

A photograph of two people, a woman on the left and a man on the right, are shown in profile, looking down at a document or screen. They appear to be in a professional setting, possibly a meeting or a collaborative work environment. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue geometric pattern.

Delivering the Forward View:
**NHS planning guidance
for 2016/17 – 2020/21**

Technical Guidance for NHS planning 2016/17

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Technical Guidance for NHS planning 2016/17

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The NHS Five Year Forward View sets out a vision for the future of the NHS. It was developed by the partner organisations that deliver and oversee health and care services including:

- NHS England
- Care Quality Commission
- Health Education England
- Monitor
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
- NHS Trust Development Authority
- Public Health England.

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1. Introduction

1. *Delivering the Forward View: NHS Planning Guidance 2016/17 – 2020/21*, published jointly by the NHS Leadership Bodies on 22 December 2015, sets out the priorities for the NHS in meeting the commitments and vision set out in the *NHS Five Year Forward View*. Over the coming months, NHS bodies will therefore need to work together to produce a five-year 'place-based' sustainability and transformation plan (STP), and an operational plan for 2016/17 for each organisation, that is consistent across the planning footprint and with the emerging STP.
2. The overarching priorities for both plans are set out in *Delivering the Forward View*. The expectations for the content of operational plans are described more fully in Technical Annex 2 for commissioners and Technical Annex 5 for providers. NHS England and NHS Improvement will publish further guidance on STPs in January. This technical guidance and its supporting annexes also provide more information about: the timetable, where to find support, content and assurance arrangements for operational plans, and guidance on the various data returns and templates organisations will need to use.
3. The planning documents, including *Delivering the Forward View* and all technical annexes are accessible from the Five Year Forward View website. They can also be accessed via the NHS England, Monitor and NHS Trust Development Authority websites. A list of all the technical annexes, with links to the relevant documents, is provided in Appendix 1.

2. Operational plan timetable

4. The table below sets out the key milestones for the 2016/17 operational planning and contracting timetable.

Timetable Item (applicable to all bodies unless specifically referenced)	Revised timetable
'Delivering the Forward View' planning guidance published	22 Dec 2015
Indicative 2016/17 prices published	22 Dec
Commissioner allocations	8 Jan
Technical Guidance and annexes issued	January
2015/16 baseline agreement checkpoint	18 Jan
Regional training events on demand and capacity models completed	By 29 Jan 2016
Submission of full draft 2016/17 operational plans	8 Feb (noon)
Weekly contract tracker to be submitted	8/9 Feb 22/23 Feb Weekly from: 7/8 March to 25/26 April

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Timetable Item (applicable to all bodies unless specifically referenced)	Revised timetable
National Tariff S118 consultation	Jan-Feb
Submission of updated full draft plans (CCGs, NHS England only)	2 March
Contract signature stocktake	14 /15 March
Where contracts not signed and contract signature deadline of 31 March at risk, local decisions to enter mediation	15 March
Contract mediation	15 March – 7 April
Publish National Tariff	Early March
National deadline for signing of contracts	By 31 March
Budgets and final plans approved by Boards of providers and commissioners	By 31 March
Final contract signature date for avoiding arbitration	8 April (noon)
Submission of arbitration paperwork where contracts not signed	8 April (noon)
Submission of final 2016/17 operational plans, aligned with contracts	11 April (noon)
Contract arbitration panels and/or hearings	11 - 25 April
Arbitration outcomes notified to commissioners and providers	Within 2 working days after panel date
Contract and schedule revisions reflecting arbitration findings completed and signed by both parties	By 3 May

5. We will announce the timetable for consultation and issuing of the standard contract separately.
6. Further details of the timetable for the completion of place-based sustainability and transformation plans (STPs) by July 2016 will be issued separately in January.
7. Please refer to Technical Annex 1 for the detailed submission schedules relating to the 'prov/comm' submissions for activity and the contract tracker.

3. Support, review and assurance for 2016/17 operational plans

8. The process of developing and agreeing operational plans (and their interaction with STPs) will be challenging. The process itself, and particularly the local conversations it fosters, will be at least as important as the outputs in enabling local ownership and delivery. The national NHS bodies are committed to supporting local organisations to work through the process and deliver the best possible plans.
9. NHS England and NHS Improvement are developing a joint prospectus of practical planning support for localities to access, including a range of planning tools and a series of workshops and webinars.

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10. The main elements are:
- Regional events to explore good practice, promote peer learning and cross-fertilise thinking between areas;
 - Substantial national CEO involvement at events;
 - Areas asked to self-assess their readiness for local health and care community working and support designed around need;
 - Structured support and challenge (for example, site visits) provided by joint national teams whilst STPs are developed;
 - Workshops/webinars on specific aspects of planning; and
 - Practical tools, resources and guides.
11. Regional events have already started, and will be completed by the end of January. As part of this, a number of demand and capacity training workshops are being delivered throughout January 2016 to ensure NHS commissioners and providers have a shared understanding of the principles underpinning demand and capacity planning. These workshops will promote the use of a series of demand and capacity models that will help inform 2016/17 activity plans. Further details of how to access these additional resources will be provided shortly. Further information on the demand and capacity models can be found [here](#) or by contacting england.demandandcapacityproject@nhs.net.

Joint assurance process

12. The operational plan of each commissioner and provider will need to be approved by its individual Board or governing body. To support this, **NHS England and NHS Improvement will undertake a joint assurance process, working with local organisations in a coherent and joined-up way.**
13. This joint assurance approach will focus on supporting organisations to deliver operational plans which demonstrate how the following requirements will be met:
- Agreement of robust demand and capacity plans – considering whether sufficient and affordable activity is planned for, and the capacity of providers to meet this;
 - Finance and activity projections supported by reasonable and deliverable planning assumptions. This involves assessing whether projections are developed within realistic parameters that are appropriately stretching but deliverable, whilst making the best use of available resources, by: using local intelligence to consider whether plans meet local need; reconciling data in provider and commissioner plans; considering the credibility and deliverability of demand management; and gaining assurance that no local business rules have been put in place unless jointly agreed between provider and commissioner;
 - Coherence with other planning and output assumptions – checking the consistency of planning assumptions across provider and commissioner plans;

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- Identification of risks outside of the direct control of the organisation, and how these might be mitigated. This involves considering both the assumptions in individual plans and the shared understanding across the local health and care community. This assessment of risk should be linked to the one percent non-recurrent expenditure referred to in paragraph 41 of *Delivering the Forward View*, set aside to insulate the health economy from financial risks.

Joint data collections

14. To ensure coherence of plans across the locality, activity and finance assumptions made by providers and commissioners should be consistent. For the 2016/17 operational planning round, commissioners and providers will participate in three joint data collections. Information from each of these collections will be shared between commissioners and providers, allowing transparency and understanding of common data and enabling alignment of plans.
15. The **baseline checkpoint** on 18 January 2016 is a provider and commissioner collection to provide joint assurance of the alignment of baseline values of contracts and key activity data for 2016/17. It highlights the level of progress made and where further support may be needed at an early stage in the contracting round, increasing the ability of organisations to agree realistic levels of activity within plans and contracts. Templates and detailed guidance in relation to this data collection were issued separately in December 2015 to enable timely completion of the templates ready for the 18 January submission deadline.
16. Submissions for **annual activity plans** (Technical Annex 1, Part A) are due on 8 February and 11 April 2016. Collected through UNIFY, these will be broken down into individual provider and commissioner contractual relationships. The review process will seek assurance of joint working between providers and commissioners to agree activity plans for 2016/17 that reflect the detailed demand and capacity work undertaken. Building credible plans for 2016/17 will rely on a clear understanding of demand and capacity, alignment between commissioners and providers, and the skills to plan effectively. The suite of demand and capacity models provides commissioners and providers with the basic building blocks required to support a more robust approach to activity planning for 2016/17.
17. The **contract tracker** collection (Technical Annex 1, Part B) will commence on 8 February. Throughout the contracting round, providers and commissioners will submit information through UNIFY relating to their individual contracts. This will help all parties to understand misalignment and contract risk early on, thus: providing meaningful support to commissioners and providers; encouraging contracts that contain realistic levels of activity that providers have the capacity to deliver; and helping to ensure that contracts are signed by the national contract deadline.

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Dispute resolution process

18. It is vital that all commissioners and providers have mutually agreed contracts in place prior to the start of the 2016/17 financial year, and commissioners and providers should make every effort to reach local agreement. NHS England and NHS Improvement will consider it to be a major failing where parties do not manage to reach agreement by the national contract signature deadline of 31 March 2016.
19. Support is available from regional NHS England and NHS Improvement teams to help organisations make progress and resolve outstanding issues. Where contract discussions have not progressed, the escalation processes detailed in the joint Dispute Resolution Process should be followed. However, they should be used only as a last resort. [Details of the joint Dispute Resolution Process](#) can be found on the NHS England website.
20. Monitor expects well-governed foundation trusts to take all reasonable steps to achieve signed contracts in a timely manner. Therefore in any cases where foundation trusts fail to achieve signed contracts with their commissioners in accordance with the national timetable, Monitor expects those foundation trusts to enter arbitration voluntarily. Monitor's expectations are explained in more detail in the joint Dispute Resolution Process guidance.

4. National Tariff

21. The timing of the publication of the Spending Review has had a knock-on effect on the timetable of the National Tariff. We are planning to publish the National Tariff Document for statutory consultation shortly but this means that final prices are unlikely to be available until early March. Therefore, as an aid to planning only, an update on the national tariff and indicative prices for 2016/17 was published on 22 December 2015. These [indicative prices, and more information on how the proposed cost uplift has been calculated](#), can be found on the Monitor website.
22. Providers and commissioners should undertake contractual discussions and prepare their 2016/17 plans on the basis of the indicative prices provided.

Choose an item.

Appendix 1 Content of technical annexes

Annex 1: Activity Plan, Contract Tracker and SRG Operational Resilience Template Guidance

Link:	Annex 1
Audience:	CCGs, NHS England direct commissioning teams, NHS Foundation Trusts, NHS Trusts
Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To explain the requirements for completion of the monthly and annual activity plan templates by both providers and commissioners• To provide guidance on how to complete the Contract Tracker template and how to upload this information into UNIFY• To provide guidance to lead commissioners on how to complete the SRG Operational Plan template
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detail of template requirements for organisational plans (monthly) and joint provider and commissioner plans (annual)• Details on links to Unify2 for further guidance• Instructions on how to submit templates• Details on how to obtain access to Unify2• Details of contract tracker template design• Instructions on how to extract prov/comm information from each weekly submission• A list of key contacts who can give advice

Annex 2: NHS England Guidance on Commissioner Operational Plans

Link:	Annex 2
Audience:	CCGs, NHS England direct commissioning teams
Purpose:	Sets out the business rules and operational planning measures
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details of business rules and financial planning requirements• A table setting out the full range of operational planning measures, including NHS Constitution standards.

Annex 3: Guidance for Completion of Commissioner Finance Templates

Link:	Annex 3
Audience:	CCGs, NHS England direct commissioning teams
Purpose:	To provide guidance for Commissioners on how to complete the financial plan template
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details for each tab within the template• Details of the order in which to complete the template will be provided• Instructions on how to submit plans• A list of key contacts who can give advice

Choose an item.

Annex 4: Better Care Fund Planning Requirements

Link:	This annex will be available shortly
Audience:	CCGs, Local Authorities
Purpose:	To outline the planning requirements of commissioners in order to access funding through the Better Care Fund in 2016-17.
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details of the overall approach to Better Care Fund planning for 2016-17;• Details of the planning requirements, including the National Conditions and performance metrics related to the fund;• An overview of how plans should be developed, submitted and assured;• Links to other key documents for Better Care Fund planning, including the Planning Return Template and BCF Health and Wellbeing Board level funding allocations.

Annex 5: NHS Improvement Guidance on Provider Operational Plans

Link:	Annex 5
Audience:	NHS Foundation Trusts and NHS Trusts
Purpose:	To clarify the main elements that should be included within operational plans produced by Foundation and NHS Trusts and to detail the approach to be taken by NHS Improvement in reviewing them
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details of the main elements that should be included in the operational plans for 2016/17 produced by NHS FTs and NHS Trusts• Details of the approach taken by NHS Improvement in reviewing these plans

Annex 6: Annual Plan Review Template Guidance for NHS Foundation Trusts

Link:	Annex 6
Audience:	NHS Foundation Trusts
Purpose:	To provide guidance for NHS FTs as to how to complete the annual plan template including financial and workforce information
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details for each tab within the template• Details of key changes since last year's APR template• Details of the triangulation testing of finance, activity and workforce• Details of the order in which to complete the template• Instructions on how to submit plans• Contact details for advice

Annex 7: Trust Financial Management System (TFMS) Plan Guidance

Link:	Annex 7
Audience:	NHS Trusts

Choose an item.

Purpose:	To provide guidance and forms for NHS Trusts to complete their financial plans.
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details for each tab within the template• Details of the structure and flow of information in the template• Instructions on how to submit plans• Details of contacts for technical queries• A new appendix describing the triangulation tests that NHS Trusts will be able to undertake using the linked file, testing the level of alignment between finance, activity and workforce plan submissions

Annex 8: Workforce Plan Technical Guidance for NHS Trusts

Link:	Annex 8
Audience:	NHS Trusts
Purpose:	To confirm the requirement for inclusion of workforce planning within NHS Trusts' operational plans
Content:	Guidance on how to produce a workforce plan and complete the necessary documentation

Choose an item.

Appendix 2 Summary of operational plan submission requirements

Requirement	Section/Annex Reference			Deadlines		
	NHSE	NTDA	Monitor	NHSE	NTDA	Monitor
One-Year Plan Summary	Annex 2	Annex 5		Draft 8 Feb (noon)		
				Draft 2 Mar (noon)	n/a	
				Final 11 Apr (noon)		
Financial Plan	Annex 3	Annex 7	Annex 6	Draft 8 Feb (noon)		
				Draft 2 Mar (noon)	n/a	
				Final 11 Apr (noon)		
Activity Plan – By Organisation	Annex 1			Draft 8 Feb (noon)		
				Final 11 Apr (noon)		
Activity Plan - Prov/Comm	Annex 1			Draft 11 Feb (noon)	Draft 8 Feb (noon)	
				Final 12 Apr (noon)	Draft 11 Apr (noon)	
Baseline Agreement Checkpoint-Prov/Comm	Section 3			18 Jan (noon)		
Contract Tracker – Prov/Comm	Annex 1			9 Feb (noon)	8 Feb (noon)	
				Continuing up to... (see Annex 1)		
				26 Apr (noon)	25 Apr (noon)	
Workforce Plan	n/a	Annex 8	Annex 6	n/a	Draft 8 Feb (noon)	
					Final 11 Apr (noon)	
Better Care Fund Planning	Annex 4	n/a	n/a	8 Feb	n/a	
				16 Mar		
				20 Apr		
SRG Operational Resilience	Annex 1	n/a	n/a	8 Feb	n/a	
				11 Apr		

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Requirement	Submission details					
	NHSE		NTDA		Monitor	
	Template	Submit to	Template	Submit to	Template	Submit to
One-Year Plan Summary	Template supplied via SharePoint	Template submitted to drop off library in SharePoint	No template supplied, format described in Annex 5	Delivery and Development contacts detailed in Appendix 3	No template supplied, format described in Annex 5	Through online FT portal
Financial Plan	Template supplied via SharePoint	Template submitted to drop off library in SharePoint	Template accessed via the pigeonholes	TDAfinance@dh.gsi.gov.uk	Template accessed via the portal	Through online FT portal
Activity Plan – By Organisation	Commissioner template accessed via UNIFY	Via a commissioner return on UNIFY	Provider template accessed via UNIFY	Via a provider return on UNIFY	Template accessed via the portal	Through online FT portal
Activity Plan - Prov/Comm	Commissioner template accessed via UNIFY	Via a commissioner return on UNIFY	Provider template accessed via UNIFY	Via a provider return on UNIFY	Provider template accessed via UNIFY	Via a provider return on UNIFY
Baseline Agreement Checkpoint-Prov/Comm	Template to be issued through Sharepoint	NHSCB.financialperformance@nhs.net	Template issued by email	TDA.finplan@nhs.net	Template to be issued via the portal	Through online FT portal
Contract Tracker – Prov/Comm	Commissioner template accessed via UNIFY	Via a commissioner return on UNIFY	Provider template accessed via UNIFY	Via a provider return on UNIFY	Provider template accessed via UNIFY	Via a provider return on UNIFY
Workforce Plan	n/a	n/a	Templates issued by email	TDA.workforce@nhs.net	Template accessed via the portal	Through online FT portal
Better Care Fund Planning	Templates published on NHSE and LGA websites	england.bettercaresupport@nhs.net	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
SRG Operational Resilience	Commissioner template accessed via UNIFY	Via a commissioner return on UNIFY	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Choose an item.

Appendix 3 Key contacts for planning advice

Monitor

Monitor Planning team: APR@monitor.gov.uk

Trust Development Authority (TDA)

The main contact point for NHS Trusts with the TDA will be through the Delivery and Development Teams. The names and contact details are set out in the table below. Any queries should be directed to your usual Delivery and Development team contact.

Location of NHS Trust	Email address
North of England	TDA.planningnorth@nhs.net
Midlands and East	TDA.planningmande@nhs.net
London	TDA.planninglondon@nhs.net
South of England	TDA.planningsouth@nhs.net

The leads at the TDA in relation to specific technical elements of the operating plans are set out in the table below.

Operating plan element	Email address
Quality	TDA.clinicalbusinessoperations@nhs.net
Workforce	TDA.workforce@nhs.net
Performance & activity	TDA.returns@nhs.net
Finance	TDA.TFMSqueries@nhs.net
Capital and cash	TDA.capitalcashqueries@nhs.net

NHS England

The main contact for CCGs will be their DCO teams.

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