

## Starmer Sets Out Vision to Move National Health Service Care Closer to Communities

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Prime Minister Keir Starmer has outlined a significant shift in how the National Health Service will deliver care, announcing plans to move many services out of hospitals and into newly established neighborhood health centers.

The strategy, presented during a visit to a General Practitioner (GP) surgery in Essex, aims to transform the NHS into a more community-focused system, emphasizing early intervention, integrated support, and reduced hospital pressure.

The proposal centers on creating a network of neighborhood health centers across England, where general practitioners, nurses, mental health professionals, physiotherapists, and social care staff will work side by side.

The government plans to open neighborhood health centers that serve as one-stop hubs for care. These centers aim to give patients access to various services without requiring a hospital visit. The focus is on catching health issues earlier, improving outcomes, and lowering the number of people who use emergency departments for non-urgent problems.

Starmer called the current reliance on hospitals outdated and unsustainable. He said that too much NHS care responds only after conditions become serious. The government plans to shift the system toward prevention and local support to ease pressure on hospitals and improve patient experience and efficiency.

Health Secretary Wes Streeting backed Starmer's message. He said the new centers offer a more modern approach to care and could help close regional gaps in access. He added that funding would come from targeted investment and savings generated by the NHS reform. The plan also includes expanded recruitment and training to ensure enough staff can support the centers.

Medical groups such as the Royal College of General Practitioners gave cautious support. They agreed with the push for more integrated, community-based care but urged action to fix workforce shortages and clarify when and how the plan will roll out. They also warned that new projects must not weaken existing services.

The move signals a significant shift in NHS strategy. The government's focus on prevention and local collaboration aims to reshape healthcare for an aging population and rising demand. If done well, these neighborhood centers could become a central part of the NHS in the years ahead.