

NHS budgets and management

The relatively new Secretary of State for Health has a major job to do. He has to ensure the NHS sustains high quality care and a good level of response and service. He needs to supervise how the substantial extra money will be spent and check on how the base budget is used.

Doing good and doing no harm to patients must be the common starting point. Tackling the unacceptably high waiting lists is a clear priority.

This agenda should include

1 Further improvements in infection control. Controlling viral transmission requires better air extraction and UV filters in air systems. Other hospital infections require high levels of disinfecting and cleaning.

2. Expansion of capacity. Hospitals are short of beds and of some medical staff to man them. This should be a priority in new spend.

3. Reduction of administrative overhead where there are too many layers and bodies over the heads of medical teams

4 Intelligent digitalisation of records with good access for all screened medical staff who need access to a patients condition and diagnoses.

5. Development of more specialist units that become very good and efficient at the more routine operations like joint surgery and cataract removal.

6. Provision of more social care back up to allow discharge of frail and elderly from hospital after treatment.