

PATIENT SAFETY COMMISSIONER BUSINESS PLAN 2025-26

Introduction

This sets out the proposed strategic priorities and activities of the Patient Safety Commissioner (PSC) and her office in line with her statutory responsibility under the Commissioner for Patient Safety (Appointment and Operation) (England) Regulations 2022.

Context

Since January 2025 the Office has been operating within a reduced headcount due to a pause on recruitment to vacancies (including the vacant Chief of Staff role), pending the outcome of Dr Penny Dash's review of the patient safety landscape.

The first 3-year term of the Patient Safety Commissioner came to an end in September 2025, and Professor Henrietta Hughes was reappointed in September to serve for a second 3-year term. The Commissioner has published a paper setting out the impact that the Patient Safety Commissioner role has made over the first three years.

Strategic Priorities

In July 2025 Dr Penny Dash's review of the patient safety landscape was published¹. The review recommended that the hosting arrangement of the PSC should be transferred to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which has direct responsibility to monitor medicines and medical devices. The review stated this move would:

- Offer improved clarity about where responsibility for the voice of patients lies when it comes to the safety of medicines and medical devices
- Build on MHRA's current work to capture adverse events more effectively (such as through use of technology)

The Government has accepted this recommendation. Therefore, a key strategic work priority for the Patient Safety Commissioner in 2025-26 is to work collaboratively with the DHSC and MHRA to design the new hosting arrangements in a way that ensures the Patient Safety Commissioner is able to discharge its statutory functions effectively, maintain independence, and continue to champion the views of patients in respect of medicines and medical devices within the new operating structures.

Work will be required to understand the implications of transferring the hosting arrangements, including the costs. As part of the transition arrangements, the DHSC sponsor team for PSC is moving from the Patient Safety Directorate to the MedTech and Innovation Directorate.

The strategic priority to help DHSC deliver this recommendation will need to be carried out alongside the business as usual of the PSC, promoting improvements in the safety of medicines and medical devices and ensuring the centrality of the voices of patients and the public.

¹ [Review of patient safety across the health and care landscape - GOV.UK](#)

Priority activities and key milestones

Priority activities and key milestones are summarised below.

In addition, business as usual activities will be maintained throughout - including finance, correspondence, office management, website, social media & comms, regular stakeholder meetings including with the DHSC sponsor team, Commissioner speaking engagements and visits. The PSC will continue to provide responses to inquiries and ministerial requests.

Q1

- Move out of 18 Smith Square office space (due to lease ending and uncertainty pending Dash review (May)
- Meeting of the PSC Advisory Group (May)
- PSC Annual Report 2025-25 laid before Parliament and published on website (June)

Q2

- Meeting of the PSC Advisory Group (July)
- Begin work on transition arrangements to transfer PSC hosting to MHRA. PSC is a member of and will engage fully with the transfer implementation group chaired by DHSC (ongoing)
- PSC publishes the PSC Impact paper (September) (<https://www.patientsafetycommissioner.org.uk/our-reports/psc-impact/>)
- New contract in place for the PSC website (August)

Q3

- Work with MHRA to plan for the physical move to MHRA's office in Canary Wharf, London, ensuring appropriate private space to safeguard independence of PSC's role (ongoing)
- Stand down membership of existing Advisory Group (Dec)
- Recruitment exercise to fill vacancies
- PSC appointed Deputy Chair of the National Commission of Regulation of AI in Healthcare
- Commence work on governance and sponsorship arrangements for the new hosting arrangements including working with MHRA to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding between MHRA and PSC, and input to changes to the existing DHSC/MHRA framework agreement

Q4

- New governance and accountability arrangements within the new operating environment finalised, established and operational
- PSC office fully staffed
- Review/refresh of PSC Advisory Group
- New strategy developed (once Chief of Staff in post)

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