

Meeting: Trust Board Meeting in Public

Date: 24 September 2025

Approval Report

Agenda item	Provider Capability
Board Lead	Neil Macdonald, Chief Executive Officer
Author	Joanna James, Head of Corporate Governance
Appendices	Appendix 1_Full Provider Capability Guidance_August 2025 Available in the Reading Room
Onward governance	Submission to NHS England

Report overview

This paper provides an overview of the NHS provider capability process and the proposed submission for 2025/26.

Previously considered	n/a – completed following input from all Executive Directors
Decision	The Board is requested to consider the and approve the position ahead of submission.

Relevant strategic priority

Outstanding Care ☒ Healthy Communities ☒ Great Place to Work ☒ Net Zero ☐

Relevant breakthrough objective – 2025/26

<input type="checkbox"/> Reduction in emergency admissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting people to live healthier lives	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero tolerance to bullying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Governance / Statutory Requirement
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduction in elective waiting times			

Implications / Impact

Quality	The paper is stating 'confirmed' against the quality of care domain and 'partially confirmed' against access and delivery of services.
People (BHT colleagues)	The paper is stating 'confirmed' against the people and culture domain.
Risk: link to Board Assurance Framework (BAF) and local or Corporate Risk Register	The effective management of risk supports board decision making processes and overall good organisational governance.
Financial	The paper is stating 'confirmed' against productivity and value for money and financial performance and oversight.
Compliance	NHS Oversight Framework / NHS England Guidance
Partnership: consultation / communication	The paper is stating 'confirmed' against the strategy, leadership and planning domain which includes collaborative working with system partners and provider collaborative.
Equality	The Trust has an effective EQIA programme which supports confirmed ratings related to quality and finance.

Executive Summary

This paper provides a summary of NHS England processes related to the provision of a capability rating to NHS trusts. The first step of this process is a self-assessment, signed off by trust boards, considering capability against the six domains as outlined in The Insightful Provider Board.

Following contributions from executive directors and their teams, the proposed submission is as follows:

1. Strategy, Leadership and Planning – confirmed
2. Quality of Care – confirmed
3. People & Culture – confirmed
4. Access & Delivery of Services – partially confirmed*
5. Productivity & Value for Money – confirmed
6. Financial Performance & Oversight – confirmed

**related to tiering for cancer and elective performance.*

The Board are asked to consider and approve this ahead of submission in October 2025 along with supporting evidence.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of the background and guidance related to the provider capability self-assessment process and present the current position for the Trust.

2.0 Introduction

As part of the NHS Oversight and Assessment Framework (NOF) 2025/26, NHS England will assess NHS trusts' capability and use this, alongside NOF segmentation, to judge what actions of support are appropriate at each trust. The provider capability rating will help inform the response to NOF segmentation and may also inform decisions about entry into the National Provider Improvement Programme (NPIP).

In August 2025, NHS England wrote to provider organisations requesting completion of a self-assessment of their capability. This is due for submission by 21 October with Board level sign off.

3.0 Self-Assessment of Provider Capability

As a key element of the NHS England assessment, NHS boards are being asked to assess their organisation's capability against a range of expectations across six areas:

1. Strategy, Leadership and Planning
2. Quality of Care
3. People & Culture
4. Access & Delivery of Services
5. Productivity & Value for Money
6. Financial Performance & Oversight

These are derived from The Insightful Provider Board and NHS boards are required to make a declaration against each category within a pre-set template. This can be:

- Confirmed
- Partially confirmed
- Not met

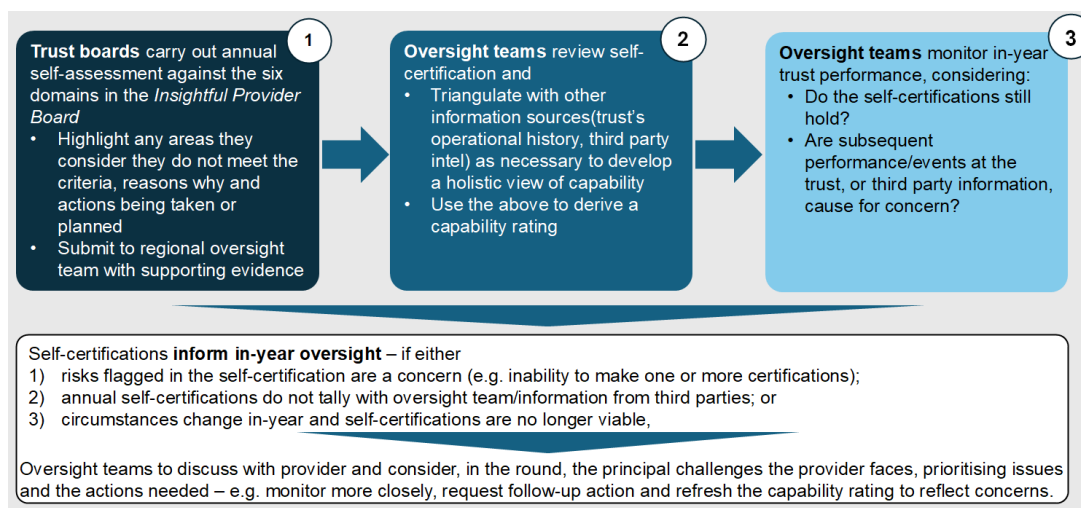
The intention of the self-assessment is to strengthen board assurance and help oversight teams take a view of trust capability based on board's awareness of the challenges faced by their organisation and actions in place to address them.

Should an organisation not be able to make a positive self-assessment, the reasons why should be included within the template along with the extent to which these have been outside of the trust's control to address, how long these have persisted and a summary of mitigating actions that have been taken or are being taken.

4.0 The Capability Assessment Cycle

The self-assessment is the first part of the full capability assessment cycle. The self-assessment will be triangulated with other information by oversight teams and result in the provision of a capability rating. Performance will continue to be monitored throughout the year.

The diagram below provides an overview of the full process.



Below is a list of examples of third party information that NHS England may use to inform their overall view of capability:

- Other bodies with regulatory responsibility e.g. Human Tissue Agency, Information Commissioner.
- Professional representative bodies e.g. General Medical Council.
- Patients and the public e.g. Healthwatch.
- Staff information e.g. National Staff Survey.
- ICB partners.
- Other NHS England teams.
- Relevant oversight groups.
- Other sources relevant to the Trust e.g. Local Government, Ofsted.

5.0 Capability Ratings

NHS trusts will be provided one of the following ratings:

Rating	Description
Green	High confidence in management
Amber-green	Some concerns or areas that need addressing
Amber-red	Material issue needs addressing or failure to address major issues over time
Red	Significant concerns arriving from poor delivery, governance and other issues

6.0 Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Overleaf is the prescribed self-assessment template with the proposed submission for the Trust.

In summary:

- 7. Strategy, Leadership and Planning – **confirmed**
- 8. Quality of Care – **confirmed**
- 9. People & Culture – **confirmed**
- 10. Access & Delivery of Services – **partially confirmed**
- 11. Productivity & Value for Money – **confirmed**
- 12. Financial Performance & Oversight – **confirmed**

Confirmation statements have been derived from supporting information provided by executive directors and their teams. Evidence is currently being collated to support this.

7.0 Action required from the Board

The Board are asked to consider and approve the proposed submission. Following this, the information will be submitted to NHS England along with supporting evidence ahead of the October deadline.

Provider Capability - Self-Assessment Template

The Board is satisfied that...

(Mitigating/contextual factors where boards cannot confirm or where further information is helpful)

Strategy, leadership and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trust's strategy reflects clear priorities for itself as well as shared objectives with system partners The trust is meeting and will continue to meet any requirements placed on it by ongoing enforcement action from NHSE The board has the skills, capacity and experience to lead the organisation The trust is working effectively and collaboratively with its system partners and provider collaborative for the overall good of the system(s) and population served 	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.
Quality of care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having had regard to relevant NHS England guidance (supported by Care Quality Commission information, its own information on patient safety incidents, patterns of complaints and any further metrics it chooses to adopt), the trust has, and will keep in place, effective arrangements for the purpose of monitoring and continually improving the quality of healthcare provided to its patients Systems are in place to monitor patient experience and there are clear paths to relay safety concerns to the board 	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.
People and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff feedback is used to improve the quality of care provided by the trust Staff have the relevant skills and capacity to undertake their roles, with training and development programmes in place at all levels Staff can express concerns in an open and constructive environment 	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.
Access and delivery of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans are in place to improve performance against the relevant access and waiting times standards The trust can identify and address inequalities in access/waiting times to NHS services across its patients Appropriate population health targets have been agreed with the ICB 	Partially confirmed	Trust in Tier 2 for Elective and Cancer for Q2 2025/26. Focussed recovery plans in place and being monitored through Trust governance and performance structure. Recovery plan reviewed by NHS England Regional Team with ongoing regular oversight meetings.
Productivity and value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans are in place to deliver productivity improvements as referenced in the NHS Model Health System guidance, the Insightful board and other guidance as relevant 	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.
Financial performance and oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trust has a robust financial governance framework and appropriate contract management arrangements Financial risk is managed effectively and financial considerations (for example, efficiency programmes) do not adversely affect patient care and outcomes The trust engages with its system partners on the optimal use of NHS resources and supports the overall system in delivering its planned financial outturn 	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.
	In addition, the board confirms that it has not received any relevant third-party information contradicting or undermining the information underpinning the disclosures above.	Confirmed	Not applicable - positive declaration.