

23 JUNE 2026

Regional Health Scrutiny Update

Summary

The Committee is requested to consider an update on the work of the regional health scrutiny committees. Some recent health-related developments impacting on the Tees Valley and / or wider North East and North Cumbria footprint are also highlighted.

Detail

Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

1. Middlesbrough Council is hosting this Committee during 2026-2027.
2. The first Committee meeting of the new municipal year took place on 2 June 2026 where agenda items included:
 - Appointment of Chair (Cllr David Jackson) and Vice-Chair (deferred) for 2026-2027
 - Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2026 (see **Appendix 1**)
 - NHS England / Northern Neonatal Network: Delivery of Neonatal Care across North East and North Cumbria Region
 - University Hospitals Tees (UHT): Quality Account 2025-2026
 - University Hospitals Tees (UHT): Planned Workforce Reductions
 - Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV): Adult Eating Disorder Services Review

The next meeting was scheduled for 23 July 2026. Although the agenda was still to be confirmed, a request was made at the June 2026 meeting for an item to be included on access to specialist community perinatal mental health services.

Sustainability and Transformation Plan / Integrated Care System Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

3. Following a lengthy hiatus, Durham County Council (who supported this Joint Committee) contacted scrutiny teams across the region in November 2022 with the intention of arranging a meeting for late-November / early-December 2022. However, following liaison with senior NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) representatives, it was deemed that in light of the ongoing ICS briefings to the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, a meeting of this Joint Committee (which involved similar Councillors) was likely to be a duplication and would not add value.

4. In wider regional health matters, the NENC ICB has added a focus on **NHS dentistry** to its home page (see <https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>) – this link includes details on how to find routine dental services, getting urgent dental care, and being 'smile smart' (tips on protecting teeth and gums). Its Oral Health and Dental Strategy 2025-2027, the NENC ICB plan to improve oral health in the North East and North Cumbria, is also accessible.
5. The '**Here to help you**' webpage continues to provide information on choosing the right NHS service for your needs, keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet, or getting your vaccines. Plus, there is lots of health advice and local support information (see <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-you/>).
6. A pioneering North East mental health support service for health and care staff was named a regional champion in the NHS Excellence Awards. Funded by the NENC ICB and delivered by Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, the **North East and North Cumbria Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub** was honoured in the 'Valuing Our People' category in the awards' inaugural year (see <https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/north-east-staff-wellbeing-hub-named-regional-champion-in-nhs-excellence-awards/>).
7. Ahead of World Asthma Day (5 May), people across the North East and North Cumbria were encouraged to upgrade their old inhalers from 'blue to new' as part of a **major step forward in lung-health care**. The familiar blue reliever treatment, which had been used by millions of asthma patients for over five decades, was being upgraded to an improved anti-inflammatory reliever (combination) inhaler which not only relieved symptoms of asthma but also treated the underlying cause (see <https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/from-blue-to-new-patients-offered-upgrade-in-asthma-care/>).
8. An article in May 2026 reflected on **improved performance against the NHS four-hour treatment standard** despite Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments across the region facing their busiest month ever in March 2026 (see <https://www.northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/news/busiest-month-ever-but-aes-make-steady-improvement/>).
9. The NENC ICB is working with the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), Healthwatch, and other partners to **improve NHS patient transport services** and consider ways to make it fairer, clearer and more consistent. People who use patient transport in the North East, along with carers and family members, are encouraged to [take part in a survey](#) and share their experiences and views before any decisions are made. The survey is open until 3 July 2026.
10. The NENC ICB [2025/26 Annual Involvement Report](#) is now available. The report shares **what patients and the public told the NENC ICB about the services it commissions** and the changes it has been making. It also highlights the different ways people have been involved in the NENC ICBs work and the themes they raised.
11. Early-May 2026 marked an **important milestone for the NENC ICB** as it brought its transition programme to a close and started a new chapter as a strategic commissioning organisation. In line with national NHS guidance and the [Model ICB Blueprint](#), the NENC ICB had reduced both running and programme costs while reorganising to support its new role and operating model. The [five-year strategic commissioning plan](#) sets out how the NENC ICB will work with partners to plan and commission services for the 3.2 million people it serves, building on its shared ambition of [Better health and wellbeing for all](#).

12. More locally, a number of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust developments have been publicised in recent weeks (see <https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/>), including:
- A new perinatal pelvic health service (PPHS) has helped more than 450 women in a little under one year (May 2026)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/new-pelvic-health-service-helps-more-than-450-women-in-first-year/>
 - A Stockton man has been put forward as a finalist for a national award which recognises volunteers in the healthcare sector (May 2026)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/hospital-volunteer-shortlisted-for-award/>
 - Patients with suspected prostate cancer are being seen and diagnosed faster thanks to a new nurse-led biopsy service within the urology service at the University Hospital of North Tees (May 2026)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/new-nurse-led-biopsy-service-helping-to-speed-up-prostate-cancer-diagnosis/>
 - A hospital research team has been selected to be part of a national trial looking into a condition known as broken heart syndrome (May 2026)
<https://www.nth.nhs.uk/news/hospital-joins-national-trial-to-improve-treatment-for-broken-heart-syndrome/>

North East Regional Health Scrutiny Committee

13. No meetings are currently scheduled.

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