

# Controversial NHS shake-up will cost £150m of taxpayers' money

 [oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15119365.Controversial\\_NHS\\_shake\\_up\\_will\\_cost\\_150m\\_of\\_taxpayers\\_39\\_money/](https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15119365.Controversial_NHS_shake_up_will_cost_150m_of_taxpayers_39_money/)

A CONTROVERSIAL plan to transform NHS services and make savings will itself cost £150m of taxpayer cash to deliver, it has been revealed.

Health bosses have asked NHS England for the vast sum to carry out their sustainability and transformation plan (STP) for the the region.

The figure was uncovered by the British Medical Association, which is concerned the ongoing national health shake-up is becoming 'unworkable', and those involved in the plans could not confirm what the £150m would pay for.

Campaigners have hit out at the cost, warning the process could end up costing more than it saves.

It comes as a spike in 'bed-blocking' in Oxfordshire's hospitals has again been reported despite optimism that the problem had been dealt with last year.

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group spokeswoman Rachel McQuilliam said: "The £150m was an estimate of capital needed over a five year period.

"Investment is needed in buildings and technology to modernise the NHS and how care is delivered. The process of confirming capital requirements is currently ongoing."

Efforts to produce the STP are being led by 10 clinical commissioning groups across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire West, led by OCCG's chief executive David Smith.

## ADVERTISING

[inRead invented by Teads](#)

It aims to address staff shortages and avoid a financial gap of £479m by 2020 by streamlining NHS services and moving care away from hospital.

In practice this is likely to mean the closure of up to 200 beds and the downgrading of services at the Horton General Hospital and community hospitals.

Health campaigners reacted with dismay, with Jacquie Pearce-Gervis of Patient Voice querying why so much cash was being asked of the 'financially hard-pressed' NHS.

She said: "Perhaps the CCG could indicate the areas which need particular attention to deliver their plan. It sounds as if someone has plucked a figure out of the air."

Keith Strangwood, chairman of the Keep the Horton General group, said: "This is typical. This is an unproven, untested idea and could end up costing more than it saves.

"We have asked them about a cost analysis and their document doesn't say a lot. You should pilot something before you do it."

Across the country, 44 STPs are in progress and clinicians and managers involved have asked NHS England for between £20m and £700m to get them off the ground.

BMA chair of council Dr Mark Porter said: "These figures are especially concerning given that everyone can see a huge crisis unfolding within our NHS.

"These plans are fast becoming completely unworkable and have instead revealed a health service that is unsustainable without urgent further investment."

The business case for the STP for the 'BOB' region suggests funds will be centred on capital programmes for [Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust](#).

To deliver the plans £14.5m will need to be spent on the Horton General Hospital site as well as the transfer of equipment, valued at £6.3m.

Phase one of a split consultation on the Oxfordshire arm of the STP, affecting the overall number of beds and some services at the Horton, is now out to consultation.

Last week [Oxfordshire County Council](#) lambasted the plans, stating: "Consultation proposals as they stand are unlikely to satisfy the concerns of people in the county. Council officers said closing acute beds in hospital was 'a potentially significant issue', adding: "The evidence is not yet available to conclude that this is appropriate."