

Because innovation is everyone's business, we've made it ours

April 2024

Building a Health Innovation Network (HIN) Blueprint for DHCNI

Achieving Success from what works well



The Health Innovation Network is a collective group of 15 networks across England that help drive the adoption of innovation



What is a Health Innovation Network?

- Established in 2013, the Health Innovation Network (HIN), previously known as The AHSN Network, consists of 15 local groups leading the charge in health and care innovation¹.
- As connectors of the NHS, academia, local authorities, the third sector, and industry, HINs are uniquely positioned to rapidly and broadly scale innovation.
- HINs collaborate with HIN members, national commissioners (NHS England & Improvement, Office for Life Sciences), and industry partners, ensuring that patients regularly benefit from innovative solutions



Figure 1: Map showing the 15 Health Innovation Network locations¹



Originally implemented in 2013/14, AHSNs were relaunched in 2023 under the new badge of Health Innovation Networks

Healthcare Innovation



References: 1. Innovation Health and Wealth: Accelerating Adoption and Diffusion in the NHS, Department of Health, 5 December 2011. 2. https://www.england.nhs.uk/2013/05/acc-health-sci-ntwrk/ 3. https://thehealthinnovationnetwork.co.uk/news/nhs-and-government-back-ahsns-to-continue-to-lead-innovation-under-new-name

HINs connect NHS leaders and industry partners to drive cost effective growth through innovative solutions

Healthcare Innovation

Navigating Healthcare Challenges

- The NHS faces unique obstacles to patient care¹
- Ongoing workforce pressures and unprecedented demand for services in primary through to tertiary care settings have led to significant challenges
- Addressing these challenges requires **innovative thinking** and stronger collaboration across health systems

The Power of Innovation

- No single solution exists, but innovation is crucial for revolutionising healthcare, improving resource efficiency, and addressing community needs
- Innovations span from straightforward apps and diagnostics to complex medication regimens, digital infrastructures, and care pathway redesigns.

The Health Innovation Network

- Fosters collaboration between NHS organisations and industry partners to accelerate the uptake of innovative and evidence-based therapies, technologies and care pathways.
- **Cross-stakeholder** collaboration can bring an injection of pace, fresh thinking, additional insight and experience of rapidly delivering at scale.

The HIN operates with three strategic aims:



Develop outcomes-led programmes that respond to health and care priorities



Build a high-impact national innovation pipeline



Establish HINs as an authoritative voice on transforming health through innovation

HINs achieve this by seeking innovations that :

Enhance patient care, safety, and clinical outcomes

Generate cost savings for the NHS and social care

Align with the NHS's priorities¹

References: 1. NHS. NHS Long Term Plan. Available at: https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-term-plan/

HINs have a dual focus, guiding both commercial innovators and NHS healthcare teams through various supportive methods



How do HINs guide commercial innovators?		How do HINs guide health and care teams?	
Advice	Innovation Surgeries Offering one-on-one advice, either in-person or via phone, to help innovators identify healthcare challenges and understand evidence requirements.	Innovative products Signposting to innovations that may meet the needs of their local populations. Advise on design and implementation of digital pathways.	
Support	Solution Evaluation Assessing if your innovation addresses the needs of HIN members and promoting it within the network.	Practical Support Evaluations, evidence gathering and data analysis to build knowledge and support clinical practice. Training in key areas (Digital, Data, Technology). Frameworks for adoption.	
V Programmes	Funding and Support Navigation Directing innovators to additional resources like the National Innovation Accelerator.	Innovation Programmes Facilitate adoption of proven innovation products through AAC. Annual Innovation Grants kickstart projects. Sharing of wider innovation funding opportunities.	
e-e Connections	Business Support and Networking Providing access to programs like the Digital.London Health Accelerator, expert workshops, and funding opportunities such as SRBI and Innovate UK competitions.	Connecting people with great ideas Communities of Practice (CoP). Innovation challenge events. Patient partnerships. Events and networking opportunities.	
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What is needed to speed up service adoption of innovations in the NHS?

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Factors for Rapid Adoption of Innovation in the NHS

The Kings Fund>

An independent report was commissioned by the six AHSNs responsible for spreading health innovation in the East Midlands; Kent, Surrey and Sussex; the North West Coast; South London; the West of England; Yorkshire and Humber.



Interviews were set up with the originations and AHSN staff for 8 successful innovation implementation projects.

- **1. Early diagnosis and intervention**: Many innovations succeed by providing earlier diagnosis and intervention than previous approaches
- 2. Changes to staff roles: Adapt the roles of GPs, community services, and hospital consultants within local systems
- 3. Empowering patients: Encourage patients to play a more active role in managing their own care
- 4. Improving access for vulnerable patient groups: Innovations that focus on enhancing access to services for vulnerable and neglected patient groups, such as individuals with severe mental illness or older people, can result in significant improvements in overall care quality.
- 5. Addressing social challenges: Recognise the importance of addressing social challenges alongside physical and mental health needs
- 6. Breaking down silos: Overcome organisational barriers and promote collaboration between healthcare providers, academic organisations, local authorities, and other stakeholders
- 7. Securing appropriate funding quickly: Ensure innovators have access to funding, not only for the development of their ideas, but also for the adoption and spread of their innovations.
- 8. Support from local leaders: When local leaders actively champion innovation by setting ambitious goals, encouraging staff to explore new ideas, and providing resources to execute plans, it creates a culture that embraces change and supports rapid adoption.
- **9.** Integrated local health and care systems: Develop more integrated systems can help address barriers to adoption by establishing appropriate objectives, financing mechanisms, performance management, and stronger relationships between professional groups and services.



In a survey of Health Tech founders¹, where 15+ provided validated input:

Do AHSNs offer useful introductions, advice and access to funding?

Do AHSNs give valuable insight and share understanding of the system they're situated in?

Do AHSNs help healthtech to proceed through the lifecycle of concept validation >> to active intra-NHS evidencing >> to getting paid contracts >> to wider scale?

Do AHSNs capably generate the right kinds of evidence that the system needs to actually commission it? The effectiveness of AHSNs in providing useful introductions, advice, and access to funding is inconsistent. Success often depends on fortunate circumstances. While the NIA offers support for a small group, much of its program relies on devolved support via AHSNs, which continues to pose challenges.

AHSNs do not consistently provide valuable insights and shared understanding of the systems they are situated in. Their effectiveness in this area appears to vary significantly.

While AHSNs may help some healthtech companies through various stages of the lifecycle, the vast majority **do not feel that they are experiencing a supportive pipeline within the NHS**. The **'proven innovation pipeline'** referenced by the AHSN Network does not seem to be effectively implemented, as many UK healthtech companies struggle to progress. Additionally, some interviewees reported that **AHSNs can create more bureaucracy and additional steps** in the process without clear benefits or guidance.

AHSNs might be effective in generating the right kinds of evidence for commissioning in some cases, particularly when it comes to **health economic evaluation**. However, **only a small number of AHSNs were consistently praised** for their performance in this area, leaving **room for improvement among the majority**.



When building a new HIN, we must ensure the blueprint captures what 'success looks like'



The Base Case Blueprint for Building a HIN



Theme	Base Case
Collating the Evidence Base	 Review the evidence base, strategic and policy needs, and local, regional, or national data to outline the case for change. Address health inequalities and ensure protected groups are not unintentionally disadvantaged.
Establishing a Governance Structure	 Include a steering group and appoint clinical leads to provide direction and oversight. Undertake stakeholder mapping and define leadership roles to build a robust support system.
Identifying and Collaborating with Partners	 Work with industry, the third sector, and service users to integrate diverse perspectives and expertise. Build goodwill with key stakeholders to create momentum and ensure a positive programme start.
Building in Service User Input	 Ensure the patient's voice is central to the programme, reflecting their needs and experiences. Capture and integrate patient feedback to inform continuous improvement.
Developing Adoption and Spread Guidance	 Create an implementation toolkit, engagement toolkit, and communications plan to support adoption. Utilise specific tools to communicate programme details and the approach to implementation
Promoting Programme Success	 Use established communication channels to regularly update stakeholders on programme progress. Raise awareness of the programme's positive impacts to encourage wider adoption.
Establishing Communities of Practice	 Promote shared learning and support through regular interaction among practitioners. Set up a dedicated workspace for programme leads to access toolkits and exchange knowledge.
Supporting Implementation	 Upskill project/programme staff to aid operational/clinical staff with implementation. Address the challenges of changing behaviour to ensure the sustainability of innovation. Collect qualitative feedback from key stakeholders

Taking the learnings from previous examples, use these points to 'Level up'



Theme	How to Level Up?
Collating the Evidence Base	 Stay at the forefront of UK Health policy. Create new thinking and evidence that can be used to guide future policy through presentations whitepapers, case studies, blog articles Complete 'innovation scanning' to maintain a view of the competitive landscape. Seek innovations that facilitate earlier diagnosis and intervention than existing approaches.
Establishing a Governance Structure	 Establish relationships with key clinical experts and thought leaders and promote the benefits of innovation through tailored guides and toolkits Strong clinical leadership will drive implementation and ongoing support for a programme.
Identifying and Collaborating with Partners	 Secure funding quickly for adoption and spread of innovation. Comprehensive stakeholder mapping and prioritisation with 4 key themes; those stakeholders to consult, partner with, inform and involve. Collaborate with other HINs for a whole system approach. Develop integrated systems by establishing appropriate objectives, financing mechanisms, performance management, and stronger relationships between professional groups and services.
Building in Service User Input	 Seek the involvement of people with lived experience in the community and voluntary sector Local leaders to champion innovation by setting ambitious goals, encouraging staff to explore new ideas, and providing resources to execute plans Validate strategies/initiatives with Key Opinion Leaders (KoLs)
Developing Adoption and Spread Guidance	 Embrace Digital Transformation and Technology, this will allow seamless integration and faster adoption of new devices and tools. Invest in a programme team or committee that specialises in value communication. Work with marketing teams to make training webinars, demos, etc Identify collaborative online workspaces for shared materials
Promoting Programme Success	 Essential to put 'boots on the ground'. Senior clinicians to convince on the benefits, project teams to implement innovations, support for providers Adopt QI principles, develop a tailored QI plan and Regularly convene key players to apply QI monitoring and promote shared learning Share and learn from previous and current evidence of 'what works well' Utilise national procurement frameworks to support rollout across local commissioning. Collaborative workshops with programme leads and coordinated promotion ensures an innovation's sustainability and continued rollout post-programme.
Establishing Communities of Practice	Create national and local CoPs to support post implementation sharing and learning across key stakeholders.
Supporting Implementation	 Conduct qualitative analysis by sorting the data using a framework approach with categories, themes and sub-themes. Validate with thought leaders and disseminate findings.

Case Study: Community pathway to rapidly test and treat flu¹

Healthcare Innovation

Current Status:	Innovation Type:	Solution Theme:	Geographic Scope:
Proof of value	• Service	DiagnosisTreatment	 Health Innovation North- West Coast Health Innovation Yorkshire and Humber
Focus of Programme	AHSN (HIN) Involveme	nt	Key Outcomes
 Pilot a community pathway for testing and treating Flu A/B and Covid-19 in patients over 65 and at- risk groups based on flu vaccine eligibility using point-of-care diagnostic tests that give results in 20 minutes 	 NHS-owned company digital reporting pathwin electronic patient resultant assess cost, health, a Feedback and Data A qualitative interviews, 	tion: Commissioned to nd other potential benefits Analysis: Project included	 Outcomes Successfully established, implemented, and replicated community flu test and treat pathway in several locations Key Findings Improved patient care through early diagnosis, preventing deterioration in primary care, and reducing burden on secondary care
 Provide diagnostic certainty in primary care settings to potentially reduce referrals to secondary care 	 optimisation and scala Project Replicability providers/partners for 	ability Ensured interchangeable testing equipment, digital analysis for future	 Positive patient feedback on the ease of understanding the pathway Adaptable for various community setting Diagnostic certainty for prescribers, supporting prescription decisions

References: 1. Community pathway to rapidly test and treat flu. Health Innovation Network. Case Study. 9 August 2023. Available at: https://thehealthinnovationnetwork.co.uk/case_studies/community-pathway-to-rapidly-test-and-treat-flu/

Case Study: Supporting the detection of Atrial Fibrillation and optimising treatment¹

AHSN National Programme (2018-2020)

	•		
Current Status:	Innovation Type:	Solution Theme:	Geographic Scope:
Rollout	DeviceDigitalService	DiagnosisTreatment	National
Focus of Programme	AHSN (HIN) Ir	nvolvement	Key Success Factors
Detect Raising public awareness of AF and the importance of pulse rhythm testing to identify those with undiagnosed AF	among all Patient Patient 	thway Engagement: Supporting of learning and best practices	 Strong Clinical Leadership drove the implementation and ongoing support for the program Robust collaboration and engagemen between clinical staff, deployment
Protect Supporting healthcare professionals to c optimal anticoagulation medication to all	Guality Important Provided for patients ar	provement Tools & Resources: or GP practices to identify at-risk nd review existing AF patients	 locations, and stakeholders. Efficient local information governance streamlined processes and reduced
those who would benefit Perfect	Featuring f	Procurement Frameworks: ive nationally funded AF detection or local commissioning	 administrative burdens. Detection devices were seamlessly integrated into existing AF care

Supporting patients with their anticoagulation medication and supporting clinicians to review patients with AF.

 Online AF Toolkit: Contains tools, resources, clinical guidance, and evaluation to help NHS teams improve detection and treatment

Stakeholders **embraced technology**, allowing for quick adoption and utilization of new devices and tools.

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References: 1. Supporting the detection of Atrial Fibrillation and optimising treatment. Health Innovation Network. Case Study. 20 December 20222. Available at: https://thehealthinnovationnetwork.co.uk/case_studies/supporting-the-detection-of-atrial-fibrillation-and-optimising-treatment/

integrated into existing AF care pathways. Stakeholders **embraced technology**,

Healthcare Innovation

2

Successful healthcare innovation hinges on a deep understanding of the clinical and operational need for change



What Good Looks Like

Health Inno	vation East Focus ADHD	How to Achieve Success?	
Strategic Alignment	The national Focus ADHD programme ¹ identified unwarranted national variation in ADHD diagnosis service delivery that could be standardised with a more objective assessment. This had clear alignment to several key policy papers*	Ensure to stay at the forefront of healthcare policy through regular training and knowledge sharing sessions. Anchor to wider NHS/DHSC agendas to maximise the potential for lasting positive impact	
Establish thought leadership	 The programme: Presented to the ADHD All-Party Parliamentary Group in 2022. Influenced the creation of NICE Medtech Innovation Briefing 318 (MIB318, March 2023)² 	Create new thinking and evidence that can be used to inform and guide future policy through presentations whitepapers, case studies, blog articles	
Review clinical evidence	The Focus ADHD programme ¹ collated key evidence (systematic review, clinical trials, and implementation studies) in formats that met the needs of the different audiences	Build a strong network with a range of policy makers, clinicians, NHS leaders and patients. Collate high quality evidence that is tailored for all audiences.	

Ability to capitalise? High



Notes: * NHS Long Term Plan (2019) and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance (NG87) for the diagnosis and management of ADHD References: 1. https://thehealthinnovationnetwork.co.uk/programmes/mental-health-and-neurodiversity/focus-adhd/ . 2. https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/mib318

Understanding the context

Robust evaluation and analysis of the innovation in the indicated population will provide influential evidence for decision makers



What Good Looks Like

Health Innovation East

Focus ADHD

Real world evaluation

1

Health Innovation East Midlands undertook a real-world evaluation over 12 months to assess the effects of the QbTest and provide evidence that it was beneficial to families, clinicians and provider organisations.

Programme scope

HI East Midlands gained national approval based on a clearly defined programme scope, which incorporated age and diagnosis in the population, services involved, type of tool, innovative aspect and positioning in care pathway.

Analysis

Lacking systematic data collection for referrals in England, the program harnessed local intelligence with a cost-benefit analysis of the innovation's real-world impact data to confirm positive cost savings for the NHS.

How to Achieve Success?

Establish the value of the innovation in real world practice over a long time-frame. Consider a broad evidence base and objective rather than subjective assessment

Complete 'innovation scanning' to maintain a view of the competitive landscape. Establish a steering group to ensure the scope is adhered to

Quantify (through quantitative cost-benefit analysis) the exact level of need for an innovation and the exact level of benefit the innovation will provide.





References: 1. https://healthinnovation-em.org.uk/component/rsfiles/preview?path=our-work%252Four-innovations%252FTransforming-ADHD-Care%252FFinal_Overall_Evaluation_Report_31May18.pdf&Itemid=1457%22

Raising Awareness

Establish digital communication strategies that draw from the expertise and influence of thought leaders and policy makers



Ability to

capitalise?

What Good Looks Like

Health Innovation East

Focus ADHD

Stakeholder engagement

Health Innovation East Midlands produced an engagement guide and communication toolkit that mapped key stakeholders, promoted info on positive outcomes, sought opportunities for presentation and key conferences and awards ceremonies.

MPERIAL COLLEGE HEALTH PARTNERS

London Asthma Decision Support Tool (LADS).

Digital Technology

In a digital-driven approach, ICHP produced several webinars, demos and online clinical expert deep dives to showcase the Asthma decision Support Tool receiving 'highly commended' in its category at the HSJ awards.

How to Achieve Success?

Stakeholder engagement is critical to success. Establish relationships with key clinical experts and thought leaders and promote the benefits of innovation through guides and toolkits

Embrace Digital Transformation and

Technology. Ensure communication approaches incorporate a digital aspect. **Online marketing** and training through webinars, demos, etc. is essential to spread the word amongst all audiences.



High

Raising Awareness

Collate a well-informed programme team that can disseminate information in CoPs with clear consistent value narrative



What Good Looks Like

Health Innovation East

Focus ADHD

Value Messaging

1

The Focus ADHD programme invested in a programme team that listened and responded to all key stakeholders through clear and consistent communication.

Online Collaboration The programme capitalised upon the FutureNHS workspace to securely store and share resources, as well as to facilitate online discussions.

Health Innovation Network South London

Communities of Practice (CoP) South London have developed seven communities of practice so far, and still growing. They include; Medication safety, Acute deterioration, Maternity, Sepsis, Duty of Candour, Delirium

How to Achieve Success?

Invest in a programme team or committee that specialises in value communication to a range of stakeholders (patients, clinical experts, policy makers). Engage early and proactively

Identify collaborative online workspaces that are available to the programme target audience. Use this as the library for the evidence base to ensure easy access to the latest documentation

Create **national and local CoPs** to produce a conversational relationship among peers across the Network. CoP meetings provide **dedicated time** to **disseminate programme information**. Ability to capitalise? High High



Building Will

Map key influential stakeholders and draw on their experience to establish leadership and governance structures



Ability to

capitalise?

What Good Looks Like

Health Innovation East

Focus ADHD

Stakeholder Mapping A critical step that can affect successful implementation. Focus ADHD undertook stakeholder analysis, mapping stakeholders by influence and creating a list of priority stakeholders. Time was invested in building strong relationships with the key stakeholders. How to Achieve Success?

Conduct comprehensive stakeholder mapping and prioritisation¹. This should be structured by interest and influence with 4 key themes; those stakeholders to consult, partner with, inform and involve. Revisit stakeholder map and iterate over time

Health Innovation West of England

Leadership and Governance Structures Health Innovation West of England has a team of clinical leads, senior leadership team and board level oversight. This is consistent across HINs. Digital innovation directors are a new addition to the leadership structure to optimise digital transformation and the delivery of tech enabled new models of care.

The board should consist of executives within NHS organisations under the HIN umbrella. Executive teams should be made up of healthcare leaders with extensive experience. Inclusion of clinical leads ensure patient centricity. Appoint a dedicated SRO and assemble a skilled programme team. Implement a robust governance structure with clear reporting and risk escalation processes.



References: 1. https://healthinnovation-em.org.uk/images/AHSN-Focus ADHD Stakeholder Engagement and Baseline Data Collection Guide v2.2.pdf

Building Will

1

Draw from commercial and lived experience to establish strategic partnerships that support innovation delivery



Ability to

capitalise?

What Good Looks Like

Lived Experience	HIN South London established a Lived Experience Partner role. Taken part in over 350 co-production activities and engaged with over 70 national stakeholders.	Seek and embrace formal involvement of broader partners including people with lived experience in the community and voluntary sector	High
Commercial Partners	Local health innovation networks operate across sectors and a key role is to broker connections between health and care and commercial organisations.	Build trust with commercial parties and develop collaborative agreements (e.g. Project Initiation Document) for strategic programmes	Moderate
Value Proposition and Business Case Development	Identify necessary program and financial resources, assess potential risks and issues. Sets out the ambitions, scope, metrics, roles, responsibilities, and methodology of delivering a programme	Employ recognised methodologies, leverage resources (NICE), and use proven templates to assist ICB/providers in developing a compelling value proposition, case for change, and business case.	High

How to Achieve Success?

Supporting Implementation

Empower sustained organisational growth through quality improvement, collaborative learning and skilled workforce



Ability to

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What Good Looks Like

What Good Looks Like		How to Achieve Success?	capitalise?	
Quality Improvement	HIN South London developed a resource pack to provide to innovation collaborative stakeholders that listed several NHS QI initiatives ¹	Adopt QI principles to establish a clear direction and measure outcomes effectively. Develop a tailored QI plan that includes digital tools to streamline processes and overcome challenges	High	
Collaboration	Short polls within the innovation sessions gauged staff perceptions of usefulness, enabling adaptive modifications to meet their needs, such as tailoring the format based on their feedback	Regularly convene key players to apply QI monitoring and promote shared learning. Enhance team performance with coaching that encourages reflection and continuous improvement	High	
Health Innovation Ea	Focus ADHD mobilised a regional workforce that understood and supported the objectives of the programme. a range of skills such as marketing, data analysis and patient engagement.	Essential to put 'boots on the ground'. Develop experienced project teams in each HIN which can support providers to plan and implement the innovation. This is especially true where provider workforces are stretched.	Moderate	

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References: 1. https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Dii.-HIN-Opioids-Resource-Pack.pdf

Changing Behaviour

Support post innovation implementation and sustainability through events and shared learning workshops



What Good Looks Like

Previous Experience

A critical factor in the success of a HIN is to build upon accomplishments and learning from other HINs, attracting the interest of organisations who were previously neutral.



Communities of Practice (CoP) South London have developed seven communities of practice so far, and still growing. They include; Medication safety, Acute deterioration, Maternity, Sepsis, Duty of Candour, Delirium

Health Innovation East

Sustainability planning

When HINs role in leading the Focus ADHD programme ended in March 2023, local implementation by NHS partners has continued

How to Achieve Success?

HIC, which includes a set of previous HIN leaders can draw from previous learnings and gain advice on strategic decision making

Create **national and local CoPs** to support post implementation **sharing and learning** across key stakeholders. CoP meetings provide **dedicated time** to **disseminate programme information**

Remember post programme events. Collaborative workshops with program leads facilitate knowledge exchange and acknowledge a steering group's efforts, while coordinated promotion ensures an innovation's sustainability and continued rollout post-programme.



Changing Behaviour

Capture feedback through evaluations with key stakeholders and analyse data to generate insights



Ability to

capitalise?

What Good Looks Like

Health Innovation East Focus ADHD

The Health Innovation Network was keen to build on the success and evidence base of the real-world evaluation and commissioned a national evaluation. This approach has ensured that the large-scale adoption and spread was still achieving the expected patients and staff benefits

How to Achieve Success?

Collect qualitative data about the implementation of innovation programmes. Provide organisations with final reports so they can give informed feedback. Present collective data for all organisations using the innovation. Disseminate among KoLs

Evaluation

Analysis

Health Innovation East **Focus ADHD**

The Health Innovation Network collected multiple choice survey data and feedback from 22 healthcare staff using interviews. Domains within the NASSS (non-adoption, abandonment, scale-up, spread, sustainability) framework (Greenhalgh et al., 2017) were used within the analysis to guide the development of themes

Conduct qualitative analysis on the data by sorting the data using a framework approach with categories, themes and sub-themes. Utilise existing literature or KoL input to develop themes and categories that are relevant to the implementation of technological innovations in health care.

