

Policy Digest March 2026

This policy digest provides links to items of interest produced by Healthwatch Northumberland partners and stakeholders and other organisations in the wider health and social care field. To help with prioritisation we have classified the items using the following key:

- 1** Important to HWN strategic aims **2** Of interest to HWN **3** Wider interest

Social Care

- 1 **Casey Commission on Social Care** - [Baroness Casey](#) gave a keynote speech on her commission's first year and has written to the Secretary of State with 3 key asks to transform social care quickly.
- 2 **CQC and local authority inspections** - latest iteration of the [CQC inspection framework](#).
- 1 **Transition to adult services** - the parliamentary Health & Social Care Committee is establishing an [Independent Expert Panel](#) to investigate what happens and goes wrong when children reach the threshold for adult services.

Health

- 1 **Neighbourhood Health** - the [Neighbourhood Health Framework](#) has been published. This is a major part of the 10 Year Plan's '3 shifts'.
- 1 **GP contract** - HWE response to the new [GP contract](#).
- 1 **Corridor Care** - attached report about the implications of providing care in temporary settings.
- 2 **NHS Staff Survey** - latest [NHS Staff Survey](#) highlighting staff experiences and stresses.

Communication and Engagement

- 1 **Healthwatch England report** - [Healthwatch England](#) report on the 'state of care'. Although our shared experiences are not quoted (again), the examples and issues given are recognisable.

Northumberland

- 1 **CNTW update** - [CNTW](#) has revised its service strategy and plans to align with the 10 Year Plan and associated Planning Frameworks.

- 1 **CQC Report – Acomb court** – this is the latest [CQC report](#) on Acomb Court which we visited in 2025.
- 1 **NENC ICB update** – latest update from the [Chief Executive](#) of the NENC ICB.