

In partnership with



# Partnering with purpose

How integrated care systems and industry can work  
better together

November 2023

# About us

## **NHS Confederation**

The NHS Confederation is the membership organisation that brings together, supports and speaks for the whole healthcare system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The members we represent employ 1.5 million staff, care for more than 1 million patients a day and control £150 billion of public expenditure. We promote collaboration and partnership working as the key to improving population health, delivering high-quality care and reducing health inequalities.

For more information visit [www.nhsconfed.org](http://www.nhsconfed.org)

## **The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)**

The ABPI exists to make the UK the best place in the world to research, develop and use new medicines and vaccines. We represent companies of all sizes who invest in discovering the medicines of the future. Our members supply cutting edge treatments that improve and save the lives of millions of people. We work in partnership with government and the NHS so patients can get new treatments faster and the NHS can plan how much it spends on medicines. Every day, we partner with organisations in the life sciences community and beyond to transform lives across the UK.

For more information visit [www.abpi.org.uk](http://www.abpi.org.uk)

## **About this publication**

This paper captures the learning from a masterclass series, delivered jointly by the NHS Confederation and ABPI, on how integrated care systems and industry can work better together. It was developed, researched and written by both organisations.

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# Foreword



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The formation of integrated care systems (ICSs) a year and a half ago offers an opportunity to improve patient outcomes and address health inequalities across England. At the same time, the NHS is experiencing some of the most severe pressures it has faced in its 75-year history.<sup>1</sup> From the elective backlog to growing financial pressures, there is undoubtedly a need to think about innovative ways patients can receive the care they deserve in this new model of working.

The opportunity now exists to better embed strategic partnerships across industry, patient organisations and the NHS, creating a thriving health ecosystem that works for patients, society and the economy. We all saw the role that collective partnerships can play in delivering care during the COVID-19 pandemic, when a deep partnership allowed the NHS to carry out research at an unprecedented scale to find the world's first effective treatment for COVID-19, dexamethasone, which was made available across every hospital on the same day it was approved. This partnership also enabled the NHS to not only deliver the first accredited COVID-19 vaccine in the world but also to roll out the vaccination

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There is a need to think about innovative ways patients can receive the care they deserve

programme rapidly and with high patient uptake across the country. It highlighted what could be achieved when cross-sector collaboration is at the heart of the NHS's approach, and we have an opportunity to repeat this success now that ICSs are becoming embedded into the healthcare landscape.

To understand how ICSs can play a role in confronting the challenges of improving the health of populations they serve through partnership working, the NHS Confederation and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) jointly hosted a series of masterclasses for selected ICS and industry leaders between October 2022 and May 2023. These events explored how industry can support systems to develop innovation solutions and spread good practice. The publication of this report brings together the insights from this series in the form of tangible priorities to enhance the role cross-sector partnerships can play in helping to improve the health of patients and the performance of the NHS.

We are thankful to all our colleagues who gave up their time to share their insights, expertise and perspectives as part of this masterclass series, and we look forward to building on this work to maximise the opportunities presented by partnership working to improve patient outcomes for the entire population.

# Key points

- Cross-sector partnerships are essential in helping the NHS to overcome the many challenges local organisations face, bringing in additional capacity to enable systems to improve the quality of care and introduce much-needed expertise, skills and resources, and reduce the inequitable uptake of NICE-approved medicines.
- To support integrated care systems to strengthen collaborations and build capacity with system partners, the NHS Confederation and Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry brought together senior industry leaders and system leaders to explore how the NHS and industry can work as partners in solving the health challenges we face as a nation.
- Four masterclasses were held between October 2022 and May 2023, drawing a range of leaders including integrated care board chairs, chief executives, directors of innovation, chief pharmacists, chief medical officers and directors of medicine optimisation. In total, 13 integrated care systems were represented, and 80 system and industry leaders attended.
- Four priority areas emerged which, taken together, could support partnership working and improve patient outcomes, make more efficient use of NHS resources and deliver economic growth.
- Content for the series was created through engagement with ICS and industry leaders to ensure sessions aligned with system priorities. The resulting impact is a strong coalition of industry and system leaders who are willing to further engage with the ABPI and the NHS Confederation to develop principles of NHS-industry partnership working.

- Looking to 2024, our collaborative work will build on the masterclasses and move to delivery-focused projects to facilitate enhanced relationships between systems and relevant partners and improve outcomes in targeted localities. The programme will also generate new guidance on how collaborative working can be structured and delivered across care settings

# Background

The passage of the [Health and Care Act in April 2022](#) put integrated care boards (ICBs) on a statutory footing from 1 July 2022. This makes them responsible for planning and funding health and care services in the area they cover in England.<sup>2</sup> The [Hewitt review](#) and the accompanying [government response](#) endorsed the need to shift to a more preventative model of care, which ICSs will begin to integrate within their operating framework.<sup>3</sup>

Responsibility for primary pharmacy, ophthalmology and dentistry services and some specialised services have been delegated to ICBs.<sup>4</sup> These wider responsibilities enable commissioning across care pathways to go further with transformation. However, several operational and capacity-related issues impede the ability of ICSs to effectively deliver transformation, as set out in the Hewitt review.

NHS England has confirmed that ICBs must cut their running costs by 30 per cent by 2025/26, just seven months into their existence as statutory bodies.<sup>5,6</sup> This is taking place at a time when the elective backlog remains stubbornly high and access to primary care continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>7,8</sup> All of this contributes to poorer health outcomes in the UK compared to its peers, with the country ranking 16th and 18th respectively for preventable and treatable causes of mortality against 19 comparable countries.<sup>9</sup>

As outlined in our previous joint publication, [Transforming Lives, Improving Health Outcomes: Tackling the True Cost of Variation in Uptake of Innovative Medicines](#), geographical and structural disparities can have a significant impact on the quality of care a patient can expect to receive. The report assessed the impact of variable uptake of National Institute for Health and Care

For further information on the state of integrated care systems in 2022/23, please access the [ICS Network's latest report on progress and opportunities](#).



Excellence (NICE)-approved medicines in four treatment areas – stroke prevention, kidney disease, asthma and type 2 diabetes – concluding that 1.2 million patients in these four categories alone are missing out on the treatments they are entitled to.<sup>10</sup> There are several reasons for this: practical barriers include a lack of capacity in the workforce to develop the pathways for medicines, and innovations can also be seen as a risk or additional burden on limited resources rather than a solution to existing challenges.

NHS England (NHSE) has identified that a core pillar to improving healthcare across communities is through enabling ICSs to embed local partnerships.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, cross-sector partnerships are essential in helping the NHS to overcome the many challenges local organisations currently face, bringing in additional capacity to enable systems to improve quality of care for patients and introduce much-needed expertise, skills and resources, as well as reducing the inequitable uptake of NICE-approved medicines.<sup>12</sup>

Against this backdrop, this report aims to support ICSs in strengthening collaborations and building capacity with system partners to ensure that the NHS and industry can work as partners in solving the health challenges we face as a nation.

It is based on a series of masterclasses which brought together senior industry leaders and system leaders, including ICB chairs, chief executives, directors of innovation, chief pharmacists, chief medical officers and directors of medicine optimisation. In total, 13 ICSs were represented, and 80 system and industry leaders attended.

Table 1: Masterclass series guide

Masterclass	System challenge explored	Date
<b>Masterclass 1:</b> Becoming an anchor institution? How ICSs can stimulate partnerships across sectors to generate health and wealth for their populations and reduce health inequalities.	Population health and health inequality	5 October 2022
<b>Masterclass 2:</b> Innovation – burden or benefit? How collaborating with biomedical innovators can accelerate ICS plan delivery and help tackle COVID-19 recovery.	Population health and recovery from COVID-19	30 November 2022
<b>Masterclass 3:</b> The missing millions – tackling health inequality. How patients and systems are missing out on the benefits of innovation to improve outcomes and productivity.	Health inequality and service optimisation	28 February 2023
<b>Masterclass 4:</b> A new public-private partnership? The role of industry in supporting systems to drive transformation.	Medicines and service optimisation	23 May 2023

# Priority areas

Four priority areas emerged from the masterclass series which can support partnership working to improve patient outcomes, make more efficient use of NHS resources and deliver economic growth. These will inform the NHS Confederation and ABPI collaboration in supporting system partners:

Priority	System challenge explored
Health innovation networks have a role in supporting ICS organisations to improve local economies by strengthening their positions as anchor institutions through deeper cross-sector partnerships.	ICS leaders, the NHS Confederation and the ABPI
The NHS Confederation and the ABPI should develop practical guidance to operationalise partnerships that optimise pathways of care at primary, secondary and system levels, with system leaders supporting these efforts.	The NHS Confederation and the ABPI
Support ICS leaders to use evidence of successful partnerships and evidence hosted on the <a href="#">ABPI's library of case studies</a> to stimulate further cross-sector collaboration.	ICS leaders and the ABPI
Support NHS and industry leaders to enhance their understanding of partnership operating frameworks and sources of assurance, including the ABPI Code of Practice.	The NHS Confederation, NHS leaders, ICS leaders and the ABPI

# Masterclass 1: Becoming an anchor institution?

**Focus:** How ICSs can stimulate partnerships across sectors to generate health and wealth for their populations and reduce health inequalities.

**System challenge explored:** Population health and health inequality.

**Date:** 5 October 2022

**Priority:** Health innovation networks have a role in supporting ICS organisations to improve local economies by strengthening their positions as anchor institutions through deeper cross-sector partnerships.

“NHS, industry and wider partnerships have enormous potential in taking forward collaborative anchor approaches for the benefit of local communities. It is vital to recognise the value of bringing together diverse groups of leaders to explore these opportunities and develop shared resources.”

Dr Dominique Allwood, Chief Medical Officer and Health Innovation Network Deputy, UCLPartners

## Masterclass summary

The first masterclass assessed how ICSs can stimulate partnerships across sectors to improve the health and wealth of their populations and reduce health inequalities. In particular, the conversation focused on the economic potential of the NHS and how an ICS can successfully engage and support a growing local economy through innovative partnership and alliance building.

In November 2020, NHS England published, [Integrating Care: Next Steps to Building Strong and Effective Integrated Care Systems Across England](#).<sup>13</sup> This signalled a new direction of travel for health and care policy and described a core purpose of an ICS as helping the NHS support broader social and economic development in local communities. This principle is particularly important given the wider impact of the pandemic and the inextricable relationship between health outcomes and socio-economic factors.

To develop this approach more coherently, greater emphasis is being placed on the NHS becoming an anchor institution. This will ensure that the NHS can have an even greater impact on the wider factors that ensure populations remain healthy, such as partnership working to deliver economic growth and social benefits. The NHS Confederation published [Unlocking the NHS's Social and Economic Potential: Creating a Productive System](#). This looked at how ICSs can deliver on this purpose and reflects the next phase of the anchor journey – moving from an institutional view of what one can do to a system view of what we can change.

## What is an anchor institution?

An [anchor institution](#) is one that, alongside its main function, plays a significant and recognised role in a locality by making a strategic contribution to the local economy.<sup>14</sup> ‘Anchors’ tend to be large, rooted in the place and have a strong social ethos. They traditionally include

councils, universities, colleges, voluntary and community sector organisations, sports clubs and, of course, the NHS. Many private sector organisations and businesses now also see themselves as anchors and have expressed an interest in developing strategies that can support the development of their place.<sup>15</sup>

NHS organisations are renowned as important local anchor institutions given their size, workforce, procurement budget, environmental impact and general economic, social and civic influencing power. They also operate in every part of the country, meaning the NHS voice matters in a rural, urban and metropolitan economies.<sup>16</sup>

Early challenges for ICSs are to understand this inherent value to the local economy, link together institutional approaches to become more of an anchor system and understand how best to collectively deliver, particularly when addressing their fourth purpose – supporting broader economic and social development.

Early anchor system work has focused on areas where ICSs believe they can make a difference to local strategic economic and social development. This has included the areas of: workforce, skills and employment; social value and procurement; estates; research, development and innovation; and areas linked with prevention. These priority areas represent a good starting point for discussions about what an ICS-industry partnership could target and deliver.

## Key insights

- There is a strong ambition to harness the value of anchor approaches across the NHS, industry, academia and other partners to help ICSs achieve their aims for the benefit of local communities. The UK is facing challenging economic conditions, which highlights the importance of anchors' strategic contribution to the local economy.

- The NHS does not necessarily need to operate as the lead organisation on this agenda. ICSs have valuable convening power and opportunity to learn from and partner with local industry, local enterprise partnerships, higher and further education organisations, local government, large employers and other bodies. It is important to recognise that economic development efforts are taking place and the NHS can join longstanding conversations.
- Partners need to continually reflect and act on how anchor approaches are made real to people and are understandable in relation to tangible impact for local communities.
- A successful anchor approach is one that runs throughout collaborative activity and is a contribution to solutions, not a standalone workstream.
- Industry partners offer a range of potential resources and expertise relevant to NHS system ambitions.
- The NHS Confederation has an ongoing programme of 'health economic partnerships' and is supporting ICSs to develop and implement anchor approaches and impactful industry partnerships.

## Case studies

The five case studies below exemplify the impact that partnership working can have on reducing health inequalities and generating health and wealth for their populations:

### **Economic growth through life sciences in East London** –

**Barts Life Sciences:** Barts Health NHS Trust and Queen Mary University of London, supported by Barts Charity, worked in

coordination to facilitate a partnership known as Barts Life Sciences. The partnership has worked across East London to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities by creating jobs and economic growth through a focus on population health and targeted, precision treatments.

### **Economic impact – Birmingham Health Partners:** Birmingham

Health Partners has worked closely with industry partners to create the Birmingham Health Innovation Campus (BHIC), which is set to be a world-leading health technologies hub. The BHIC, which is due to open in 2024, will harness world-leading academic and clinical strengths while bringing new commercial power to the region to accelerate life sciences research, taking innovative new healthcare treatments and technologies from early development to real-life application.

### **Research, innovation and industry engagement – Surrey**

**Heartlands Health and Care Partnership:** Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership has worked closely with industry leaders to identify strategic areas of focus to deliver agreed priorities, to ensure that patients are able to receive the care they are entitled to.

### **Industry's growing role as an anchor and in tackling health**

**inequalities – Novartis:** Novartis has identified ten ways in which business can reduce health inequalities, these include



embedding diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation, partnering directly with the NHS to tackle health inequalities, working with community partners to address social mobility, and taking decisive action to improve sustainability.<sup>17</sup>

**UCLPartners' Anchor Measurement Toolkit**: The UCLPartners Anchor Measurement Toolkit provides guidance and support to local health anchors and their partners, helping them to capture their activity and impact.

# Masterclass 2: Innovation – burden or benefit?

**Focus:** How collaborating with biomedical innovators can accelerate ICS plan delivery and help tackle COVID-19 recovery.

**System challenge explored:** Population health and recovery from COVID-19.

**Date:** 30 November 2022

**Priority:** The NHS Confederation and the ABPI should develop practical guidance to operationalise partnerships that optimise pathways of care at primary, secondary and system levels, with system leaders supporting these efforts.

“If we can apply the learnings of the Masterclass series and create more collaborations between industry and the NHS, then together will have a golden opportunity to improve the performance of the healthcare system and better support patients. Industry stands ready to work hand in hand with the NHS to achieve its goals.”

Marie-Andrée Gamache, Country President, Novartis UK and Ireland

## Masterclass summary

The second masterclass offered a space for system leaders to explore case studies, identify opportunities and share what is working well and where the greatest challenges lie in fulfilling their missions. This session explored how ICSs can stimulate partnerships across sectors to access innovation and resources to help achieve system ambitions. In particular, the focus was on the potential for collaborating with biomedical innovators.

Three local examples were presented by NHS and industry leaders for discussion, with each of the cross-sector partnerships taking a 'triple-win approach' – benefiting patients, healthcare organisations including the NHS and pharmaceutical companies. In the context of the UK's recovery from the elective backlog and the broader challenges facing healthcare organisations, these are more important than ever. Provided below are examples of the potential benefits that can be delivered through partnership working.

## Table 2: The benefits of partnership work – ‘the triple win’

Examples of the potential benefits that cross-sector working can achieve.

Benefits for patients	Benefits for the NHS	Benefits for industry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More patients receive evidence-based care</li> <li>• Care closer to home</li> <li>• Fewer hospital admissions</li> <li>• More information about conditions and treatment options</li> <li>• Better experience of the healthcare system</li> <li>• Health inequalities reduced</li> <li>• Improved outcomes</li> <li>• Improved quality of life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved quality of care delivery</li> <li>• Freeing up headspace</li> <li>• Accessing expertise and capability</li> <li>• Better use of resources</li> <li>• Better quality clinical outcomes</li> <li>• Lower hospital admissions</li> <li>• New approaches to preventative care and treatment developed</li> <li>• Addressing efficiency and system challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of an eligible patient population</li> <li>• Increase in the appropriate use of medicines aligned to local or national guidance</li> <li>• Better understanding of the challenges faced by healthcare organisations, including the NHS</li> <li>• Improved implementation of national treatment guidance</li> <li>• Real-world evidence and data generated to enhance research</li> </ul>

## Key insights

- There are opportunities for innovative support from industry in areas such as leadership development, change management and supporting new working arrangements for teams across health and care. Alongside clinical and care pathway knowledge, industry partners offer a range of practical resources and expertise relevant to NHS system ambitions, including project management, stakeholder involvement and multidisciplinary team mobilisation.
- The lack of clarity in terms of the ‘point of entry’ for building system partnerships was expressed by both ICS leaders and industry partners. These practical barriers need to be identified and overcome for the benefits of innovation to be accessed more effectively.
- There is a strong ambition to harness the value of innovative approaches across the NHS, industry, academia and other partners to help ICSs achieve their aims for the benefit of local communities.
- Partners need to continually reflect and act on how innovation is made real to people and how partnership support from industry can be aligned to system ambitions.
- In the context of system working, there is a potential perception that pharmaceutical industry and life sciences companies are only relevant to NHS partners. This can act as a barrier to collaboration, where some partners are not aware of the value of life sciences organisations in areas such as secondary prevention and reducing health inequalities.

## Case studies

- **Skill-mixing the primary care workforce to deliver integrated heart failure services in Leeds – Novartis**: In partnership with the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Novartis worked to create a new model of care for heart failure. The programme results in clear impacts for patients including every eligible patient receiving education to support self-management, regardless of the need to actively change their clinical intervention. The NHS benefited from pharmacists' knowledge being improved significantly, allowing for better quality care to be delivered.<sup>18</sup>
- **Optimising the care pathway to eliminate hepatitis C to improve outcomes and reduce healthcare inequalities for patients – Gilead Sciences**: Working in partnership with providers of addiction services and prison healthcare, Gilead Sciences supported system change to ensure that eligible hepatitis C virus (HCV) patients were receiving the care they deserve. Since May 2019, the partnership resulted in 11,746 people with HCV starting their treatment, as well as significant benefits for the NHS, including improved data integrity and flow across the pathway and expanded access across stakeholders.
- **Staff experience of the implementation of non-face-to-face (NF2F) consultations in non-surgical oncology clinics in a regional cancer centre – Bristol Myers Squibb Pharmaceuticals (BMS)**: Bristol Myers Squibb worked on a three-month project with the Weston Park Cancer Centre (WPCC), part of the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, to optimise patients' experiences and outcomes by contributing to the development of an end-to-end process for the management of patient assessment using face-to-face and non-face-to-face approaches. The project gave patients the opportunity to share their perspectives on a significant change in service delivery, influence future service development and allowed the NHS to gain an insight into both the patient's perspective as well as the staff perspective on recent changes in service delivery. (NO-GB-2300322 | November 2023).

# Masterclass 3: The missing million – tackling health inequality

**Focus:** How patients and systems are missing out on the benefits of innovation to improve outcomes and productivity.

**System challenge explored:** Health inequality and service optimisation.

**Date:** 28 February 2023

**Priority:** Support ICS leaders to use evidence of successful partnerships and evidence hosted on the ABPI's [library of case studies](#) to stimulate further cross-sector collaboration and drive awareness of good practice.

“ICSs have great potential to support collaboration and partnership working with industry to deliver improvements in clinical care for patients. This masterclass series also brings home the importance of cross-sector partnerships to help the NHS deliver on its overarching priorities and improve health outcomes across communities.”

Todd Manning, VP and General Manager, AbbVie UK

## Masterclass summary

Masterclass 3 focused on implementing the 13 recommendations drawn from the report [Transforming Lives, Improving Health Outcomes: Tackling the True Cost of Variation in Uptake of Innovative Medicines](#). The report builds on analysis by PwC which estimates that the UK economy would achieve £17.9 billion in additional productivity gains through the increased uptake of NICE-approved treatments.<sup>19</sup>

Participants from the masterclass cited the significant benefits that could be achieved if the report's recommendations were implemented. They highlighted the transformative role that innovative medicines can have on individual patient lives, as well as the significant benefits brought to the economy and society through greater patient, NHS and carer productivity. Participants stressed that for the NHS and the wider health and care system to survive and thrive for the benefit of its users, innovation at every stage and in every aspect is not only desirable but necessary.

A number of industry and NHS partnerships demonstrating the impact of collaboration across the health system were shared. It was clear that while success can occur when partnerships are able to thrive, such achievements often occur only at a local level and not all patients are able to benefit. National scaling of successful local initiatives remains a challenge, even when best practice is demonstrated, and patient outcomes are improved. Failure to spread success across the NHS exacerbates health inequalities, and it is essential that HINs, ICS leaders and industry share learning more effectively across localities, regions and UK nations to address these issues.



## Key insights

- Adoption of innovation is challenged by the fact that NHS leaders face ongoing operational pressures.
- Strategic partnerships between the NHS, patient organisations and industry are essential to create a thriving health and life sciences ecosystem.
- Opportunities for impactful partnerships include tackling the slower and inequitable uptake of innovative medicines which contributes to poorer health outcomes for the UK, including for those populations currently disproportionately impacted by disease.
- [Core20PLUS5](#) is a helpful example of a national approach designed to support ICSs to drive targeted action in healthcare inequalities improvement.
- [Innovation for Healthcare Inequalities Programme](#) is another positive example of a programme that addresses local health inequalities by supporting systems to improve access to innovations.
- Many conversations on this topic concentrate on secondary care. It is vital to shift mindsets to allow the creation of pathways that ensure specialist drugs are available to patients at the most appropriate point on the pathway, acknowledging that this may vary from person to person.
- System value propositions are essential to effectively implement innovative medicines. Real-world evaluation frameworks are required from the offset and can help with predictive health models to demonstrate value.
- Upskilling primary care pathways could help to grow primary care clinicians' confidence and competence in prescribing directly.

## Case studies

- **Campaign supports patients to seek help and respond to drop in referral rates – MSD**: The Do It For Yourself campaign was designed to support lung cancer disease awareness within some of the most socio-economically deprived regions across England. It focused on areas that exhibit some of the highest levels of lung cancer disease burden, as well as those that had the steepest declines in patient presentation when the COVID-19 pandemic began. The programme positively impacted patients. When the two-week-wait referral time figures for the two-month period before the campaign (April and May 2021) were compared with the period during and one month directly after the campaign (July and August 2021), there was an increase in the number of two-week-wait referrals within six of the eight cancer alliances where the campaign took place. Similarly, by acting to design and implement a lung cancer symptom awareness campaign while the NHS was focusing on the pandemic response, the Do It For Yourself campaign was able to positively impact the decline of lung cancer referrals during a critical time.

# Masterclass 4: A new public-private partnership?

**Focus:** The role of industry in supporting systems to drive transformation.

**System challenge explored:** Medicines and service optimisation.

**Date:** 23 May 2023

**Priority:** Support NHS and industry leaders to enhance their understanding of partnership operating frameworks and sources of assurance, including the ABPI Code of Practice.

“In order to achieve the greatest positive impact across the health and care ecosystem, partners need to align capabilities, capacity and culture from across NHS, industry, academia and elsewhere. Support from NHS Confederation and ABPI is helpful in strengthening these connections and guiding implementation.”

Arjun Sikand, Director of Innovation, NHS Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System

## Masterclass summary

Masterclass 4 focused on the key impacts that partnership working can have, as well as the barriers and core principles required for a successful partnership.

### Impact of partnership working

**Better patient outcomes:** Participants were clear that partnership working has the potential to change the lives of millions of individuals and families across the nation. As evidenced by the case studies featured from page 20, partnerships can support delivery of NHS priorities and enable the ‘triple win’ of improved patient outcomes, more efficient use of NHS resources and evidence of impact for industry and have the potential of being replicated and scaled across the NHS.

**Reducing operational pressures:** Participants highlighted that partnerships could play a critical role in reducing operational pressures, such as primary care access and urgent and emergency care, at a time when there are significant constraints on the NHSE’s finances and workforce.

**Supporting preventative care:** Cross-sector collaborations can support health services towards moving resources upstream on the care pathway towards prevention, particularly in the form of secondary preventions, which can ensure patients remain healthier for longer. Indeed, the use of earlier interventions will pay dividends for the NHS by reducing repeat usage of the services, freeing up resources and allowing greater scope to reduce the elective backlog.

## Barriers to partnership working

Participants also highlighted areas where inhibitors to partnership working can exist:

**Lack of shared understanding of process and assurance:** An understandable variance in system and industry governance structures and lack of understanding around how joint collaborations can be established between different systems and companies can confuse potential stakeholders and act as a barrier to effective partnership working. While flexibility to adapt to local circumstances is key for ICSs, systems and partners will benefit from clarifying and communicating strategic priorities and decision-making processes, in order to identify potential alignment and making engagement collaboration easier to commence and facilitate.

**Cultural barriers:** Participants highlighted that there can be a degree of mistrust and anxiety towards working with industry, which, coupled with scepticism towards industry motives, can discourage innovation and new practices.

**Challenge of upscaling:** While excellent examples of partnership working exist, there is a lack of concerted effort to systematically scale these successes.

## Core principles enabling effective partnership working

The masterclass cohort also considered key principles that need to underpin a successful partnership:

**Clear frameworks and agreements:** To ensure that cross-sector collaborations can operate in a smooth and efficient manner, clear joint frameworks for partnership working must be established. These must consider clear contracting and data-sharing agreements that also allow for other stakeholders from across the

life sciences ecosystem to support fulfilment, such as HINs and patient organisations.

**A shared vision:** A shared vision is critical to reduce cultural barriers between the NHS and industry. This can be achieved by articulating a common set of values and collective purpose from the outset of a partnership and ensuring these are backed up by transparent and accountable project management mechanisms. As part of this, joint working agreements should effectively address process and evaluate overall outcomes. To ensure understanding of what is possible within cross-sector partnerships, it is also important for ICS leaders to enhance their understanding of the ABPI Code of Practice. This can be facilitated through training sessions offered by the Prescription Medicines Code of Practice Authority (PMCPA) or other providers.

**Sustaining partnerships:** Participants also made it clear that partnerships must take a sustainable approach, with future commissioning built in to help ensure that successful projects can eventually be scaled and adopted across systems.

## Key insights

- The topic of innovation is a crucial one for the NHS and the wider health and care system. However, leaders face the ongoing pressure of meeting high demand with insufficient capacity while simultaneously trying to reimagine services transformed by a new focus on population health, partnership working and innovation.
- Public-private partnerships in healthcare offer various opportunities and face certain obstacles. These partnerships, when done well, can drive innovation, improve service delivery, expand infrastructure and enhance the well-being of individuals and communities.

- It is crucial to establish transparent governance frameworks, clear accountability mechanisms and equitable distribution of benefits to ensure the success and sustainability of these collaborations. This may also require joint efforts to strengthen trust and nurture a pro-innovation culture across the NHS and industry.
- ICSs present a real opportunity to drive accountability and uptake of new and innovative treatments and technologies – and consequently to reduce health inequalities and support broader social and economic development.
- The NHS Confederation and the ABPI want to support NHS teams to think long term, with improved awareness of available innovations, greater collaboration with relevant partners, more effective risk taking and, ultimately, improved uptake of innovations that boost patient outcomes and increase productivity.
- Whether through capacity building and knowledge exchange, service delivery innovation, research and development or financing and investment, there are numerous opportunities to leverage the strengths of both sectors in the interest of local communities.
- With the completion of the final masterclass, it was clear that there was a strong appetite for partnership working, particularly if clear guardrails and assurance can be put in place to ensure alignment with strategic priorities and joint expectations of way of working.

## Case studies

- **Proving the feasibility of a postal inhaler recycling scheme to help reduce the environmental impact of medicines – Chiesi Ltd:** Take AIR (Action for Inhaler Recycling) is a Chiesi Ltd-funded scheme supported by University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) and Leicestershire and Rutland Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC). In February 2021, Chiesi Ltd, UHL and LPC collaborated to develop Take AIR, the first and only scheme allowing people to dispose of and recycle empty, unwanted or out-of-date inhalers through the post. There were significant benefits for patients and the scheme was well received, with all patients surveyed agreeing that the scheme should be available across the UK. Moreover, Take AIR also benefited the NHS by saving the equivalent of an estimated 305.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions from entering the atmosphere.
- **Optimisation of cardiometabolic pathway – Boehringer Ingelheim UKIE:** Working with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Boehringer Ingelheim UKIE established a new innovative cardiometabolic clinic. Since its founding, the ‘one-stop clinic’ has helped reduce the waiting list burden for diabetes review. While some patients still need a review by a diabetes specialist, many receive optimisation of their cardio-renal-metabolic medicines and risk factors without needing a referral to the diabetes service. Thanks to the success of this clinic, patients were empowered with the tools needed to adopt healthier lifestyles. For example, 38 per cent of patients who attended clinic were provided with a home blood pressure monitor to better optimise blood pressure and 65 per cent of smokers were provided smoking cessation advice, including the prescribing of smoking cessation therapy. Similarly, the NHS benefited from improved workforce utilisation, with the upskilling pharmacists allowing consultant physicians to manage more complex patients. (NP-GB-103876 - October 2023).



# Further reading

- [Transforming Lives, Improving Health Outcomes: Tackling the True Cost of Variation In Uptake Of Innovative Medicines](#)
- [NHS-industry partnership case studies library](#)
- [Working Together - A Guide for The NHS, Healthcare Organisations and Pharmaceutical Companies](#)
- [Transforming Lives, Raising Productivity](#)
- [Scaling Innovation Within Healthcare Systems: Practical Considerations](#)
- [The State of Integrated Care Systems 2022/23: Riding The Storm](#)
- [How does the NHS compare to the health care systems of other countries?](#)
- [From Delegation To Integration: Lessons From Early Delegation Of Primary Pharmacy, Optometry And Dentistry Commissioning To Integrated Care Boards](#)

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