Hugh McCaughey is the National Director of Improvement at NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Hugh took on the role of national director of improvement in the new NHS Executive group on 1 April 2019. As part of this role, he helps to ensure NHS providers and local systems are equipped to deliver world-class universal healthcare on a sustainable basis. Hugh oversees the delivery of high-impact support to the NHS to help reduce unwarranted clinical variation, improve quality and access, and ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources.

Previous to this role, Hugh was the chief executive of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland since 2009, where he made quality improvement a key strategy. This led to significant improvements in the trust’s performance across a wide range of clinical, workforce and cultural areas, as well as its financial effectiveness. The trust has also established a Quality Improvement Academy, which has resulted in more than 4,000 staff being trained in quality improvement.

Hugh is a member of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and is a founding member of the Health Improvement Alliance Europe and the UK Improvement Alliance. He is chair of the Ulster Rugby Academy and a former coach, player and manager.

Hugh was previously chief operating officer and deputy chief executive of the Belfast Trust. He brings with him a wealth of experience and skills, having first joined the NHS in 1985 as a national management trainee.