

*From the Office of Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE  
Chief Executive of the NHS in England*



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**To:**

All chairs of strategic health authorities  
All chairs of primary care trusts

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Dear Colleague

**PLANNING FOR A SECURE TRANSITION TO THE NEW HEALTH AND CARE SYSTEM**

As we are entering the final phase of transition to the new health and care system, I want to take this opportunity to thank you personally for the professional commitment you have brought to your specific roles and to the wider NHS. Undoubtedly the high quality leadership demonstrated by SHAs and PCTs has played a huge part in us getting to this stage of the process whilst maintaining performance in the current system.

I believe that we are now very well placed to deliver a smooth transition to the new systems and structures by securing the current system, ensuring its resilience and providing continuity of leadership for functions transferring to new bodies. This wouldn't be possible without your strategic vision and commitment to putting the best interests of NHS services above all else.

To say that this process has been challenging at times is, of course, a huge under-statement. Although we have all been responsible for complex change projects in the past, none of us have dealt with anything on this scale before. We have reached a crucial stage in the process and the new system must now gear up for the challenges it faces. To succeed it will continue to need your support more than ever and I am very grateful for that which has been given so willingly.

Today I have written to leaders across the system setting out the next major step in the transition process, outlining how I will work with SHA and PCT Chairs and Chief Executives to agree robust local arrangements. This should be the last significant organisational change prior to April 2013. It will have considerable impact on PCT Chief Executives and Boards and will present a huge leadership challenge. I know I can rely on your continuing commitment to working in the best interests of the NHS during transition to ensure its successful implementation. Together I am confident we can achieve the secure and smooth transition we all want to see for our patients, staff and the communities we serve.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Nicholson'.

**Sir David Nicholson, KCB CBE  
NHS Chief Executive**