

New Leadership for construction of 40 new hospitals

- Natalie Forrest brings a wealth of health, construction and project management experience, most recently as Chief Executive of Chase Farm Hospital
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear set to upgrade mental health and learning disability services and Salford Royal will start work on a new hospital that will include a major trauma centre

The government's commitment to build 40 new hospitals by 2030 has been boosted today by the appointment of Natalie Forrest to oversee the building programme.

Forrest has worked in the NHS for over 30 years and is a registered nurse. She most recently led the construction and operationalisation of NHS Nightingale London in response to the pandemic. Alongside this role, she was also Chase Farm Hospital's Chief Executive in North London, where she successfully led operational and clinical teams to design an innovative and groundbreaking new hospital, delivered to time, on budget and without interrupting services.

In total, 48 hospitals will be built by 2030, with £3.7 billion committed so far. In the North East, one of these schemes has just received final approval to upgrade mental health facilities in the region. Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust's new £72.6 million facilities – which will be finalised by 2023 – will improve the quality of mental health and learning disability services in the regions by combining innovative design with a holistic approach to patient care and safety.

Final approval has also been secured on Salford Royal's £67.4 million new hospital building, and construction work will begin soon. This will be home to a major trauma centre treating patients who have experienced life-changing or life-threatening injuries – for example, after a serious road traffic accident or fall.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

I'm delighted to appoint Natalie into this role. She not only brings unrivalled experience in health management and nursing, but also the construction and project management knowledge that helped turn the Excel conference centre into a Nightingale Hospital in just 9 days, as well as overseeing the rebuild of Chase Farm Hospital at pace.

The New Hospital Programme – as part of our Health Infrastructure Plan – will transform the delivery of NHS healthcare infrastructure to build back better and will ensure our country has world-class healthcare facilities right across the country for decades to come.

Senior Responsible Officer of the New Hospital Programme Natalie Forrest said:

I am determined to build trust in our national capability in planning and delivering hospitals, not just with health and construction stakeholders but with the staff and patients who will benefit from them on a daily basis.

My goal will be to deliver these new hospitals cost-effectively and at speed, and to foster an ecosystem that owns, learns from and improves healthcare design.

With over 12 years spent in NHS senior leadership roles, Forrest has extensive experience working with key clinical, board-level and other NHS stakeholders.

Starting this month, she will oversee a delivery board across the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England and Improvement, which will work closely with a network of NHS trusts.

Overall, the New Hospital Programme within the government's long-term [health infrastructure plan](#) will help develop new sustainability standards, planning capabilities and care and workforce models. It will also implement cutting-edge digital technologies across the NHS, and will support an integrated approach to building new healthcare infrastructure using modern methods of construction.

The full list of 48 hospitals is available in the press release, '[PM confirms £3.7 billion for 40 hospitals in biggest hospital building programme in a generation](#)'.