

Mike Durkin - biography

Dr Mike Durkin, National Director of Patient Safety at NHS England, started his career after qualifying as a Medical Practitioner at The Middlesex Hospital, London in 1974. He held research and teaching appointments in London and Bristol, prior to a move to the USA to Yale University School of Medicine.

In 1990 he returned to the UK as a Clinical Director before accepting a post as the first Medical Director of Gloucestershire Royal NHS Trust from 1993 to 2002 also holding a consultant post in Anesthesia until 2013. In his role as Medical Director, Dr Durkin provided clinical advice and leadership to the NHS Trust Boards and supported the development of a clinical governance framework and principal of governance for the hospitals across the South West.

Dr Durkin is most proud of his leadership of one of the first big hospital systems, creating a significant vehicle for health care delivery in the West of England. This resulted from the amalgamation of Cheltenham and Cotswold's hospitals; with Stroud, Gloucestershire in the East and the Forest of Dean to the west.

In 2002 the landscape of the NHS changed dramatically and Dr Durkin was appointed as Medical Director and Director of Clinical Quality for Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority. A further move in 2006 saw Dr Durkin appointed as Medical Director of the South of England Strategic Health Authority. He continues as the National Clinical Director for Venous Thrombo-Embolism and leads the National Prevention Programme in this area. A further Medical Director post was secured in 2011, for NHS South of England.

In early 2000 Dr Durkin was asked to lead on National Patient Safety for England. With the help of Sir Ian Carruthers, he was involved in persuading the chairs and chief executives of all 18 Hospitals in the South West to come together to achieve a whole systems approach to reduce avoidable harm in hospitals. This was the first time such an approach had been attempted in England and is seen as one of the largest collaborative systems to still be working in the world.

In 2012 he was appointed to his current post as the first National Director of Patient Safety in England for the NHS. Dr Durkin aims to develop a national plan to improve the safety of every patient in every sector and every setting across the NHS in England.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Mike Durkin's contribution to health research and NHS leadership.