHS Improvement (NHSI) sponsorship for Department of Health staff. It aims to explain:

- NHSI, who they are and what they do;
- how best to work with NHSI; and
- how we sponsor and hold NHSI to account.

NHSI incorporates



Improvement

NHS Improvement is the operational name for an organisation that brought together Monitor, NHS Trust Development Authority (TDA), Patient Safety, including the National Reporting and Learning System, Advancing Change Team and Intensive Support Teams

Monitor

NHS Trust
Development
Authority (TDA)

National
Reporting and
Learning
System

Patient Safety

Advancing
Change Team

Intensive
Support Teams

NHSI - Who they are

- NHSI is not a legal organisation in its own right. Monitor and TDA remain two separate legal bodies, governed by their respective statutory frameworks and legislative functions and duties
- But NHSI are governed by a single executive team who are accountable for both organisations
- NHSI help the NHS to meet its challenges
- NHSI also hold providers of NHS services to account.

NHSI - What they do

- NHSI is responsible for overseeing foundation trusts and NHS trusts, as well as independent providers that provide NHS-funded care
- They offer the support providers need to give patients consistently safe, high quality, compassionate care within local health systems that are financially sustainable
- NHSI are the regulators for health services in England. It is their job to protect and promote the interests of patients by ensuring the whole sector works for the patient's benefit
- NHSI provide a regulatory framework which ensures that NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts are well led and financially robust so that they are able to deliver excellent care and value for money.

NHSI - What they do



NHSI – Key delivery partners

- NHSI work closely with NHS England (NHSE), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and other arm's-length bodies at national, regional and local levels
- With NHSE they ensure greater alignment between the financial levers for commissioners and providers
- With CQC they help to ensure that provider and commissioner plans are aligned
- They align with both organisations to create a single and simple definition of success for providers.

NHSI – What they lead on

- DH sets NHSI's objectives which range from ensuring financial balance in the NHS to reducing infections in hospital. Their remit letter is published annually and you can find it here: [NHSI Remit Letter 2016-2017](#)
- Their being effectively supported and held to account is therefore key to the Department successfully achieving its objectives. Some of the most significant things they do to make this happen include:

NHSI – What they lead on

- **Single oversight framework (SOF)**

The SOF sets out how NHSI oversees NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts, using one consistent approach. It helps them to identify the type and level of support that is needed to meet these requirements.

Before considering whether a provider requires support, NHSI monitor their performance under each of the following themes; Quality of care, Finance and use of resources, Operational performance, Strategic change and Leadership and improvement capability.

NHSI – What they lead on

- **Single oversight framework (SOF) cont.**

NHSI segment individual trusts into one of four categories according to the level of support each trust needs. Where improvements in performance are required, they develop a package of support with the provider to help them achieve this.

NHSI – What they lead on

- **Special measures**

NHS trusts and foundation trusts that have serious failures in quality of care and where there are concerns that existing management cannot make the necessary improvements without support, can be put into Special Measures.

This consists of a set of specific interventions designed to improve the quality of care within a reasonable time.

NHSI support improvement in the quality of care provided.

NHSI – What they lead on

- **Carter recommendations**

In 2016 a review undertaken by Lord Carter was published, which focused on finding savings within the NHS. This included looking at cost and efficiency savings.

Post review, an **Operational Productivity** team within NHSI was set up to coordinate the implementation of work that resulted from these recommendations.

NHSI – What they lead on

- **Setting the National Tariff**

The National Tariff is a set of prices and rules to help providers of NHS care and commissioners provide best value to their patients. It is a shared responsibility between NHSI and NHSE.

NHSE has a duty to specify those healthcare services for which it thinks a national price should be used, and NHSI has the duty to set that price. The National Tariff specifies rules governing not only how nationally set pricing will work, but also how local price-setting must operate.

While NHS medical services are free at the point of use for the patient, the system is taxpayer funded.

NHSI help trusts to help themselves in three main ways



How do I contact NHSI?



Sponsorship

- The Department's arms length bodies (ALBs) and executive agencies (EAs) are their delivery agents, and our sponsors are the main point of contact with them
- The key focus for sponsors is to:
 - support their ALB/EA in being a high performing organisation;
 - provide assurance that the ALB/EA is delivering its objectives and contributing to the Department's wider policy aims;
 - provide assurance that the ALB/EA is effectively managing risk and maintaining tight financial controls;
 - act within the Department as advocates for their ALB/EA.

How the Department sponsors NHSI

The Department

- holds NHSI to account for delivery against their objectives
- provides funding to NHSI so they can discharge their duties
- provides oversight for NHSI's budget and ensures value for money
- assesses NHSI's performance and holds them to account for the delivery of their functions

How the Department sponsors NHSI

The Department cont.

- administers the Secretary of States appointments, approvals and interventions
- leads on it's relationship with NHSI, and acts as champion for them within Government and externally
- works with NHSI to determine what success looks like for the coming years
- develops an assurance mechanism at Ministerial, DG and Director level.

How the Department sponsors NHSI

The Sponsorship Team

- NHSI has a dedicated sponsorship team in the Department which aims to support good relationships between NHSI and the DH
- The sponsorship team gathers intelligence and NHSI's perspective to help improve and develop policy making or draft legislation
- The team is lead by Deputy Director Jason Yiannikou, and includes [I/S] , [I/S] and [I/S] .

How the Department sponsors NHSI

The Remit Letter

- The Department sends an annual Remit Letter to NHSI which sets out NHSI's objectives for the coming year. This covers, amongst other things, playing their part in balancing the NHS budget, delivery of safe high quality care, NHS operational performance, and NHS leadership.
- The Remit Letter is sent from the Secretary of State to the chair of NHSI.

How we sponsor and hold NHSI to account

NHSI and DH have a programme of meetings at Ministerial, Senior Departmental Sponsor & informal levels every year

Four Quarterly Accountability meetings

**2 Ministerial and
2 SDS chaired**

All meetings are structured to promote openness, constructive challenge and the identification and resolution of strategic and topical issues. Items can be proposed by either party

Two NHSI-DH meetings at Senior Departmental Sponsor (SDS) level

Formal meetings attended by the NHSI Chair and other senior NHSI/DH staff. They provide a platform for the DHs SDS to ensure that NHSI is discharging its duties and is meeting the objectives set out in the Health & Social Care Act

Sponsorship team meetings

These are regular informal meetings attended by the sponsorship team and NHSI Operational Contacts helping to forge and maintain a strong working relationship

Within the Department



Phillip Dunne

- Minister of State for Health Philip Dunne, is responsible for holding NHSI to account for delivery



Lee McDonough

- Lee McDonough is the Director General for Acute Care & Workforce with the responsibility of ALB Senior Departmental Sponsor



William Vineall

- William Vineall is the Director responsible for NHSI sponsorship

Within NHSI



Jim Mackey

- Chief Executive



Baroness
Dido Harding

- Chair