



Summary minutes: Fifth meeting of the National Commission into the Regulation of AI in Healthcare (23rd February 2026)

Background:

The National Commission into the Regulation of AI in Healthcare was announced on 26th September 2025 as an independent, non-statutory advisory group hosted by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, (MHRA). Its purpose is to advise on creating a new regulatory framework for AI products in healthcare, supporting the ambition for Great Britain to be the fastest and safest place to regulate AI and software as a medical device.

The Commission will meet monthly until May 2026 and is tasked with publishing recommendations by summer 2026.

Summary of the discussion:

- The meeting opened with a welcome from the chair, who thanked commissioners for attending. The Chair confirmed that all four of the National Commission's working groups had recently met to discuss the producer and developers' role, noting that feedback had been incorporated into the paper.
- Commissioners then considered the paper which outlined proposals for a theoretical "earned autonomy" model. This considered whether, in principle, developers or manufactures with a strong track record of responsible practice could benefit from a more streamlined pre-market regulatory process. The Chair emphasised that the proposal was intended to stimulate forward-looking discussions around possible future regulatory frameworks, but was not under active development.
- In relation to the proposal, members expressed a range of views on the merits and feasibility of such a scheme. They explored possible implementation options, how a model would interact with existing regulatory processes, and factors that might affect how practical it would be to introduce. Members highlighted that this would depend on the quality of the provider's post-market surveillance. This means having strong systems for ongoing monitoring to assess how products perform once they are in real-world use. They also discussed the role of organisational culture and digital capability, alongside post market surveillance. Together, these factors would play a critical role in determining how such a mechanism could operate.
- It was recognised that regulating AI-driven devices is unlikely to be achieved through small changes to the current system, which is already under significant strain. The proposed model could, in theory, support proportionate oversight of fast-changing, AI-driven products by reducing unnecessary repetition for organisations with sustained, high-quality governance capabilities.
- Members agreed that any assessment of whether the potential benefits would outweigh the associated costs and risks would ultimately depend on the final design of such a scheme - most notably the criteria used to assess and monitor responsible practices and the level of autonomy granted. It was stressed that any new regulatory model would require a clearly articulated problem statement, including clarity on the counterfactual risks it aims to avoid.



- A representative from the MHRA then shared an update on the AI Commission Summit taking place in March. Designed to bring commissioners and working group representatives together, the event will provide an opportunity to collaborate and discuss forthcoming priorities. The programme for the event includes findings from the Call for Evidence, updates from the research and engagement activities, and guest lectures.
- The Deputy Chair and Patient Safety Commissioner then provided an update on the upcoming 'Ask Me Anything' event, which will offer a public forum for patients and the public to engage directly with the Commission's leadership and raise any questions or concerns.
- Commissioners then received a brief update on the National Commission's wider research and engagement programme, including early insights from the Call for Evidence, preparations for the upcoming public deliberative workshops, and ongoing engagement with professional stakeholder groups. Members provided feedback on the specific regulatory approaches and use cases that would be valuable to test with the public.
- Members were then given an opportunity to offer their reflections on three policy reports covering trends in frontier AI capabilities and ongoing safety developments. The Chair welcomed the policy digest paper and noted that the Commission will be considering how to approach agentic AI at its April meeting.
- The Chair closed the meeting by thanking commissioners for their contributions and confirming that insights from the discussion would inform ongoing policy development following the National Commission's final recommendations.



Attendance:

Professor Alastair Denniston (Chair), Professor of Regulatory Science and Innovation, University of Birmingham; Honorary Consultant Ophthalmologist, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust; Executive Director, Centre of Excellence for Regulatory Science in AI & Digital HealthTech (CERSI-AI)

Professor Henrietta Hughes (Deputy Chair and Chair of Health Systems Working Group), Patient Safety Commissioner

Professor Neil Lawrence (Chair of Technology Working Group), DeepMind Professor of Machine Learning, University of Cambridge; Chief Scientist, Trent AI

Professor Cathie Sudlow (Chair of Devolved Authorities Working Group), Head of School of Population Health Sciences, University of Edinburgh and Director of UKRI Adolescent Health Study

Dr Brian Anderson, Chief Executive Officer, Coalition for Health AI (CHAI)

Dr. Ricardo Baptista Leita, CEO, HealthAI - The Global Agency for Responsible AI in Health

Dame Jennifer Dixon, Chief Executive, The Health Foundation

Dr Paul Goldsmith, Non-Executive Director MHRA; Chair, MHRA's Regulatory and Safety Committee; visiting Professor, Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College London; Consultant Neurologist, Clinical Senate

Dr Vish Ratnasuriya MBE, General Practitioner; Chair, Our Health Partnership; Co-Founder, Primary Care Accelerator; Honorary Associate Professor, University of Birmingham

Dr Gabriella Spinelli, Director, RADIANT-CERSI Centre for Regulatory Science & Innovation in Digital Health & Healthcare AI, Brunel University London

Dr Barry Stein, Chief Clinical Innovation Officer; Chief Medical Informatics Officer; Founder, Center for AI Innovation in Healthcare; Attending Vascular and Interventional Radiologist, Hartford HealthCare, Connecticut, USA

Mr Richard Stubbs, Chief Executive, Health Innovation Yorkshire & Humber

Apologies:

Adj. Prof. Raymond Chua, Chief Executive Officer, Health Sciences Authority; Deputy Director-General of Health (Health Regulation), Ministry of Health (Singapore)

Professor Richard Susskind CBE KC, President of the Society for Computers and Law, Special Envoy for Justice and AI to the Secretary General of the Commonwealth