

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE North London NHS Foundation Trust Proposed Merger by Acquisition of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust	
REPORT OF Deputy Chief Executive Officer, North London NHS Foundation Trust Chief Executive Officer Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	DATE 1 December 2025
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on North London NHS Foundation Trust's (NLFT) proposed merger by acquisition of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (TPFT).</p> <p>The report lays out the high level timeline for the proposed acquisition, the case for change, vision and benefits. A plan on a page summarises the key points.</p> <p>As part of the priority pathway for Children and Young People the key benefits across Camden and NCL are highlighted.</p> <p>A snapshot of staff engagement at TPFT is provided and this forms part of a wider staff engagement and communications plan.</p> <p>Both Trusts anticipate submitting the Full Business Case in the coming weeks. This will then be reviewed by NHS England, which will include patient benefits, quality and safety, and financial elements.</p> <p>Legally NLFT and TPFT will merge by applying to NHS England under s56A of the National Health Service Act 2006 (the NHSA) for NLFT to acquire TPFT.</p> <p>Following the NHSE review stage, they will provide their outcomes letter and RAG (Red Amber Green) rating and recommendations. Approvals will then follow via the Trust Board and subsequently the Secretary of State approvals during Q4 25/26.</p> <p>The planned date for the new enlarged NLFT is 1 April 2026.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p>	

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee notes and comments on the proposed North London NHS Foundation Trust Merger by Acquisition of Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Natalie Fox'.

Natalie Fox, Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Date: 18 November 2025

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on North London NHS Foundation Trust's (NLFT) proposed merger by acquisition of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (TPFT).
- 1.2. This report has been requested by the Committee to understand the service benefits for Camden residents.
- 1.3. This report is accompanied by a supporting presentation which will be shared with Committee members at the meeting being held on 1 December 2025, and will be presented jointly by NLFT and TPFT Executives.

2. Background

- 2.1. TPFT, England's second-smallest NHS provider, faces unsustainable financial pressures. This financial instability is the primary driver for the proposed merger by acquisition. NHS England (London) and the North Central England Integrated Care Board agree that acquisition by NLFT is the optimal path for long-term sustainability and service preservation. For TPFT, this offers a route to stability and a platform for innovation and growth, ensuring the continuation of its specialised services and a more financially stable future.
- 2.2. Legally, NLFT and TPFT will merge by applying to NHS England under s56A of the National Health Service Act 2006 (the NHS Act) for NLFT to acquire TPFT.
- 2.3. This will result in NLFT's corporate continuity as an enlarged Foundation Trust, incorporating TPFT's workforce, property, assets, and liabilities, with corresponding amendments to NLFT's constitution and the corporate dissolution of TPFT. The anticipated completion date for this is 1 April 2026.

3. Strategic Rationale

- 3.1. The acquisition is driven by a shared vision:
 - To create an exceptional, integrated mental health offering across NCL and beyond.
 - By uniting NLFT's strengths and diverse service offerings with TPFT's unique expertise, the enlarged Trust will significantly enhance the scale, integration, and impact of combined services.
 - This will directly benefit the people of NCL by improving access to TPFT's clinical expertise and better equipping the Trust to address population health needs, target resources effectively, and strengthen preventative care for vulnerable populations.

4. Options for Change

- 4.1. Following an NCL commissioned review in December 2022 which concluded TPFT was not financially sustainable independently, this was followed by an internal appraisal by the TPFT Board which identified merging with another organisation as the most viable path.
- 4.2. After exploring potential partners during 2024 through an Expression of Interest process, this work was not progressed. NLFT expressed further interest in early 2025. NHSE London and NCL ICB endorsed NLFT to progress working on the acquisition of TPFT, recognising benefits for enhanced service integration, strengthened research/education, and improved prospects for financial sustainability.

5. Vision for the enlarged Trust

- 5.1. NLFT's vision is to be a globally recognised leader in patient-centred mental health care, pioneering clinical practices and setting new standards for integrated service delivery, training, and education. TPFT, with its renowned brand and directorate of education and training, is a unique opportunity to support the realisation of this vision.
- 5.2. The enlarged Trust will leverage combined expertise to enhance clinical services, expand research (especially in psychotherapy), and foster a holistic, patient-centred approach integrating physical and mental health. NLFT envisions becoming a premier education and training provider, expanding opportunities through university partnerships and TPFT's degree-awarding Office for Students (OfS) registration.

6. Clinical Strategy

- 6.1. The TPFT acquisition is seen to enhance NLFT's capacity to deliver high-quality mental health services, driving innovation and addressing service gaps across NCL.
- 6.2. The clinical benefit of integration is that it will support the delivery of NLFT's clinical vision / model and therefore improve the mental health of everyone in North London. This will mean supporting people to be resilient and have good mental health. Through a more comprehensive, joined up offering across NCL boroughs, the enlarged NLFT can offer early intervention for those with mental health problems to prevent these problems from worsening.
- 6.3. Another key opportunity is creating a fully integrated 0-25 CYP (Children & Young People) pathway in NCL, building on the momentum of the Community CYP Mental Health Provider Collaborative, led by North London Foundation Trust (NLFT) as Lead Provider. This will help address current fragmentation and allow NLFT to leverage TPFT's reputation for psychoanalytic/psychodynamic approaches to complex mental health issues.
- 6.4. Post-acquisition, the immediate priority is a seamless transition, maintaining current service delivery and focusing on standardising policies and governance.

- 6.5. A longer-term review will consider broader clinical service integration, leveraging the synergies between current NLFT and TPFT clinical services.

7. Strategic Benefits

- 7.1. The proposed merger is expected to yield a wide range of benefits, significantly enhancing the quality and safety of our services. By operating at scale across the five boroughs and standardising best practices, we will deliver improved care throughout the region.

- 7.2. A primary and arguably most significant benefit is the crucial support to stabilise TPFT's finances. Further benefits arising from this transaction are summarised below:

7.3. Priority Pathway: CYP Provider Collaborative Business Case

- Structural consolidation enabling the integration of CYP Services across NCL boroughs
- Address longstanding fragmentation, inequity, and inconsistency in community mental health service delivery for CYP.
- Establishment of a consistent Core Offer providing improved, coordinated support to CYP, parents, and carers.
- Creation of a sustainable service model that enhances experience, strengthens workforce resilience, and improves outcomes across the system.
- Timely access to care within four weeks for Core Community CYP (Getting Help / Getting More Help), with standardised clinical pathways and shared outcome measures.
- Implementation of a hub-and-spoke model for crisis, offering same-day response, A&E (Accident and Emergency) diversion, outreach, and 24/7 access via NHS 111 (Mental Health Option).
- Dual ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)/Autism assessments, consistent age thresholds, needs-led care regardless of diagnosis, and integrated support across education, social care, and VCSE (Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise).
- Reduced unwarranted variation and address entrenched disparities, promoting equity in health and minimising duplication.

7.4. Service User Benefits

- Beyond the CYP pathway showcased above, we see a range of benefits for those that encounter our services more generally, these include:
- Standardised model of care shared best practices, and "single front door" access.
- Expansion of multi-agency, multi-disciplinary community teams.

- Delivery of preventative care and support recovery closer to home, reducing reliance on inpatient services.
- Improvements in CYP community services, reducing fragmentation and improving transitions.
- Care closer to home with shorter waiting times.
- Reduced health inequalities and improved equity of access, including trauma and psychotherapy services.
- Enhanced performance metrics through shared learning, driving improvements in quality, efficiency, and patient outcomes.

7.5. Staff Benefits

We are committed to offering great places to work and providing staff with a supportive environment to deliver outstanding care. The intended impact of the enlarged Trust for the workforce is to create conditions where staff like the culture at work, feel they have a consistent team around them and have opportunities to develop their career.

The enlarged NLFT and the associated changes are expected to benefit staff by:

- Empowerment of staff through standardised digital systems and equitable corporate support.
- Consistent approaches to supervision, development, and job planning.
- Streamlined workflows, reduced administrative burden, and increased time for patient care.
- Enhanced staff experience and retention.
- Increased career progression, diverse mobility opportunities, cross-training, and leadership development.
- Access to new postgraduate training courses.
- A unified, strengthened staff voice through integrated networks and trade unions, improving morale and stability.
- Fostering a diverse, motivated workforce aligned with shared values.
- Ensuring a positive transition through early staff consultation on TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment)).
- Creation of efficiencies, new roles, and sustainable career pathways through strategic restructuring.
- Establishment of the Trust as an exemplar employer through integrated and strengthened workforce policies, committed to flexible working and continuous improvement.

7.6. Student Benefits

The immediate priority is to achieve stability for TPFT's Department for Education and Training (DET), ensuring the education function can effectively

and sustainably support current and future student cohorts. This necessitates immediate interventions to resolve existing challenges and secure operational continuity. The long-term ambition is to achieve growth, leveraging the enlarged entity's enhanced capabilities to improve education quality, profitability and market presence.

8. NCL System Benefits

- 8.1. The acquisition will benefit the wider NCL health and care economy by enabling a consistent population health management approach and strengthening system resilience.
- Improved financial position for TPFT, eliminating its need for historical deficit support.
 - Synergies and economies of scale across corporate services, reducing overhead costs.
 - Increased capacity to effectively price offerings, particularly in TPFT's education international markets and consulting functions.
 - Reduced administrative duplication, streamlined services, and optimised resource allocation.
 - Streamlining service delivery and promoting best practice sharing and learning opportunities across the wider NCL landscape.
 - Facilitating improvement in population health management through enhanced collaboration at scale, unlocking efficiencies for strategic reinvestment in advanced data analysis.
 - Alignment with the NHS Long Term Plan, the NCL ICS strategy, and national priorities for mental health care.

9. Timeline

- 9.1. The proposed merger by acquisition of TPFT by NLFT is due to be completed on 1 April 2026.
- 9.2. The Full Business Case is currently being finalised, pending confirmation of the financial case which includes the financial and non-financial support agreement by NHSE.
- 9.3. The merger timeline is currently planned for submission to Trust Boards by end of December following reaching the aforementioned agreement. After the NHSE quality and financial review stage and the Secretary of State's review and approval the Grant of Acquisition is anticipated in March 2026.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1. That the Committee notes and comments on the proposed North London NHS Foundation Trust Merger by Acquisition of Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

11. Comments of the Director of Finance

- 11.1. The Director of Finance has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report.

12. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 12.1. The terms of reference of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee include the functions under section 244 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and its associated regulations The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013. Under the regulations where an NHS trust has under consideration any proposal for a substantial development or substantial variation of the health services in the area of the Local Authority, it must consult with the Local Authority. If more one local authority is consulted, those local authorities must appoint a joint overview and scrutiny committee for the purposes of the consultation. The committee should consider if this is a substantial variation or development.

13. Environmental Implications

- 13.1. There are no environmental implications arising from the contents of this report.

14. Appendices

- 14.1. Appendix A: NLFT TPFT Merger by Acquisition Summary