

Conclusion on Phase 1 Findings

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Current Strengths and Barriers
- Key Steps to Success

Introduction to Phase 1

Project Objective:

To establish a dynamic and sustainable healthcare innovation ecosystem that effectively bridges the gap between healthcare demand and service delivery in Northern Ireland.

Project Scope:

- Comprehensive examination of the current healthcare research and innovation landscape in Northern Ireland.
- Identification and engagement with key stakeholders to drive forward collaborative initiatives.

Project Design Overview:

- **Phase-Based Approach:** Implementing the project in distinct phases to ensure thorough analysis, design, and implementation.
- **Phase 1 Highlights:**
 - Desk-based research and stakeholder engagement to map the current state of the ecosystem.
 - Thorough understanding of strengths and barriers, and mapped out how these affect the implementation and adoption of innovation in the system.
 - Produced a series of recommendations to inform future work planning.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Improved mechanisms for identifying and scaling innovative healthcare solutions.
 - Enhanced organisational capability within the Health and Social Care (HSC) sector.
 - Accelerated adoption of new technologies and digital tools in healthcare practices.

Healthcare Innovation in Northern Ireland: An Overview

Areas of Excellence:

- Robust ecosystem featuring a multitude of organisations, initiatives, achievements, and emerging programs.
- Demonstrated excellence in problem-solving, innovation, and collaboration highlighted through various initiatives, pilots, and individuals making a difference.

Current Landscape and Progress:

- Notable progress in healthcare innovation marked by dynamic efforts and achievements.
- Existing challenges around collaboration, implementation, and spread of innovations were explored in depth through stakeholder engagement.

Outlook and Opportunities:

- Despite challenges, Northern Ireland is at the forefront of healthcare innovation.
- With continued dedication to overcoming barriers and leveraging new technologies, the region is poised to lead transformative changes in healthcare.

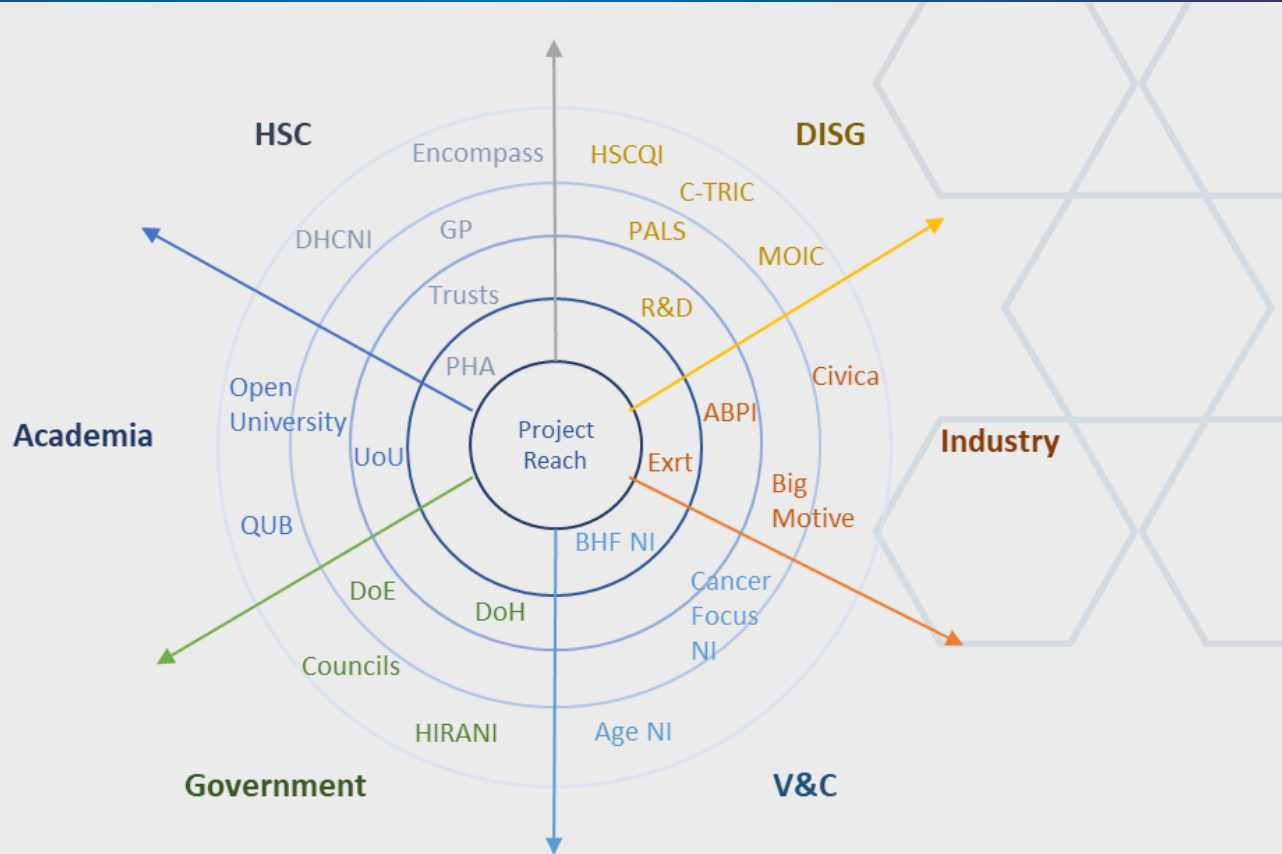
Strategic Goals for the Future:

- Foster a robust culture of innovation across all sectors of healthcare.
- Leverage emerging innovations and technologies to shape the future of healthcare in Northern Ireland.

Stakeholder Engagement

Representation of experience, opinions and expertise

265 individuals were contacted to contribute to the project, encompassing various domains such as clinical, operational, academic, commissioning, entrepreneurial, and policy realms. The diagram illustrates the stakeholder groups to which some of our contacts are affiliated.

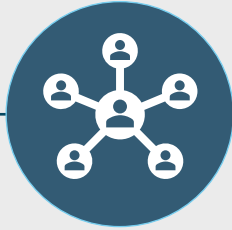


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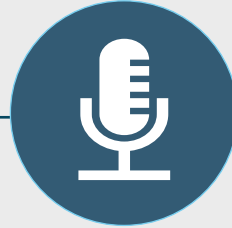
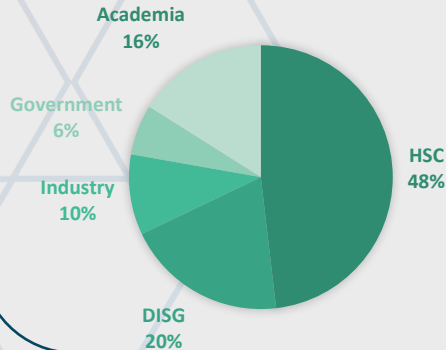
Stakeholder Engagement

Metrics, methods and representation among groups



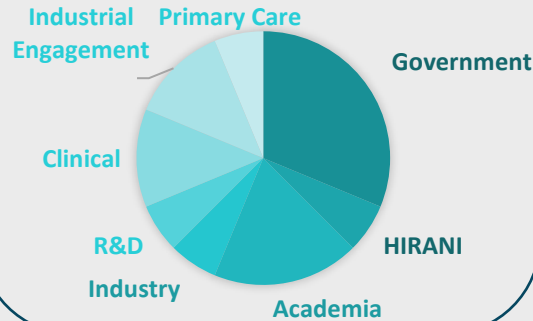
Surveys

- 73 responses
- 43 internal
- 30 external



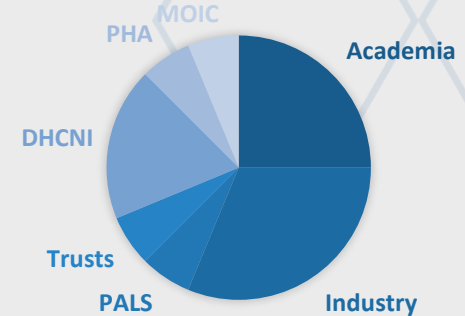
Interviews

- 13 conducted



Workshops

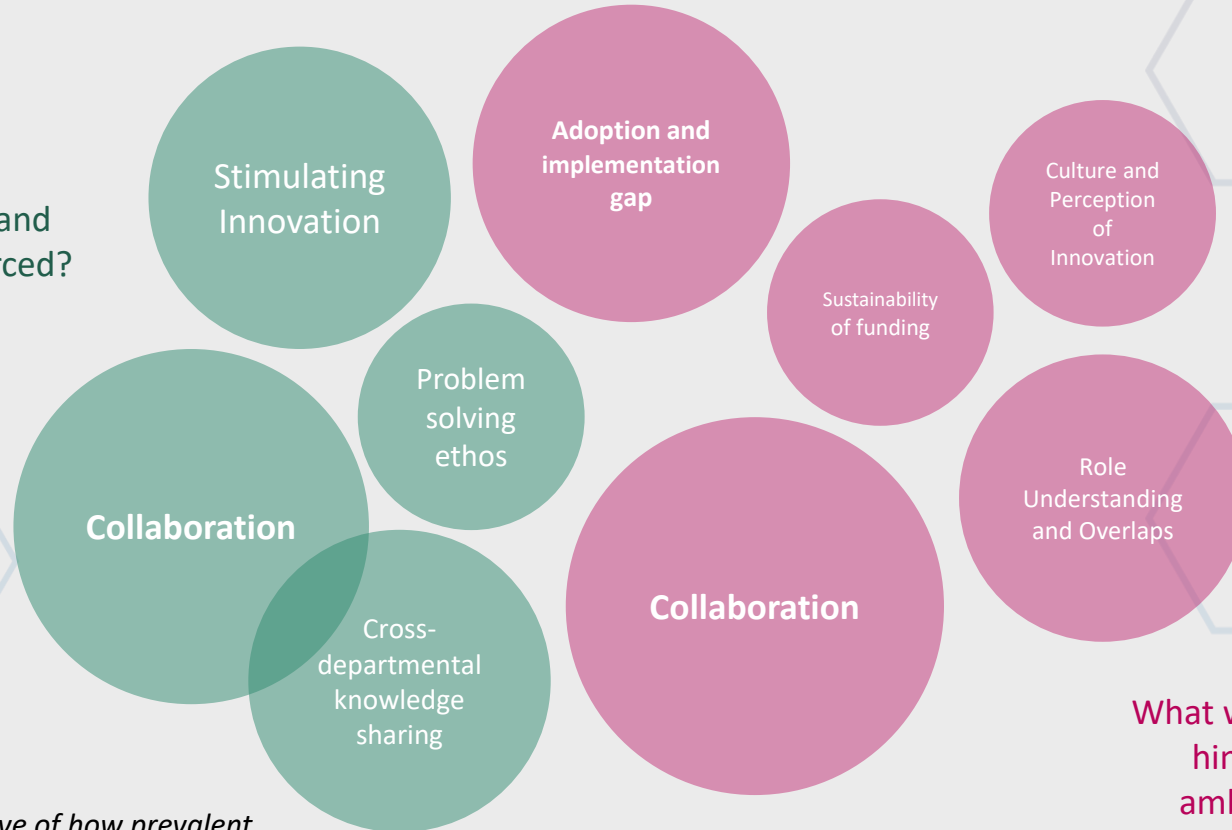
- 18 attendees
- 8 internal
- 10 external



Key Findings – Current Infrastructure

An overview of identified ecosystem strengths and weaknesses

What works well and needs to be reinforced?



* Bubble size is indicative of how prevalent stakeholders feel each strength or weakness is

What weaknesses are hindering this ambition or are misaligned?

Collaboration

was identified as both a strength and a weakness

When broken down further, these were the identified collaboration barriers

UNCLEAR PRIORITIES

- Lack of clarity on healthcare system priorities
- Unclear resource allocation for policy priorities
- Misalignment of incentives and funding for innovation

INTERNAL COLLABORATION

- Limited engagement with external innovators
- Insufficient signposting of innovators within the system
- Low awareness of key organisations

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- Siloed approach
- Complex networks and varying needs across jurisdictions

94% of HSC stakeholders would be in favour of a united network / model



UNDERUTILISED RESOURCES

- Inaction and inertia
- Available funding not utilised effectively for collaboration

RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

- Lack of necessary skills
- Difficulty engaging clinical leads due to financial constraints
- Insufficient resources for digital aspects of collaboration

SILOED WORKING

- Fragmentation and duplication of efforts
- Lack of understanding of roles and activities across the system

* White fonts indicate areas of agreement between internal and external stakeholders

UNCLEAR PRIORITIES

- Lack of clarity on healthcare system priorities
- Unclear resource allocation for policy priorities

LACK OF STRUCTURE AND DIRECTION

- Lack of structure, direction, and clear action plans
- Absence of infrastructure like elsewhere

INTERNAL COMPETITION

Presence of internal competition due to the scale of operations

87% of external stakeholders would be in favour of a united network / model



COMPLEX NETWORKS

- Identification of Overlaps and Synergies

RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

- Capacity and time constraints
- Lack of digital literacy within system

SILOED WORKING

- Fragmentation and duplication of efforts
- Lack of understanding of roles and activities across the system

* White fonts indicate areas of agreement between internal and external stakeholders

Adoption and Scale

The following barriers to adoption and scale were identified by internal stakeholders

LACK OF CLEAR AGENDA AND JOINT MINISTERIAL BUY-IN

Absence of a clear, agreed-upon agenda between the health and economy sectors, compounded by the lack of joint ministerial buy-in

FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND TIME CONSTRAINTS

- Northern Ireland allocates significantly less of the funding that England dedicates to health
- Funding constraints
- Time limitations



LIMITED AWARENESS OF NON-DIGITAL INNOVATION

Lack of awareness about other forms of innovation

CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS

Perception that digital innovation may take away jobs

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

- Poor processes, lack of structured approaches, and governance issues
- Lack of infrastructure, outdated IP policies

Adoption and Scale

The following barriers to adoption and scale were identified by external stakeholders

REGULATORY BARRIERS

Regulatory environment is aligned with the European Union, while the regulatory environment in the rest of the United Kingdom is diverging from that of the EU

LACK OF INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION

- "There is an absence of a systemic approach to innovation, as it is not considered core business in Trusts."

FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

Lack of funding or access to funding



SCALABILITY CHALLENGES

"There are currently good early-stage companies, ideas and spin outs from universities, however there is a lack of access at scaling them in NI – so they then take their service to USA as it's easier."

RISK-AVERSE ENVIRONMENT

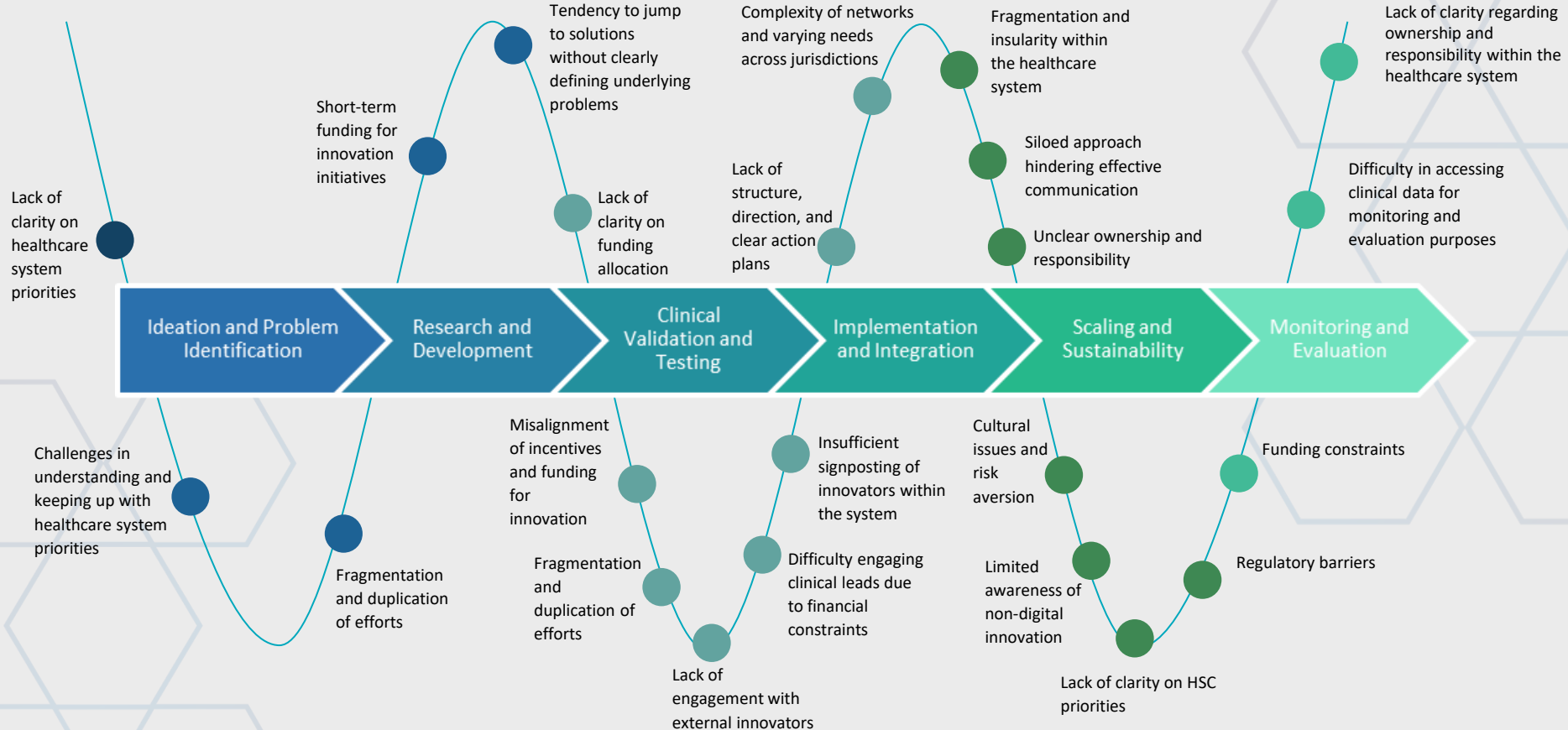
Concerns about the risk-averse and conservative commissioning and procurement environment in Northern Ireland

UNCLEAR PRIORITIES

- "Unless you work directly in HSC, it is difficult to know exactly what their priorities and challenges are".

Barriers to innovation

– When plotted against an innovation pathway, it's clear how each stage is affected, and which stages are affected the most



Key Steps to Success



1. Map Functions and Overlap

By more detailed understanding services provided within the current landscape, we can effectively allocate resources, eliminate duplication, and optimise efficiency across organisations.

2. Assess Data Sources

Evaluate various data sources to identify key priorities and areas of focus within the healthcare and R&I sectors.

3. Innovation Pathway

Set up innovation pathway and map resource for each stage. Develop a structured innovation pathway that outlines the stages from ideation to implementation.

4. Establish Governance

This governance structure will facilitate collaboration, streamline decision-making processes, and ensure alignment with overarching strategic goals.

5. Priorities

Define innovation priorities and develop programs of work to achieve short, medium, and long-term success across Northern Ireland

6. Establish Industry Access

Develop a transparent and efficient process for managing industry access to the NI healthcare system, ensuring fair and equitable opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

7. Outline Launch Pathway

Develop a detailed pathway outlining key milestones, timelines, and dependencies for the implementation of initiatives within the healthcare and R&I ecosystem.

8. Launch Activities

Support launch planning and build ongoing internal comms plan.

9. Culture of Innovation

Establish and launch intrapreneur programme and NI Accelerator Programme. Foster a culture of innovation by establishing an intrapreneur programme to encourage creativity and entrepreneurship among healthcare professionals and researchers.

10. Comms Strategy

Consider external communications and engagement strategy to promote awareness of new infrastructure, initiatives, and opportunities.