

NHS Property Services sets out advice to accelerate delivery of Neighbourhood Health Centres unlocking value within existing NHS estate

4 months ago



[NHS Property Services \(NHSPS\)](#) has published a report outlining practical and cost-effective advice for local NHS providers to deliver many of the proposed Neighbourhood Health Centres (NHCs) across England, part of the Government's NHS Neighbourhood Rebuild Programme.

The paper, "[Making Neighbourhood Health Centres a Reality: Optimising the Existing Estate](#)", responds to the Government's 10 Year Health Plan and its commitment to deliver at least 100 NHCs by 2030.

The centres are designed to bring together numerous health and wellbeing services under one roof, shifting care closer to communities and away from acute hospital settings, as outlined in the 10 Year Health Plan.

Nick Moberly, Chair of NHSPS, explained: "We believe the NHS can deliver Neighbourhood Health Centres faster and more affordably, by making better use of the estate it already owns.

"It's thought that only 40% of NHS space is currently being used effectively, so there stands a huge opportunity to refurbish and repurpose existing buildings to meet modern healthcare needs."

Guidance authored by estates experts

As well as focusing on fully utilising the existing estate through refurbishment and space optimisation

other key recommendations included in the 16-page paper include:

- Increasing utilisation by leveraging digital tools – including sensors (such as NHS Open Space) and extending operational hours to significantly improve productivity and patient access.
- Standardising delivery – by streamlining business cases, procurement, and space design, potentially reducing costs by up to 40% and accelerating delivery.
- Partnering locally – building on the strong relationships already in place and further collaboration between estates experts and local NHS teams, ensuring NHCs meet community needs and deliver value for money.

The report shares examples of how the NHS is already delivering similar projects such as NHSPS' 450 healthcare projects since 2020, including the reconfiguration of 11 properties in under 12 months to create capacity for over 210,000 additional patient appointments.

It also references the organisation's strong local relationships, enabling the property experts to provide tailored support to ICBs, providers, Trusts and systems who may struggle to find the resource and capability in house to deliver these locally.

A Smarter, More Sustainable NHS Estate

NHSPS is already rolling out property technology across its portfolio, such as utilisation sensors and NHS Open Space, its sessional booking platform, to support smarter, more sustainable buildings. These innovations are central to the NHC model, enabling flexible, multi-functional spaces that adapt to evolving healthcare needs and bring together services where the patient needs them.

“Neighbourhood Health Centres represent the future of community care,” adds Nick Moberly. “By using what we already have more intelligently, we can deliver better outcomes for patients, faster and more sustainably.”

The report also acknowledges a desire to shift decision making to local communities, and suggests that a consistent overarching approach is still required for NHCs to be delivered successfully, with agreed policies and delivery standards designed to give the public clear expectations of what an NHC should deliver for them and avoiding the potential risk of 40 different approaches which don't meet their needs.

Martin Steele, Chief Executive Officer at NHS Property Services added: “We are confident that this paper presents a set of valuable and unique insights and recommendations that will help to deliver the proposals set out by the Government.

“We have already conducted analysis that shows many potential properties that could be transformed into NHCs and we stand ready to support local NHS organisations to deliver these.

“We look forward to hearing feedback from our stakeholders following its publication and welcome their comments and ongoing engagement, which will enable us to help bring the vital neighbourhood aspect of the Ten-Year Health Plan to life.”