



Department
of Health &
Social Care

To:
Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown
Chair of Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 9NA

By email: pubaccom@parliament.uk



19 May 2026

Dear Sir Geoffrey,

Re: Public Accounts Committee: Fifty-Fifth report of Session 2024-26, Reducing NHS waiting times for elective care (Recommendations 4b)

I am writing to update you on the Committee's recommendation 4b from the above report regarding how the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England will address the problem of legacy IT equipment and ensure that IT systems used across the NHS are properly connected.

Recommendation 4b

4b. PAC recommendation: NHSE and the Department should set out:

- ***how it will solve the problem of legacy IT equipment and ensure that the IT systems used in different parts of the NHS are properly connected;***

The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation and had previously set out an earlier target implementation date. This has now been revised to reflect the development of emerging programmes as part of the Spending Review, alongside a temporary pause in the recruitment of specialist digital and technical capability during the transition of NHS England into the Department of Health and Social Care.

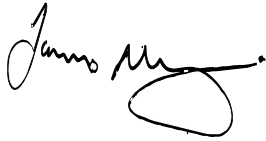
Our plan to address the problem of legacy IT equipment is now underway through the Frontline Productivity programme, which runs for four years from 1 April 2026. Through this programme, DHSC/NHSE will support providers to modernise legacy infrastructure. Specifically, the programme includes approximately £300 million of national funding to catalyse provider investment in replacing outdated infrastructure.

Our Establishing Operational Excellence programme, which aims to unify and modernise NHS health data systems, ensuring connectivity and data access, also complements this work. Key initiatives include replacing outdated platforms, automating data collection, and leveraging digital tools to reduce administrative burden and improve patient safety and outcomes.

The proposed architecture for connecting records is due to be published towards the end of 2026, therefore the target implementation date has been adjusted from April 2026 to Winter 2026 to reflect this.

We will continue to keep the Committee updated on progress.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Mackey', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Sir James Mackey
Chief Executive Officer
NHS England

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samantha Jones', with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Samanthan Jones OBE
Permanent Secretary
Department of Health and Social Care