



Eclipse
Corporate Finance

Healthcare M&A Review
Q3 2026



1. Overview

Q3 2026 overview

Deal volumes

- Deal volumes were very strong in Q3, likely driven by owners' desire to complete transactions in advance of the Autumn Statement and any potential tax changes

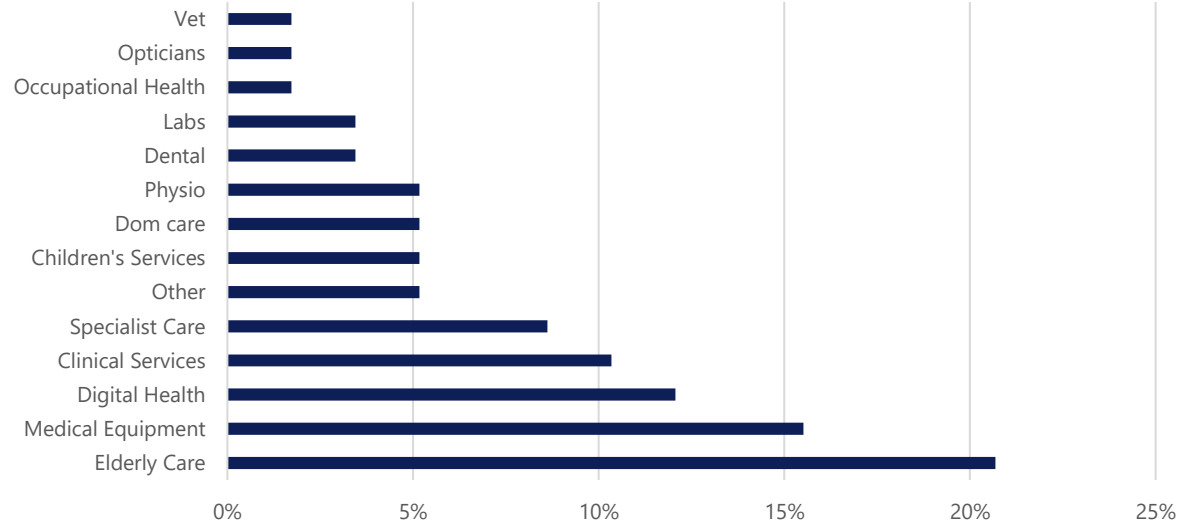
Sub-sector activity

- Broader care services remained the most active area of the market, with the non-cyclical nature of the sector attracting interest from growing private groups and property-focused investors. Elderly care was most prolific, but there was a notable increase in residential children's services deal activity buoyed by supportive debt markets
- Medical equipment continued to see high deal volumes, spanning manufacturers and distributors in areas such as aesthetics, mobility and orthotics
- Digital Health deal activity was broad, covering areas such as care management, pharmacy and mental health
- Strong clinical services presence was led by a range of deals across private pay services and outsourced NHS provision encompassing imaging, clinical pharmacy and broader secondary care services

Private equity involvement

- Private equity activity remained a core driver of M&A activity across the sector, with investors still seeking greater volumes of opportunities for both new investments and bolt-on deals for their existing platforms
- Q3 saw multiple new platforms for investors including Ethos Partners (Labyrinth Dental), Mayfair (Well Life Clinic), Hg (Nourish Care), Endurance Capital (Forge Care) and Growth Partner (Healthxchange)

Split of deals by sector



New PE platform investments

healthxchange
group

nourish



Well Life
CLINIC



LABYRINTH
DENTAL LABORATORY GROUP

Forge Care
HOMES FOR CHILDREN

The background of the slide features a dark blue, monochromatic image of a modern skyscraper with a grid-like glass facade. The building is positioned on the right side, and its reflection is visible in a body of water at the bottom. The overall aesthetic is professional and corporate.

2. In focus sectors

In focus: Clinical Insourcing

Clinical insourcing remains an important part of NHS capacity management. In June 2026, England still had 7.27 million incomplete referral-to-treatment pathways, while persistent shortages across clinical specialties continue to create demand for external capacity.

Before COVID, the market had grown steadily but remained relatively concentrated. The subsequent increase in waiting lists created pent-up demand, enabling established providers to expand rapidly and encouraging new entrants, including businesses from recruitment and staffing backgrounds.

Since 2024, the market has become more challenging. NHS Trusts face greater pressure to control external expenditure, while increased framework participation has intensified competition. With 69 suppliers now listed on the NHS Shared Business Services clinical insourcing framework, framework inclusion is no longer a meaningful point of differentiation in itself.

Performance has therefore diverged. The strongest providers are not necessarily those with the broadest or most specialist offering, but those able to demonstrate scarce clinical capability, strong governance, reliable mobilisation and established clinician and NHS customer relationships. Buyers will increasingly distinguish genuinely managed clinical services from offerings closer to commoditised staffing provision.

M&A strategies have also evolved. Earlier investment focused primarily on building scale within core insourcing, including Summit Partners' investment in 18 Week Support and Fremman Capital's investment in Medinet. More recent transactions have broadened the model. Medinet acquired Remedy Healthcare Solutions and HealthHarmonie, adding staffed modular solutions and community-based services, while 18 Week Support acquired Medical Clinics, including Sussex Community Dermatology.

Private equity interest has become more selective rather than disappearing. Bay Tree Private Equity's backing of the Medicare Insourcing Services management buyout in 2026 demonstrated that capital remains available for differentiated businesses with strong clinical capabilities and NHS relationships.

Future activity is likely to include consolidation among smaller operators, capability-led acquisitions in diagnostics and scarce specialties, and further expansion into community and selectively privately funded care.

Clinical insourcing remains an investable market, but exposure to waiting-list demand alone is no longer enough. The businesses likely to attract the strongest buyer interest will be those whose clinical capability, customer relationships and delivery model would be difficult for competitors to replicate.

Selected Transactions



In focus: Specialist Care

Notable Acquirers



£11.5bn

Local authority spend on long-term care for working age adults in 2024/25

80+

Transactions between January 2025 and September 2026

111k

Vacant posts across adult social care in 2024/25

Adult specialist care continues to benefit from strong underlying demand. Appropriate provision for adults with learning disabilities, autism, complex mental-health needs, acquired brain injuries and major physical disabilities remains difficult to develop in many parts of the country.

The M&A market remains active, but its character has changed. The previous consolidation cycle was dominated by a relatively small group of national and private equity-backed providers acquiring businesses regularly. Those consolidators have not disappeared, although many are now acquiring more selectively.

Some of the larger investment-backed platforms have been under their current ownership for extended periods. A relative lack of successful exits at the top of the market appears to have reduced the pace at which capital is recycled into further acquisitions. Until there is greater movement among these larger groups, the market is likely to remain more selective than during its most active period.

This does not mean that investment has withdrawn from specialist care. Recent investments in Apollo Home Healthcare and Glenholme Specialist Care, alongside substantial refinancings involving Achieve Together and Lifeways, demonstrate that capital remains available. However, it is being directed towards businesses with a clear strategic position, credible management and a defensible route to growth.

The buyer population has also broadened. Established consolidators are now competing alongside privately owned groups, regional operators and newer investment-backed platforms. Acquisitions are often driven by a specific strategic requirement, such as entering a new geography, increasing local service density, adding a particular care capability or securing suitable property and an established workforce.

Demand alone does not guarantee buyer interest. Staffing pressures, wage inflation and commissioner fee increases continue to affect the economics of care provision. Buyers are therefore paying close attention to regulatory quality, safeguarding, staffing stability, occupancy, referral patterns, commissioner relationships, fee levels and management depth.

For owners, the central message is that a credible sale market remains, but identifying the right buyer has become more important. The best-known national group may not be the party with the strongest strategic reason to acquire a particular business. A properly considered process should examine the full buyer market, including regional and developing operators that may place greater value on the business' location, services and local position.

In focus: Pharmaceutical Market Access

Market access is becoming increasingly influential earlier in pharmaceutical development, bringing health economics and outcomes research (HEOR) and real-world evidence (RWE) closer to the centre of the market access proposition.

Decisions around trial design, endpoints, comparators and evidence generation can materially affect future HTA outcomes, reimbursement and adoption. At the same time, EU HTA reform, greater use of real-world evidence, increasingly complex therapies and sustained payer scrutiny are raising the importance of sophisticated evidence and access strategies.

These trends are also driving M&A, with buyers increasingly acquiring specialist capabilities that would be difficult to build organically.

Prescient Healthcare Group, backed by Bridgepoint, acquired Uptake and Dolon in early 2026, adding commercial, launch, pricing and market access capabilities. Red Nucleus acquired Bridge Medical Consulting, strengthening its HEOR, evidence synthesis, modelling and statistics expertise. Newmarket Strategy, backed by Baird Capital, acquired Visible Analytics to add HEOR, modelling and data analytics to its existing market access proposition.

Private equity is also investing directly in specialist businesses. Queen's Park Equity backed Initiate Consultancy and subsequently supported its acquisition of health economics modelling and analytics specialist Dark Peak Analytics. CBPE invested in Access Infinity, which combines market access consulting with proprietary technology supporting pricing and evidence strategy. International expansion remains another theme, with Kintiga acquiring AxTalis in Benelux and SKC in Germany to add local market expertise.

The market appears able to support two successful models: scaled platforms offering genuinely connected capabilities across evidence and access, and highly differentiated specialists with recognised technical or therapeutic expertise. The weaker position is the undifferentiated generalist.

For owners, buyers are focusing on scarce technical expertise, defensible market positioning, high-quality repeat revenue, management depth and evidence that different capabilities genuinely work together.

Operating in an attractive market is not enough. The businesses likely to generate the greatest strategic interest are those that have built either an integrated platform or a differentiated specialist position around capabilities that are difficult for buyers to recreate.

Selected PE-backed Operators



Why the sector is changing



EU HTA Reform

Joint clinical assessments are pulling evidence planning earlier



More complex therapies

Rare disease, oncology and advanced therapies require strong evidence and modelling



Greater payer scrutiny

Pricing pressure is increasing the importance of value demonstration



3. July snapshot

Notable sector deals: July 2026



Onebright's acquisition of Mindstep

- Another interesting bolt-on deal for EMK Capital-backed Onebright, acquiring mental health platform Mindstep
- Founded by Dr Aaron Lin and Dr Hamzah Selim, Mindstep provides digital mental health screening, triage, personalised self-care and care navigation, and is regulated by the MHRA as a Class I medical device
- The acquisition creates an integrated pathway from preventative digital support through to Onebright's clinical assessment, psychological therapy, psychiatry and neurodevelopmental services
- The deal demonstrates the increasing convergence between healthcare technology and clinical service delivery



Medneo's acquisition of Ramsay's mobile imaging assets

- A notable diagnostics transaction for CVC DIF-backed Medneo, acquiring Ramsay Diagnostics UK's mobile MRI and CT fleet
- The deal also includes a six-year exclusive contract for Medneo to provide mobile imaging services across Ramsay's national network of 34 hospitals
- The acquisition expands Medneo's national footprint and imaging capacity, while allowing Ramsay to retain access to high-quality diagnostic services through a long-term specialist partnership
- Following the acquisition of Fairford Medical in 2025, the deal further strengthens Medneo's position in UK diagnostic imaging and highlights the attraction of platforms supported by long-term contracted revenues



Proposed acquisition of Vitabiotics by Bain Capital

- A significant consumer healthcare investment for Bain Capital, which has agreed to acquire Vitabiotics, the UK's leading vitamin company, and the wider VB Group, including Meyer Organics in India and operations across Africa
- Founded in 1971, Vitabiotics owns brands including Pregnacare, Perfectil, Wellman, Wellwoman and Osteocare, selling products in over 70 countries
- The business has developed leading positions across several international markets, including India, China, North Africa and the Middle East
- Bain will support the next phase of international expansion, alongside further investment in product innovation, e-commerce, digital capabilities, distribution and supply chain resilience



T-Pro's acquisition of BigHand Healthcare

- A strategically important healthcare technology acquisition for Livingbridge-backed T-Pro, acquiring UK-based clinical workflow and documentation provider BigHand Healthcare
- BigHand Healthcare has over 15 years of experience and longstanding relationships with NHS trusts, private hospitals and GP practices across the UK
- The acquisition combines BigHand's workflow optimisation capabilities with T-Pro's AI-powered clinical documentation and ambient voice technology, extending the group's reach to 120 NHS trusts
- The deal reflects growing demand for technology that can reduce clinical administration and improve productivity

Healthcare market activity: July 2026

Private Equity Activity

Sub-sector	Target	Acquirer / Investor	Exiting PE
Clinical Services	Ramsay's mobile imaging assets	Medneo (CVC DIF)	N/A
Consumer Healthcare	Vitabiotics	Bain Capital	N/A
Digital Health	BigHand Healthcare	T-Pro (Livingbridge)	N/A
Digital Health	Mindstep	Onebright (EMK Capital)	N/A
Digital Health	Pharmacy2U	G Square Continuation Fund	N/A
Elderly Care	Millbridge Care Home & The Knolls Care Centre	Talea Care Homes (Zugzwang)	N/A
Homecare	Penna Homecare	Care Santé (Vitry Enfants)	N/A

Venture Capital Activity

Target	Description	Lead Investor	Investment
TidalSense	AI-powered non-invasive COPD breath tests	Cross-Border Impact Ventures	\$19m
Draig Therapeutics	Developing neuropsychiatric therapies	Deep Track Capital	\$65m
Alchemab Therapeutics	AI-powered discovery of naturally protective antibodies	British Business Bank	£25m
Qureight	AI-powered imaging for clinical trials	Molten Ventures	\$20m

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4. August snapshot

Notable sector deals: August 2026



Hg's majority investment in Nourish Care

- A significant digital health transaction, with Hg acquiring a majority stake in Nourish from Livingbridge, which will remain invested as a minority shareholder
- Founded in 2011, Nourish provides digital care management software that helps residential and home care providers plan, record and coordinate care
- Livingbridge has supported Nourish since 2022, including its acquisition of CarePlanner in 2023, which expanded the business into the home care market
- Hg's investment will support further product development and the use of AI to reduce administrative demands on carers, reflecting continued investor appetite for mission-critical software across the care sector



Radiology Partners' acquisition of Everlight Radiology

- Another international teleradiology deal, with US-based Radiology Partners agreeing to acquire Everlight Radiology from Livingbridge
- Everlight operates a global network of more than 800 radiologists across more than 40 countries, reporting more than 2.5 million scans annually
- The acquisition will combine Everlight with Radiology Partners' vRad business, creating a global teleradiology platform providing continuous subspecialist coverage across the US, UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa
- The deal continues a period of activity across UK teleradiology, following transactions involving Medica, 4ways and Axon Diagnostics



Ethos Partners' investment in Labyrinth

- An interesting dental lab sector investment for Ethos Partners, backing Labyrinth Dental Laboratory Group's founding management team to accelerate the company's next phase of growth
- Headquartered in Birmingham, Labyrinth is the UK's fourth-largest full-service dental laboratory group, serving more than 2,000 NHS and private dentists through eight specialist laboratories located on a single site
- Ethos' investment will support the roll-out of free intraoral scanners and training to customers, deepening relationships with dentists and accelerating the transition from traditional impressions to digital workflows



Agentis' acquisition of Clinical Pharmacist Solutions

- A highly complementary second acquisition for LDC-backed Agentis Health Group, strengthening its clinical capabilities through the addition of outsourced pharmacy specialist Clinical Pharmacist Solutions
- Founded in 2019, CPS provides clinical pharmacists, medicines optimisation services and training to primary care organisations
- Agentis was established from Ashtons Hospital Pharmacy Services and launched in 2025 with the acquisition of Living With
- Combining CPS's clinical workforce with Agentis' digital capabilities creates a more integrated model for managing long-term conditions, aligned with the NHS's movement towards community-based and preventative care

Healthcare market activity: August 2026

Private Equity Activity

Sub-sector	Target	Acquirer / Investor	Exiting PE
Clinical Services	Everlight Radiology	Radiology Partners	Livingbridge
Children's Services	Forge Care	Endurance Capital	FPC (partial exit)
Clinical Services	Clinical Pharmacist Solutions	Agentis (LDC)	N/A
Clinical Services	Well Life Clinic	Mayfair Equity Partners	N/A
Occupational Health	Medmark	Phoenix Equity Partners	N/A
Digital Health	Nourish Care	Hg	Livingbridge (partial exit)
Specialist Care	Elysium Cymru	Iris Care (Ancala)	N/A
Medical Equipment	Montcalm International	Winncare (Siparex)	N/A
Dental Labs	Labyrinth Dental Laboratory Group	Ethos Partners	N/A
Pharma Services	tranScrip*	TMC Pharma (LDC)	N/A

Venture Capital Activity

Target	Description	Lead Investor	Investment
Mironid	Therapeutics for kidney disease	Scottish National Investment Bank	\$46m
Scan.com	Online diagnostic imaging booking platform	Noteus Partners	\$220m**

*Acquired out of administration

**Includes equity and debt



5. September snapshot

Notable sector deals: September 2026



HCML's acquisition of Corazon Health

- Another strategic bolt-on for Apposite Capital-backed HCML, with the acquisition of occupational health provider Corazon Health. HCML has been backed by Apposite since 2021 as it builds a broader health, rehabilitation and workforce wellbeing platform
- Founded in 2002, Corazon provides occupational health services to corporate clients across the UK, with services including management referrals, health surveillance, new starter assessments and employee wellbeing
- The acquisition strengthens HCML's occupational health capabilities and builds on its acquisition of healthcare rm in 2022, which significantly expanded the group's presence in workforce health and wellbeing



Growth Partner's investment into Healthxchange

- Growth Partner has invested in Healthxchange, the UK and Ireland's leading distributor of medical aesthetics products
- Founded in 2000, Healthxchange supplies more than 10,000 clinics and practitioners, distributing brands including Allergan, Galderma, Obagi and Medik8
- The investment will support further growth across its brand portfolio, education offering and customer service
- The deal highlights continued investor interest in the growing medical aesthetics market, particularly businesses with strong supplier relationships and established practitioner networks



Medneo's acquisition of Burgess Diagnostics

- CVC DIF-backed Medneo has acquired Burgess Diagnostics from Solingen Private Equity, marking its first move into veterinary diagnostic imaging
- Burgess provides mobile MRI and CT imaging services to veterinary practices, referral centres and specialist hospitals across the UK and Ireland
- The acquisition broadens Medneo's customer base and specialist imaging capabilities, while Burgess will continue to operate under its existing brand and leadership team
- The deal follows Medneo's recent acquisition of Ramsay Health Care UK's mobile imaging assets and highlights the group's rapid expansion into adjacent diagnostic imaging markets



Initiate's acquisition of Dark Peak Analytics

- QPE-backed Initiate has acquired Dark Peak Analytics, a specialist health economics modelling and analytics consultancy
- The acquisition broadens Initiate's capabilities across HEOR, HTA, evidence generation, modelling and analytics, creating a more integrated market access offering
- Dark Peak also strengthens the group's technology-enabled capabilities, supporting more scalable and sophisticated analysis for pharma clients
- The deal is Initiate's first acquisition since QPE invested in December 2025 and demonstrates the consolidation opportunity across the fragmented market access and HEOR consultancy sector

Healthcare market activity: September 2026

Private Equity Activity

Sub-sector	Target	Acquirer / Investor	Exiting PE
Aesthetics	Healthxchange	Growth Partner	N/A
Dental	FMC	SimplyHealth	Coniston
Diagnostics	Katalyst Diagnostics	Cruinn (Waterland)	N/A
Occupational health	Corazon Health	HCML (Apposite)	N/A
Pharma	Kent Pharmaceuticals	Phoenix Labs	Duke Street
Pharma Services	Dark Peak Analytics	Initiate (QPE)	N/A
Pharma Services	Sampled's UK operations	Astoriom (Limerston)	N/A
Vet	Burgess Diagnostics	Medneo (CVC DIF)	Solingen

Venture Capital Activity

Target	Description	Lead Investor	Investment
52North	Finger prick triage test for neutropenic sepsis	Macmillan Ventures Hargreave Hale	£3.2m*
Droplet Scientific	Continuous biomarker monitoring technology	DSW Ventures	£1.5m
DYAD	AI-led clinical coding	Sangha Capital	£7.5m
Fuse Diagnostics	Molecular diagnostics for point of need testing	The FSE Group	£1m
Inovus Medical	Simulation training technology for surgeons	PXN Ventures	\$9.3m
InTouchNow.ai	AI voice agent operating in the NHS	Ada Ventures	£2.3m
Magnitude Biosciences	Drug discovery platform	Northstar Ventures	£1.3m
Pharosyn	AI systems for commercial teams in pharma	Moonfire Ventures	\$3m
SageTech Medical	Recycles waste volatile anaesthetic gases	FSE Group / SWIF	£2.5m

*Includes Innovate UK grant; equity component undisclosed



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