



North & South Essex

Local Medical Committees

Delivering
operational resilience
across this winter
(2023-24)

A Guidance Document for Practices

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Overview

Overview	Letter
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This guidance sets out NHS England’s national approach to 2023/24 winter planning, and the key steps that must be taken together across all parts of the system to meet the challenges ahead. <p>In January 2023, NHS England published their delivery plan for recovering Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) services: an ambitious two-year plan to deliver improvements for patients across the integrated Urgent and Emergency Care (iUEC) pathway. This plan, along with the Primary Care Recovery Plan, Elective Recovery Plan and the broader strategic and operational plans and priorities for the NHS, provides a strong basis to prepare for this winter.</p> <p>NHS England have therefore set out four areas of focus for systems to help prepare for winter, which can be found in the following pages of this guidance document.</p>	<p>Delivering operational resilience across the NHS this winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023)</p>
<p>*For further information, please see the letter in the guidance link above, right – pages 1 to 3.</p>	

1. Continuation of delivering the UEC Recovery Plan by ensuring high-impact interventions are in place

1. Continuation of delivering the UEC Recovery Plan by ensuring high-impact interventions are in place	Letter
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Together with systems, providers, and clinical and operational experts we have identified 10 evidence-based high-impact interventions. These are focused around reducing waiting times for patients and crowding in A&E departments, improving flow and reducing length of stay in hospital settings. Delivering on these will be key to improving resilience in winter. We have recently written to all systems to ask that they assess their maturity against these areas as part of the universal improvement offer for the UEC Recovery Plan. Systems will then receive dedicated support on the four areas they choose to focus their improvement for winter.• More detail on these areas can be found at Appendix A (page 6 within the link on the right) and on the NHS IMPACT website.	<p>Delivering operational resilience across the NHS this winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023)</p>
<p>*For confirmation of the above, please see page 3 of the letter in the guidance link above, right.</p>	

2. Completing operational and surge planning to prepare for different winter scenarios

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NHS England has already collectively carried out a detailed operational planning round for 2023/24 but they are now asking each system to review their operational plans, including whether the assumptions regarding demand and capacity remain accurate. Although this will cover surge planning for the whole winter, specific plans should be made for the Christmas/New Year/early-January period which we know is often the most challenging time of the entire year. ● In addition to this, and recognising the importance of planning for multiple scenarios, we are asking systems to identify how they will mobilise additional capacity across all parts of the NHS should it be required to respond to peaks in demand driven by external factors eg, very high rates of influenza or COVID-19, potential further industrial action. ● This planning is essential to ensure winter plans protect and deliver elective and cancer recovery objectives, as well as deliver the primary care access programme, and proactive care for those most at risk of hospital admission (guidance on proactive care will be published by NHSE). ● NHSE will also be issuing each ICB with a template to capture their surge plan and overall winter plan. NHSE will work with those areas that are facing the greatest challenges across the UEC pathway via their tiering programme to support them in completing these returns. If you think you require additional support, please contact: england.uec-operations@nhs.net. ● All returns should be sent to: england.uec-operations@nhs.net by 11 September 2023. 	<p>Delivering operational resilience across the NHS this winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023)</p>
<p>*For confirmation of the above, please see pages 3 and 4 of the letter in the guidance link above, right.</p>	

3. ICBs should ensure effective system working across all parts of the system

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Including: acute trusts and community care, elective care, children and young people, mental health, primary, community, intermediate and social care and the VCSE sector. ● ICBs will play a vital role in system leadership and co-ordination but it is important that all parts of the system play their role. The NHS England operating framework describes the roles that NHS England, ICBs and NHS providers should play, working alongside our partners in the wider health and care system. It outlines our collective accountabilities and responsibilities to ensure we deliver a health service that maximises outcomes for patients. ● To help systems plan, NHSE have developed a set of recommended winter roles and responsibilities (Appendix B) to ensure clarity on what actions should be undertaken by each part of the system. These will require broad clinical leadership to implement, and systems should be using these to develop their winter planning return, reflecting how these relate to the circumstances within their individual system. ● DHSC is also writing to local authorities and the adult social care sector shortly to set out priority actions for improving winter resilience and encouraging cross-system working with the NHS on winter planning. ● To assist system working this winter, NHSE will also be publishing an updated specification for System Co-Ordination Centres and an updated Operational Pressures Escalation (OPEL) Framework to ensure that they are taking a consistent and co-ordinated approach to managing pressures across all systems. 	<p style="text-align: center;"> Delivering operational resilience across the NHS this winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023) </p>
<p>*For confirmation of the above, please see page 4 of the letter in the guidance link above, right.</p>	

4. Supporting the workforce to deliver over winter

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This year, workforces have continued to work incredibly hard in the face of increased demand. NHSE knows how much supporting the workforce matters to you, and it is crucial that employers ensure that they take steps to protect and improve the wellbeing of the workforce.• Last winter, we saw flu return at scale. It is vitally important that we protect the public and the health and care workforce against flu and other infectious diseases, and the best way of doing this is to ensure that they are vaccinated. Providers should also ensure that they have an established pathway for identifying patients at-risk of COVID-19 and flu in their care, including those who are immunosuppressed.• Systems and providers should also continue to improve retention and staff attendance through a systematic focus on all elements of the NHS People Promise, as set out in 2023/24 priorities and operational planning guidance and more recently in the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan, and ensure continued supply through maintaining education and training.	<p>Delivering operational resilience across the NHS this winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023)</p>
<p>*For confirmation of the above, please see pages 4 and 5 of the letter in the guidance link above, right.</p>	

Working together to deliver a resilient winter

Working together to deliver a resilient winter	Letter
<p>System roles and responsibilities – Primary Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On pages 7 and 8 of the guidance document within the link on the right, the plans for primary care is set out.• Essentially, this is to ensure that plans are in place to maintain access to primary care services between 18 December 2023 and 8 January 2024, including ensuring Bank Holiday cover in line with primary care national contracts is in place, so that patients can access services in primary care settings over the Christmas and New Year period.	<p>Working together to deliver a resilient winter (PRN00645 – 27/07/2023)</p>
<p>*For a more comprehensive list of plans to be put in place, please see pages 7 and 8 of the guidance document in the link above, right.</p>	



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