

[News story: NHS to save £1 billion on its medicines bill in 2019](#)

The NHS is expected to save around £930 million on its medicines bill across the UK under a new deal agreed with the pharmaceutical industry.

Patients will also have access to new medicines up to 6 months earlier.

The government and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) have reached a final agreement in [the voluntary scheme for branded medicines pricing and access](#), which will begin on 1 January 2019 and last for 5 years.

In 2019, the following savings are predicted for the NHS medicines bill:

- England: £744 million
- Scotland: £93 million
- Wales: £56 million
- Northern Ireland: £37 million

The scheme is designed to keep growth in the branded medicine bill predictable and affordable by placing a 2% cap on the growth in sales of branded medicines to the NHS.

Pharmaceutical companies will repay the NHS for spending above the 2% cap.

Other measures to keep the cost of medicines affordable to the NHS include simplifying price controls, and faster and more flexible commercial discussions between the NHS and pharmaceutical companies.

The scheme will see the newest and best-value medicines made available to patients on the NHS more quickly through:

- earlier identification of the most promising medicines being developed
- earlier commercial discussions with industry
- faster assessments of the clinical and cost-effectiveness of new medicines by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

The agreement is also designed to ensure the UK remains an attractive hub for the life sciences sector, part of [the government's Industrial Strategy](#).

Health Minister Lord O'Shaughnessy said:

The final deal is great news for patients and the NHS – the best and most affordable medicines will be available up to 6 months earlier and we will save almost a billion pounds next year which can be put back into other crucial services.

It is a vote of confidence in our world-leading life sciences sector and outlines our commitment to support small and medium-sized business to bring their innovative treatments to the NHS.

Mike Thompson, Chief Executive of the ABPI, said:

It's great that the full agreement is now confirmed – it is a commitment by the government and the NHS to work with us to support innovation for the benefit of patients. This means that people across the UK should see better and faster access to the most effective new medicines and vaccines.

Under the scheme the NHS will have absolute certainty that the sales of branded medicines will not grow by more than 2% in any of the next 5 years – or industry refunds the money. This is a significant contribution by pharmaceutical companies to support the NHS.

[Speech: UK statement to ICC Assembly of States Parties 17th session](#)

Mr President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates.

It is a great privilege to address this Assembly on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom.

We are grateful to His Excellency President O-Gon Kwon for leading the work of the Assembly, and to the Court's principals – the President, Registrar, and the Prosecutor – for steering the Court through this landmark year of the twentieth anniversary of the Rome Statute.

While we remember the historic origins of the ICC, and the atrocities that preceded it, there has never been a more important time to reflect on the Court and its work. The United Kingdom over the last 20 years has been, and continues to be, a supporter of the Court. We are not just a supporter with words, but also practical assistance. We are one of the highest contributors to the Budget and to the Trust Fund for Victims, to which we have donated over 4 million Euros since its inception. We have also donated to the Trust Fund for Family Visits and we continue to provide practical cooperation and assistance to the Court, including in active Investigations and Preliminary Examinations.

We do these things to strengthen the Court in the execution of its mandate agreed in Rome, twenty years ago. We believe in the vital importance of the

rule of law and of accountability for gross violations of human rights and the laws of war. That will always be our position. The United Kingdom is determined to see the perpetrators of atrocities brought to justice; it is vital for lasting peace. That is why we are playing a leading role supporting justice and accountability efforts in Syria, Iraq, and Burma.

But as a State that supports the Court, it is important that we also speak plainly about the concerns we have. A founding principle of the Court is complementarity. The Court is not there to second guess, still less to review, the decisions of competent, functioning national systems of justice. Justice should in principle be done at the state level. The Court should step in only where States are genuinely unable or unwilling to do so themselves. We believe the Court must reaffirm and apply the principle of complementarity in all it does.

And similarly, the Court has no mandate, and no jurisdiction, nor will it ever have nearly enough capacity, to act as a human rights monitoring organisation for the whole world. It must focus on its core and essential task, set out under the Statute.

If it acts otherwise, it risks eroding the confidence States have in the Court and the integrity of the system. It adds to the Court's ever-growing backlog of cases. And it increases the length of time taken for Investigations and Preliminary Examinations – some of which are as old as the Court itself. This situation is not sustainable. The Court must urgently adopt a closure strategy for its cases, including timelines and targets for preliminary examinations, investigations and trials. We strongly encourage the continuation, and expansion, of the Performance Indicators project, an essential management and governance tool.

Mr President,

Moreover it surely goes without saying that the Court must act in accordance with the highest possible standards of good governance and professionalism. So we welcome the steps taken by the Prosecutor to investigate the media allegations surrounding the former Prosecutor that surfaced twelve months ago. We urge her to complete speedily a comprehensive and transparent investigation and to report fully to the Assembly. This will be crucial to the credibility of the Office of the Prosecutor and the wider Court.

Mr President,

The Court's credibility also depends on budgetary discipline. At a time of fiscal prudence across many States Parties, we urge all organs of the Court to exercise budgetary discipline. The Court needs to generate greater efficiencies, strictly prioritising and redeploying resources where they are needed most and can result in concrete progress – prioritisation is not a dirty word! We want to see money spent on the right things. The Court is in danger of spending more money on internal litigation, including litigation on salaries, than on victims. This will do nothing to enhance the reputation of the Court outside its walls.

Finally, Mr President,

The Court has many critics, including in States which are not Parties to the Statute. Some of their criticism is strident and in our judgement, misplaced, and we do not share it. But there are also thoughtful and measured critiques of the Court which are offered with the best interests of the Court at heart. That is where we are. The United Kingdom strongly supports the aims of the ICC and believes there is an essential role for an international institution like the Court in delivery of justice at the international level.

But as an Assembly of States Parties to the Statute, we cannot bury our heads in the sand and pretend everything is fine when it isn't. The statistics are sobering. After 20 years, and 1.5 billion Euros spent we have only three core crime convictions. As others have said, and I quote "it is undeniable that the Rome project still falls short of the expectations of the participants at that ground-breaking conference in Rome". The time has come for States to take a fundamental look at how the Court is operating. We need to work together to address the challenges, for the future health of the Court, a Court that we care about deeply. The United Kingdom stands ready to play a leading role as a friend of the ICC.

News story: JCCC's commemorations team complete unprecedented levels of dedication during centenary year

The final burial and rededication services of the year have taken place, but the work doesn't stop there for the commemorations team within the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services. In fact, the team are equally active between November and March before they travel across the globe ensuring the services currently planned for those who lost their lives during the 2 World Wars are held with the dignity and honour that they rightly deserve, there are approximately 500,000 fallen servicemen still undiscovered.

Despite up to a century passing since they fell the remains of British servicemen are still found today, often in farmers' fields or following civil engineering works. When discoveries are made, the team start the journey of attempting to identify the individual, trace their living relatives before organising a full military funeral service in commemoration. Due to accessibility to research material and the popularity of family genealogy, the team has witnessed a rise in the number of rededication cases submitted identifying previously unknown graves.

2018 – A year like no other

These last 12 months will live long in the memories of those dedicated few who make up the small team of Gloucester-based 'war detectives' a term now regularly used to describe the work of the commemorations team. It was anticipated that this year was going to be demanding, in the lead up to the centenary marking the end of World War 1 in November, however, the scale of public interest surpassed all expectation.

Tracey Bowers, JCCC's Commemorations Team Lead said:

This has been an extremely busy, successful and enjoyable year for the commemorations team. More cases than ever have been concluded and we have had some tremendous feedback both from stakeholders and families.

This year, to cope with the increase in cases and the significance of the World War 1 Centenary, we took the decision to extend our ceremony window and conduct services well into November. Luckily the weather was glorious, and the moving services we delivered justified this decision.

This year had an equal split of 17 burials and 17 rededications spanning 6 European countries. These include a [service](#) with Defence Minister, Tobias Ellwood in attendance, who praised the work of the JCCC on Good Morning Britain.

Defence Minister Tobias Ellwood delivers a reading during a service, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

In April a burial service in Belgium for [Captain Walker](#), a New Zealand national serving with the British Army, was attended by his family as well as the current headmaster of his school who all travelled from Australia and New Zealand to be there.

The current headmaster of Captain Walker's school lays a school tie on his headstone, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

One of the most moving moments of the year occurred at the rededication service for [Private Lacey Tingle](#) whose 96 year old sister attended having been informed that nearly 74 years after her brother had disappeared, his grave had finally been found.

Private Tingle's sister, Margaret Keighley receives the Union Flag from Sergeant Gordon Judge, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Private Tingle's family wrote after the service:

We would like to say a huge thank you to you for all the care and dedication you have shown us. We are still amazed at the marvellous

job you all at the JCCC do. It is beyond words how much it means to us to know Lacey's final resting place.

From the perspective of the regiments, being part of a service to honour a fallen comrade is more than just the day job, as 1 commanding officer commented following his attendance at a recent service:

As a regular with 19 years of experience, I confess I had no previous awareness whatsoever of the 'historic' role which the JCCC undertake, offering genuine end to end service for our service men and women. I thought I would write to express my thanks at such a well conducted trip both practically (seamless conveyance) and purposely (an incredible appreciative family, bursting to tell everyone who knew them of MOD's JCCC and their personalised experience).

Activity undertaken in winter and looking ahead into 2019

Due to the wintry weather causing the ground to be unsuitable for conducting services, the commemorations team spend time extensively researching cases. This will include visits to the National Army Museum, National Archives and various other research facilities. Also, they plan for the forthcoming year liaising with the regiments and diarising upcoming ceremonies.

Between March and July 2019, it is anticipated that the team will have ceremonies for 20 cases, the majority of these taking place in France and Belgium. More services are being scheduled up to November.

For a quick overview of this year's achievements by the Commemorations Team then view the [JCCC by numbers](#) (PDF, 198KB, 1 page) 2018 infographic.

[Press release: DVLA staff raise over £50,000 for Maggie's Swansea](#)



Representatives from Maggie's Swansea, including Leon Britton of Swansea City Football Club, accept the cheque for £56,715 from DVLA's Chief Executive Julie Lennard (centre)

Maggie's Swansea is based in Singleton Hospital and offers free practical, emotional and social support to people with cancer as well as their families and friends.

Staff chose Maggie's Swansea as [DVLA's annual charity of choice](#) and raised the grand total for 2018 through a range of activities and fundraising events, ranging from raffles, sweepstakes, and cake sales to cycling the Bolivian Death Road and climbing Snowdon. The 'Music for Maggie's' concerts, in which DVLA's very own choir impressed with their renditions of well-known songs, alone raised around £4,000 through the sale of tickets to DVLA staff and members of the public.

Julie Lennard, DVLA Chief Executive, said:

I am proud that once again our staff have given up so much of their spare time throughout the year to raise thousands of pounds in support of a local charity. Our staff chose Maggie's Swansea due to the unique programme of information, practical and emotional support they provide to anyone affected by cancer. I am delighted that we were able to raise so much for them.

Sarah Hughes, Maggie's Swansea Centre Head, said:

As a local and small charity, Maggie's Swansea is completely reliant on the generosity of the local public and we were thrilled to be selected as DVLA's charity of choice. We have been delighted with the enthusiasm, creative fundraising ideas and support throughout this year. The money raised will contribute towards the costs of the free professional services we offer our centre visitors.

We have approximately 1,200 visits each month and whether it is support from our benefits advisor; a series of sessions with our clinical psychologist; support from our child counsellor or enabling us to run our bereavement courses the money raised will have a huge impact in 2019.

After the cheque presentation, Julie Lennard also announced that DVLA staff have voted [Tŷ Olwen](#) their new charity of choice for 2019.

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1. 17 December 2018 Added translation
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[News story: Ministry of Defence Police supports National Counter Terrorism Policing and promotes use of Project Servator at Christmas](#)

Counter Terrorism Policing's biggest ever winter advertising campaign for Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) launched on 19 November 2018, asking business, industry and members of the public to put security on the top of their 'must have' lists this Christmas.

The campaign aims to encourage the public to remain vigilant, look out for suspicious behaviour and inform people on how to report their concerns, providing a 'whole society' approach where police, security staff, retail workers and the public come together to minimise the chance of attacks and mitigate the impact they can have.

Counter Terrorism Policing have provided a 60 second security checklist for retailers, businesses and employers, in particular for those who operate in crowded places, urging them to think about their reaction to any potential emergencies.

The checklist includes:

- how do you enter and exit the building in an emergency?
- how do you lock down quickly?
- where can you hide?
- have you briefed your staff?

During the campaign launch the National Coordinator for Protect and Prepare, Chief Superintendent Nick Aldworth, said:

As people are enjoying the festive season they will see a visible security presence with police patrols and additional security in crowded places.

Unpredictable deployments across the UK will also provide an additional layer of protection, with specially trained uniformed and plain clothes officers working to deter, detect and disrupt hostile reconnaissance and encourage the public and businesses to be their extra eyes and ears and report anything that doesn't feel right.

Image: National Project Servator Team and Ministry of Defence Police. All

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The ongoing use of Project Servator tactics by the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) supports the objectives of the ACT festive campaign using community engagement, to encourage vigilance, as part of its unpredictable and highly visible deployments in and around the sites that it protects across the UK. Officers pop up at a range of locations including the busy public areas surrounding Defence HQ in Whitehall and the Naval Base in Portsmouth.

The MDP have, alongside other police forces and organisations, been promoting the ACT festive campaign on their social media channels, providing information on how to report suspicious activity online.

In addition, posters and graphics have been produced to support and promote Project Servator deployments throughout the coming weeks and these will also feature on police social media.

Chief Inspector Jeff Renton, Senior Police Officer at Whitehall and MDP's Protect and Prepare Force representative, said:

The ACT Christmas campaign promotes key messages on the importance of remaining vigilant and trusting your instincts, for all staff and members of the public, during the busy festive period. Project Servator is one of the tactics that the MDP uses to keep its communities safe by deterring, detecting and disrupting a range of criminal activity, including terrorism, whilst providing a reassuring presence in and around the sites that it protects across the UK.

The ACT Christmas campaign and Project Servator festive publicity materials are an effective way of highlighting the messaging to the public and further promoting the 'whole society' approach of coming together to combat terrorism. As their respective straplines and hashtags summarise: Action Counters Terrorism, Communities Defeat Terrorism, Together We've Got It Covered.

If you see something suspicious report it online using the [ACT secure online reporting form](#), tell one of our police officers or call 01371 854 444.

Please use 999 if an immediate response is required.

Find out more: