



AI analysis

## **NHS ConfedExpo 2025: Day 1**

Wednesday 11 June, 2025

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## Summary

The first day of NHS ConfedExpo 2025 highlighted both the challenges and opportunities facing the NHS, with a strong focus on the urgent need for transformation in healthcare delivery. Integrated care, collaboration, and digital technology were consistent themes seen as vital to tackling systemic pressures. Speakers emphasised a shift toward more patient-centred approaches, decentralising services to local communities, and nurturing a culture of innovation and inclusivity. A key message was the need to break down silos between health and social care to ensure seamless patient experiences. Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) were identified as crucial for managing resources and driving population health through coordinated, cross-sector collaboration.

Digital transformation was positioned as a cornerstone of NHS modernisation and efficiency. Discussions centred on the impact of tools like electronic patient records, federated data platforms, and AI-driven solutions. The rapid digital advances made during the COVID-19 pandemic showed what's possible, though speakers acknowledged difficulties in scaling successful pilots. Strong leadership, better interoperability, and ongoing workforce upskilling were seen as essential to delivering digital innovation at scale. Valuing frontline staff and securing long-term investment were also identified as key to sustaining progress.

Quality and safety remained central concerns, with calls for these values to guide all NHS decisions. Addressing safety failures, which carry major financial and human costs, was seen as urgent. Amid structural reforms, speakers urged a continued focus on patient care and system-wide accountability. The well-being of staff was linked to improved care quality, with concerns raised about the impact of blame cultures. Instead, a systems-based approach to learning from incidents was advocated to support continuous improvement and foster a safer, more resilient NHS.

The upcoming 10-year health plan was a focal point of the first conference day, with discussions around the necessity of substantial system reform to address current frustrations with NHS services. The need for a patient-controlled system, decentralised services, and community-based delivery was highlighted as essential shifts to improve health outcomes. There was a strong emphasis on the underlying infrastructure, such as operating models, financial flows, and workforce flexibility, to support these shifts effectively. The role of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) was discussed as crucial in managing funds to ensure impactful spending and driving the shift towards neighbourhood health. The importance of strategic outcome-based commissioning to improve health and economic growth was also stressed.

The connection between health and employment was explored, emphasising the integration of health and employment systems to enhance community prosperity. Speakers highlighted the alarming statistic of 2.8 million inactive individuals due to health issues and the need for inclusive strategies to create opportunities for good work and health. Effective partnerships between the NHS, local government, and other sectors were deemed essential to ensure no community is left behind. The discussion underscored the significance of localised approaches, deliberate efforts to integrate services, and the role of employers and the private sector in supporting health through good job practices and investment in employee well-being.

In conclusion, the first day the NHS ConfedExpo 2025 provided a comprehensive overview of the current challenges and opportunities facing the NHS. The collective insights from the first day highlighted the necessity of integrated care, digital transformation, quality and safety, substantial system reform, and the integration of health and employment systems. These themes are critical in addressing the systemic pressures and driving meaningful change within the NHS. The first day underscored the importance of collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity in achieving a sustainable and effective healthcare system that is truly accessible to everyone.



# Takeaways

## Integrated care boards

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ICBs are pivotal in managing funds and driving population health improvements, facilitating impactful spending and enhancing service delivery through collaborative efforts across various care sectors.

## Digital transformation

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The utilisation of digital tools, such as electronic patient records and AI-powered solutions, is crucial in modernising the NHS, improving operational performance, and transforming healthcare delivery.

## Quality and safety

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Quality and patient safety must be central to all decision-making processes within the NHS, addressing safety failures and maintaining focus on patient care amidst structural reforms.

## Substantial system reform

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The upcoming 10-year health plan highlights the necessity of substantial system reform, focusing on patient-controlled systems, decentralised services, and community-based delivery to improve health outcomes.

## Health and employment integration

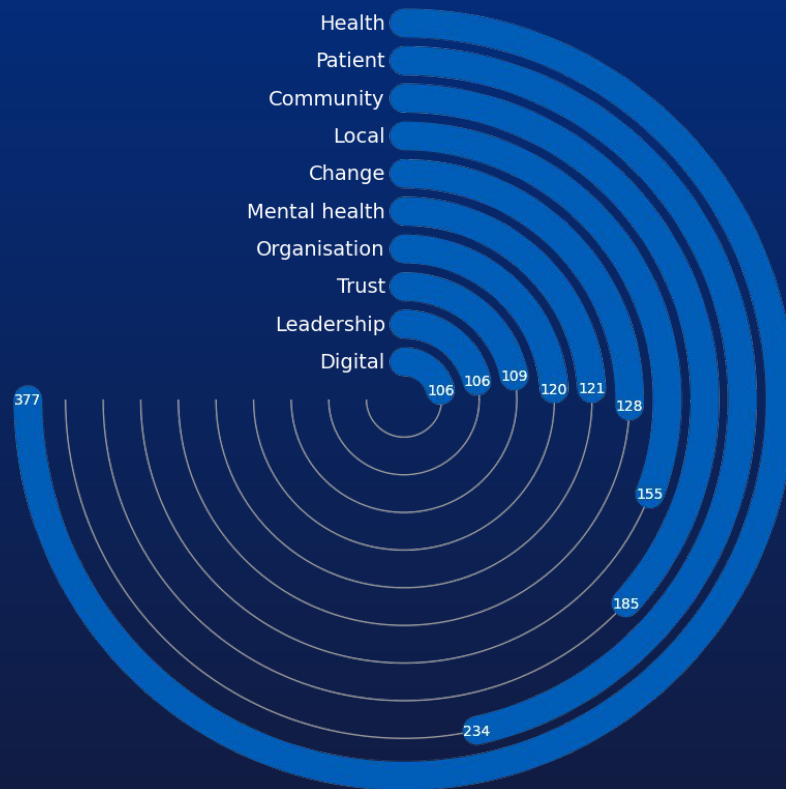
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Integrating health and employment systems is essential to enhance community prosperity, requiring effective partnerships between the NHS, local government, and other sectors to ensure no community is left behind.

## Topics

Health, patient, and community are the cornerstone topics shaping the future of healthcare. The theme of health emphasises collaboration across sectors, mental health, prevention, and reducing inequalities. Neighbourhood-level care, community partnerships, and digital innovation are pivotal in transforming healthcare delivery, enhancing efficiency, and ensuring equitable access. The importance of supporting staff well-being, lifelong learning, and flexible working conditions is recognised as essential for a healthy workforce and societal progress.

The discussions on patient care advocate for prioritising patient needs, experiences, and empowerment. Integrating digital innovations to streamline patient records, improving safety and care quality, and addressing systemic issues are key to better health outcomes. Community engagement is crucial, advocating for collaboration, trust-building, and service integration to address inequalities. Empowering communities with technology and leadership fosters inclusivity and resilience, creating environments that support holistic well-being and ensure no one is left behind.



## Top 3 topics unpacked: What was said about ...?

### Health

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Health was a recurring theme, highlighting the need for collaboration, strategic planning, and integration across the NHS, local authorities, and the voluntary sector. Discussions centred on mental health, prevention, early intervention, and reducing health inequalities through neighbourhood-level care and community partnerships. Digital innovation and AI were viewed as vital to transforming healthcare, improving efficiency, and expanding access.

Improved health outcomes were tied to economic prosperity and community well-being. There was strong support for staff well-being, better performance, and involving public health in local initiatives. Lifelong learning, flexible work, and investing in employee health were seen as essential for a resilient workforce. Overall, health was presented as key to societal progress, requiring sustained commitment and innovation.

### Patient

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The discussions emphasised placing patients at the heart of healthcare, promoting care that prioritises their needs, experiences, and empowerment. Key themes included using digital tools to streamline records, improve safety and quality, and tackle systemic issues to enhance outcomes. Collaboration among professionals, patients, and communities was seen as vital for effective care.

Speakers stressed the value of patient feedback, transparency, and honesty in healthcare interactions. Empowering patients with information and involving them in decisions were viewed as essential for a more inclusive and responsive system. Overall, the discussions reflected a strong commitment to transforming the NHS to better meet patient needs.

### Community

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Community engagement emerged as a vital element across various discussions, highlighting collaboration, trust-building, and the integration of services to address health and social inequalities. Emphasis was placed on transitioning care from hospitals to more localised settings, enhancing transparency, and empowering communities with technology and leadership to meet their unique needs, fostering a culture of shared decision-making.

The collective view underscores the importance of communities in driving meaningful change, advocating for proactive involvement in policy-making and service delivery. By leveraging community assets, promoting inclusivity, and addressing socio-economic challenges, the aim is to create resilient, thriving environments that support holistic health and well-being, ensuring no one is left behind.

## Perspectives



**Sir James Mackey**

– on public trust and responsibility:

*The NHS belongs to the public — we're all stewards, not owners.*



**Victor Adebowale**

– on leadership and continuous learning:

*Learning is work, and we must never stop — because when leaders grow, teams, patients, and communities benefit. If we aren't learning as leaders, no one else is.*



**Rob Webster**

– on workforce-driven healthcare transformation:

*If we fail to put people first, we'll fail to deliver both high-quality services and meaningful change.*

## Potential future topics

### The future of NHS workforce wellbeing: beyond traditional support

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This session will explore innovative strategies to enhance NHS workforce wellbeing that go beyond conventional support mechanisms. We will delve into mental health support, flexible working arrangements, and the integration of wellness technologies to create a healthier, happier, and more productive workforce.

Experts will share insights on how to foster a culture of wellbeing within the NHS, addressing challenges such as burnout, work-life balance, and the impact of systemic pressures. Attendees will learn about successful initiatives and best practices that can be adopted to support staff well-being and improve overall organisational health.

### Integrating environmental sustainability into NHS operations

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This session will focus on the critical role of environmental sustainability within NHS operations. Participants will discuss the benefits and challenges of implementing green practices, from reducing carbon footprints and waste to promoting energy efficiency and sustainable procurement.

We will examine case studies of NHS trusts that have successfully integrated sustainability into their operations and explore how these practices can be scaled. The session aims to provide actionable insights for healthcare leaders on making sustainability a core component of their strategic plans, ensuring the NHS contributes positively to environmental stewardship while delivering high-quality care.

### Addressing health literacy to improve patient outcomes

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This session will address the importance of health literacy in improving patient outcomes and reducing health disparities. We will explore strategies for enhancing communication between healthcare providers and patients, ensuring information is accessible and understandable.

Speakers will discuss the impact of low health literacy on patient engagement, adherence to treatment plans, and overall health management. The session will highlight successful interventions and educational programmes that have increased health literacy, offering practical tools and approaches for integrating these into NHS services to empower patients and improve their health outcomes.

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