

Most Scots agree Scotland's Referendum should be made in Scotland

Most Scots think Holyrood, not Westminster, should have the right to decide whether to hold a second independence referendum, according to a new poll.

News story: Consultation launched on prescribing of gluten-free foods

The [consultation](#) follows NHS England's announcement this week of new guidance on the prescription of low value items such as travel vaccines, painkillers, and gluten-free (GF) foods.

It will consider ending the prescription of all gluten-free foods in primary care, with estimates suggesting this could save £25.7 million a year for the health service. An additional £10 million could be saved through patients no longer needing to attend GP appointments in order to get their gluten-free prescriptions.

Currently, staple gluten-free foods such as bread, flour and pasta are available on prescription to patients diagnosed with gluten sensitivity. Gluten-free foods have been given on prescription to these patients since the late 1960s when it was less easy to buy them. But gluten-free foods are now sold in many supermarkets and a wider range of naturally GF food types is also available.

Evidence from clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) has also shown that the NHS pays much more than the consumer for the same gluten-free products.

Health minister, Lord O'Shaughnessy said:

The NHS is one of the most efficient health services in the world, but we need to do more to ensure we get the best possible value for taxpayers' money. Changing the way we prescribe gluten-free food could make an important contribution to saving the NHS millions of pounds a year.

Many clinical commissioning groups have already stopped providing gluten free foods on prescription. Norwich and North Norfolk CCGs decided to end prescribing of GF foods, except in exceptional circumstances. Spend on gluten-free prescribing fell from £400,000 in 2015 to 2016, to just £21,000,

making more money available for other treatments.

Norfolk CCG reported no negative feedback on the decision, with their patients saying they didn't have any problems accessing gluten-free foods since the ending of prescriptions. The decision in Norfolk was also well received by GPs, and by members of the public, who were often surprised to hear that gluten-free food had ever been available on NHS prescription.

Differing approaches to prescribing GF foods has created variation across CCGs. The consultation looks at a new, national approach, creating consistency in gluten-free prescribing across the country.

Press release: Ordnance Survey sets out to enhance its aerial mapping technologies

Ordnance Survey (OS) has signed an agreement with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), negotiated by its technology transfer arm, Ploughshare Innovations, to allow it to licence various forms of cutting edge aerial mapping technology.

The main technologies covered by the licence will enable the rapid processing, classification, analysis and extraction of geographic content from satellite and aerial images. The capability could facilitate the efficient production of new types of mapping content of the natural and man-made environments.

Paul Cruddace, OS Technical Change and Innovation Manager said:

We are always looking for opportunities to improve and increase our data capture and processing capabilities – creating new approaches to generating geospatial content. In accessing and applying technology of this nature, the hope is that it will allow us to further optimise our current operations as well as provide new capabilities and geospatial content to current and future customers.

It is a great opportunity to partner Dstl. For over two centuries, OS has continuously invested and innovated in new ways to map the environment. We are looking forward to exploring, trialling and hopefully adopting the latest innovations from Dstl and I am excited to see how they can enhance our processes and geospatial

content to provide our customers with premier mapping services.

Ploughshare's CEO James Kirby added:

This is the latest contract that we have signed which supports the use of technologies developed by the defence and security sectors in other areas. The technology has the potential to improve the speed that maps can be prepared and to enhance their accuracy.

This licencing agreement will enable Ordnance Survey to assess the technologies initially, in order to determine the potential efficiency benefits and enhancements they offer to gathering mapping data, prior to taking a full license.

Plan confirms that May's Government has broken its promise by failing to give the NHS the funding it needs – Jonathan Ashworth

Jonathan

Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the publication of

***NHS England's Next Steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View* said:**

"NHS

England's Five Year Forward View update contains welcome ambitions around mental health and cancer care that Labour endorses. However reading between the lines this plan confirms that Theresa May's Government has broken its promise by failing to give the NHS the funding it needs. The plan admits the public are 'concerned' for the future of the NHS and that the health service is under 'real pressure' to cope with rising demand within the current spending envelope.

"Labour has warned repeatedly that the NHS funding squeeze imposed by the Government is damaging standards of patient care. Now the Forward View confirms

that the main 4 hour A&E target won't be met for at least the next year. Waiting lists are growing as a direct result of the financial crisis. The collapse in standards in the past year has been nothing short of astonishing.

“What’s more the plan confirms more and more rationing of treatments is taking place across the NHS.

“One of the biggest problems laid out by the new NHS plan is the massive workforce challenge for the health service. We welcome NHS England reinforcing Labour’s calls for the Government to guarantee the status of European health staff as soon as possible. Sadly Jeremy Hunt has no plan whatsoever to help the NHS through the challenge of Brexit and is being enormously complacent about the impact for the NHS. The Government need to be much clearer about how they will guarantee there are enough staff in place in the health service to keep patients safe for the years to come.”

Wales leading in UK on neurological care measures

Launching the Annual Statement of Progress on Neurological Conditions, Vaughan Gething said:

“No other UK nation has attempted to measure patient experience and outcomes across both stroke and neurological conditions before.

“The aim is to have a Patient Recorded Experience Measure and a Patient Recorded Outcome Measure which can be administered, collected and collated on a national level.

“We will continue to develop and evaluate these high-quality measures over the next year and use this data to identify where services need to be improved, evaluate changes to our services and measure improvements over time.”

The Patient Recorded Outcome Measure aims to determine patients’ feelings on their symptoms, their ability to function and how their health affects their quality of life.

The Patient Recorded Experience Measure will determine patients’ feelings about their care, being treated with dignity and respect, the personal impact of any delays to treatment and measure these against their expectations.

The progress statement also outlines:

- a gradual reduction in the average length of time neurological patients spend in hospital, falling from 6.4 days in 2010-11 to 4.2 days in

2015-16

- a 65% increase in spending on neurooogical conditions between 2010-11 and 2014-15 to £283.7million
- £1.2m that has been invested in improving neuro-rehabilitation services across Wales

Vaughan Gething said:

“Increasing numbers of people need to use neurological services, and health boards are improving the services they offer. I’m determined that we will continue to work to improve care for neurological patients and these measures will form a key part of this work.”