**NHS NETWORKS weekly news stories: 23rd June 2019**  
  
[PCN briefcast: your questions answered](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/pcn-briefcast-your-questions-answered)  
In our latest podcast, former federation business manager and practice manager Tracy Green answers some of the basic questions you and your team may have.   
  
13:44pm, 21 June 2019  
[Carers’ breaks: guidance for commissioners and providers](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/carers2019-breaks-guidance-for-commissioners-and-providers)  
New guidance from SCIE and Carers UK sets out how social care and health commissioners and providers can extend and improve regular breaks for carers and the family and friends they support.   
  
13:42pm, 21 June 2019  
[NHS England announces three new integrated care systems (ICS)](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/nhs-england-announces-three-new-integrated-care-systems-ics)  
NHS England has designated three new areas integrated care systems. ICS now cover 21 million people in England – around a third of the population  
  
13:41pm, 21 June 2019  
[Deadline for submission of local variations](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/deadline-for-submission-of-local-variations)  
Under the 2019/20 national tariff, commissioners have a duty to submit details of agreed national tariff variations to NHS Improvement.   
  
13:40pm, 21 June 2019  
[Guide Dogs release free sighted guiding resources for all](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/guide-dogs-release-free-sighted-guiding-resources-for-all)  
Visual impairment charity Guide Dogs has recently released a set of sighted guiding videos.  
  
12:06pm, 20 June 2019  
[Practice mergers, super-partnerships and networks - understanding your options](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/practice-mergers-super-partnerships-and-networks-understanding-your-options-1)  
General practices can no longer afford to take a go-it-alone approach if they hope to survive. As the NHS Long Term Plan makes clear, the welcome injection of new money for general practice is conditional on practices being prepared to work at scale.   
  
12:04pm, 20 June 2019  
[Designing integrated care systems (ICS) in England](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/designing-integrated-care-systems-ics-in-england)  
NHS England has issued a guide to the different levels of management that make up an integrated care system, describing their core functions, their rationale and how they will work together.  
  
12:01pm, 20 June 2019  
[Top surgeon appointed first NHS clinical director for violence reduction](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/top-surgeon-appointed-first-nhs-clinical-director-for-violence-reduction)  
The NHS has appointed its first clinical director for violence reduction to help prevent stabbings and other violent crime.   
  
12:00pm, 20 June 2019  
[Improvement case studies from eight independent hospitals](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/improvement-case-studies-from-eight-independent-hospitals)  
The CQC has published a report on hospital improvement programmes which presents eight case studies based on interviews with staff from eight independent hospitals.   
  
11:58am, 20 June 2019  
[Care staff abused on sleep-in shifts](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/care-staff-abused-on-sleep-in-shifts)  
A report from the public sector union Unison finds that care staff on overnight shifts are often subjected to abuse, including being punched and threatened with knives.   
  
11:56am, 20 June 2019  
[Quicker access to the summary care record for community pharmacies](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/quicker-access-to-the-summary-care-record-for-community-pharmacies)  
Single-click access to the summary care record has been enabled to make it easier for pharmacists to access vital patient information.   
  
20:01pm, 19 June 2019  
[Medical contracts - do you vary or procure?](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/medical-contracts-do-you-vary-or-procure-3)  
Commissioners of primary medical services contracts are frequently faced with changes to contracting parties and contractual obligations.   
  
19:59pm, 19 June 2019  
[Primary care networks: a briefing for pharmacy teams](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/primary-care-networks-a-briefing-for-pharmacy-teams)  
This briefing document provides information on supporting primary care network for pharmacy teams.  
  
19:58pm, 19 June 2019  
[NHS prepares to fast-track cancer drugs that target genetic mutations](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/nhs-prepares-to-fast-track-cancer-drugs-that-target-genetic-mutations)  
The NHS is preparing to fast-track the introduction of new cancer drugs that target tumours according to their genetic make-up rather than where they originate in the body.   
  
19:52pm, 19 June 2019  
[Blood, tissue and cell donor selection criteria report: 2017](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/blood-tissue-and-cell-donor-selection-criteria-report-2017)  
This report from the advisory committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) recommends reducing a number of deferral periods, the time between engaging in certain behaviours and donating blood, tissue or cells.  
  
19:50pm, 19 June 2019  
[Investing in the NHS long-term plan](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/investing-in-the-nhs-long-term-plan)  
A briefing from think tank the Health Foundation analyses the challenges now facing health and social care and looks at the implications of the plan for activity levels and workforce in the NHS in England.   
  
19:49pm, 19 June 2019  
[Too many avoidable deaths from eating disorders](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/too-many-avoidable-deaths-from-eating-disorders)  
In December 2017, the parliamentary and health service ombudsman (PHSO) published a report concluding that NHS eating disorder services are failing patients.   
  
18:36pm, 18 June 2019  
[New roles in general practice: the clinical pharmacist](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/new-roles-in-general-practice-the-clinical-pharmacist)  
Of the two new roles to be funded under the network contract DES from July, the clinical pharmacist is already quite well established thanks to two national schemes to put them to work in general practice and care home settings.   
  
18:35pm, 18 June 2019  
[Getting community pharmacies involved with primary care networks](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/getting-community-pharmacies-involved-with-primary-care-networks)  
NHS England has issued a briefing for local pharmaceutical committees (LPCs) to involve contractors in primary care networks.  
  
18:33pm, 18 June 2019  
[Bids invited for health data research and innovation centres](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/bids-invited-for-health-data-research-and-innovation-centres-1)  
A £22 million competition has opened to create up to five hubs to pioneer the use of health data for research and innovation.   
  
14:39pm, 17 June 2019  
[Get to grips with the Policy and Guidance Manual - updated 2019](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/get-to-grips-with-the-policy-and-guidance-manual-updated-2019)  
In May NHS England updated the Policy and Guidance Manual. The manual for medical contracting provides essential information for contracting teams responsible for GMS, PMS and APMS, the primary medical services contracts.   
  
14:38pm, 17 June 2019  
[Validation process for mental health investment standard](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/validation-process-for-mental-health-investment-standard)  
NHS England has issued guidance to the validation process for CCGs to demonstrate their 2018/19 year-end position on meeting the mental health investment standard.  
  
14:36pm, 17 June 2019  
[NHS England seeks feedback from commissioners on childhood obesity strategy](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/nhs-england-seeks-feedback-from-commissioners-on-childhood-obesity-strategy)  
NHS England’s specialised commissioning team wants to hear from local commissioners who could help to review the draft clinical pathway for surgical and medical management of severe childhood obesity.  
  
14:34pm, 17 June 2019  
[NHS Improvement figures show progress by hospitals](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/nhs-improvement-figures-show-progress-by-hospitals)  
NHS hospitals in England provided more urgent treatment and routine operations than ever before last year, according to figures from NHS Improvement.   
  
14:32pm, 17 June 2019  
[NHS waiting times for elective and cancer treatment](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/networks/news/nhs-waiting-times-for-elective-and-cancer-treatment)  
A parliamentary report finds that increasing numbers of patients are being let down by the NHS’s failure to meet deadlines for waiting times.