# Keir Starmer’s online hospital plan aims to transform NHS digital care by 2027



Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has announced an ambitious plan to modernise the NHS with the launch of a new “online hospital” service designed to deliver millions of additional appointments and slash existing waiting lists. The initiative, set to commence operations in 2027, will be integrated within the NHS app, allowing patients direct access to specialist clinicians and a range of services remotely. According to Labour, this digital platform could provide up to 8.5 million extra appointments within its first three years, marking a significant step toward reshaping the future of healthcare delivery in the UK.

Speaking at Labour’s conference in Liverpool, Sir Keir described the project as heralding “a new chapter in the story of our NHS,” emphasising the importance of harnessing technological advancements to give patients greater control over their care. Users will be able to manage their prescriptions, receive clinical advice, book tests, and schedule physical procedures at nearby hospitals or community diagnostic centres via the app. Starmer framed the plans as a national renewal to cut waiting times for all, stressing the party’s responsibility to modernise the NHS while recognising the hard work of its staff.

The NHS England chief executive, Sir Jim Mackey, endorsed the online hospital scheme as a “huge step forward,” envisioning it as a way to “industrialise the latest technology and innovations” to enhance capacity and patient experience. He highlighted the need for the NHS to advance digital service delivery to parallel other sectors in offering personalised, flexible healthcare solutions for both patients and staff.

However, voices within NHS provider organisations have urged caution, pointing out the complexities involved in rolling out such a service. Daniel Elkeles, chief executive of NHS Providers, noted that while digital outpatient services have been slow to evolve, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of new approaches. He stressed the importance of addressing issues like patient data handling and preventing digital exclusion of those with limited access to technology. Elkeles also underscored the necessity for additional funding and reiterated that NHS staff must operate the service to avoid destabilising existing care pathways.

The online hospital forms part of a broader NHS digital transformation agenda that Starmer has been pursuing as part of a 10-year modernisation plan. This strategy aims to turn the NHS App into a comprehensive digital front door by 2028, allowing users to book, reschedule, and cancel appointments, self-refer to services, and receive AI-driven advice for non-urgent health issues. Enhanced integration with wearable technology is also planned to support personalised health monitoring and advice, representing a shift toward prevention and community-based care.

In parallel, the government is restructuring NHS management by planning to abolish NHS England and reintegrate its functions into the Department of Health and Social Care within two years. This move is intended to cut administrative costs and refocus efforts on digital transformation initiatives, potentially freeing up resources for direct patient care. Enhancing data sharing across NHS hospitals, GP surgeries, and ambulance services is another pillar of the reform, with the goal of creating a single, comprehensive patient record available through the NHS App. While promising greater efficiency and continuity of care, this has also sparked debate around privacy and data protection concerns.

These digital ambitions are supported by a substantial funding package including a £22.6 billion increase in day-to-day NHS spending and £3.1 billion in capital investment aimed at reducing waiting times and facilitating the NHS’s shift from hospital-centric treatment towards community care and prevention. This marks a critical effort to lay the foundations for a future-ready NHS amid growing demand and evolving healthcare needs.

Overall, while Starmer’s online hospital initiative and broader digital reforms represent bold steps toward modernising the NHS and improving patient access, their successful implementation will depend on careful planning, safeguarding patient data, ensuring inclusivity, and securing sufficient resources without undermining existing services. The developments signal a fundamental shift in how the NHS envisages delivering care in the digital era, with the potential to transform patient experiences across the country.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-patients-prime-minister-b2836131.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-patients-prime-minister-b2836131.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html)
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* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-patients-prime-minister-b2836131.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-wes-streeting-stephen-kinnock-england-b1189085.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/managing-healthcare-easy-as-online-banking-with-revamped-nhs-app), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-rachel-reeves-wes-streeting-b1236250.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/nhs-england-be-scrapped-reimagined-streamlined-tech-focus), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-wes-streeting-stephen-kinnock-england-b1189085.html)
* Paragraph 7 – [[7]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-first-steps-to-fix-the-foundations-and-save-the-nhs), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-patients-prime-minister-b2836131.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-wes-streeting-stephen-kinnock-england-b1189085.html), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/managing-healthcare-easy-as-online-banking-with-revamped-nhs-app), [[5]](https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/nhs-england-be-scrapped-reimagined-streamlined-tech-focus)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-patients-prime-minister-b2836131.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/managing-healthcare-easy-as-online-banking-with-revamped-nhs-app> - The UK government has announced plans to transform the NHS App into a comprehensive digital front door by 2028. This initiative aims to enable patients to book, move, and cancel appointments, access instant AI-driven advice for non-urgent care, and self-refer to various services, thereby reducing GP workloads and waiting times. The revamped app will also integrate wearable technology to monitor health metrics and provide personalised advice, marking a significant shift towards digital healthcare management.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-labour-rachel-reeves-wes-streeting-b1236250.html> - Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has unveiled a 10-year plan to overhaul the NHS, focusing on digitisation, prevention, and community-based care. The plan includes transforming the NHS App into a comprehensive digital front door by 2028, allowing patients to self-refer to services, book appointments, and access AI-driven health advice. Additionally, the initiative aims to reduce hospital dependency by expanding community health services and integrating wearable technology into routine care by 2035.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-ten-year-health-plan-2025-starmer-reeves-b2781880.html> - Sir Keir Starmer has announced a 10-year plan to modernise the NHS, emphasising the integration of technology and AI. The plan includes transforming the NHS App into a comprehensive digital front door by 2028, enabling patients to manage appointments, access health advice, and self-refer to services. It also outlines the expansion of wearable technology in NHS treatments by 2035 and the establishment of new mental health emergency departments to alleviate pressure on A&E services.
5. <https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/nhs-england-be-scrapped-reimagined-streamlined-tech-focus> - The UK government plans to abolish NHS England and reintegrate its functions into the Department of Health and Social Care within two years. This restructuring aims to reduce administrative costs and streamline the NHS's focus on digital transformation, including the development of the NHS App as a comprehensive digital front door by 2028. The move is intended to enhance efficiency and reinvest savings into frontline services.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/nhs-keir-starmer-wes-streeting-stephen-kinnock-england-b1189085.html> - Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has called for the NHS to better utilise technology, including plans to share patient data across all NHS hospitals, GP surgeries, and ambulance services in England. The initiative aims to create a single patient record accessible through the NHS App, summarising all health information, test results, and letters. While the plan seeks to improve efficiency, concerns about privacy and data protection have been raised.
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-takes-first-steps-to-fix-the-foundations-and-save-the-nhs> - The UK government has initiated reforms to strengthen the NHS, including a £22.6 billion increase in day-to-day spending and a £3.1 billion capital boost for the Department of Health and Social Care. These measures aim to reduce waiting times and rebuild the NHS, moving from hospital to community care, analogue to digital systems, and from treatment to prevention. The reforms are part of the government's 10-Year Health Plan to modernise the health service.