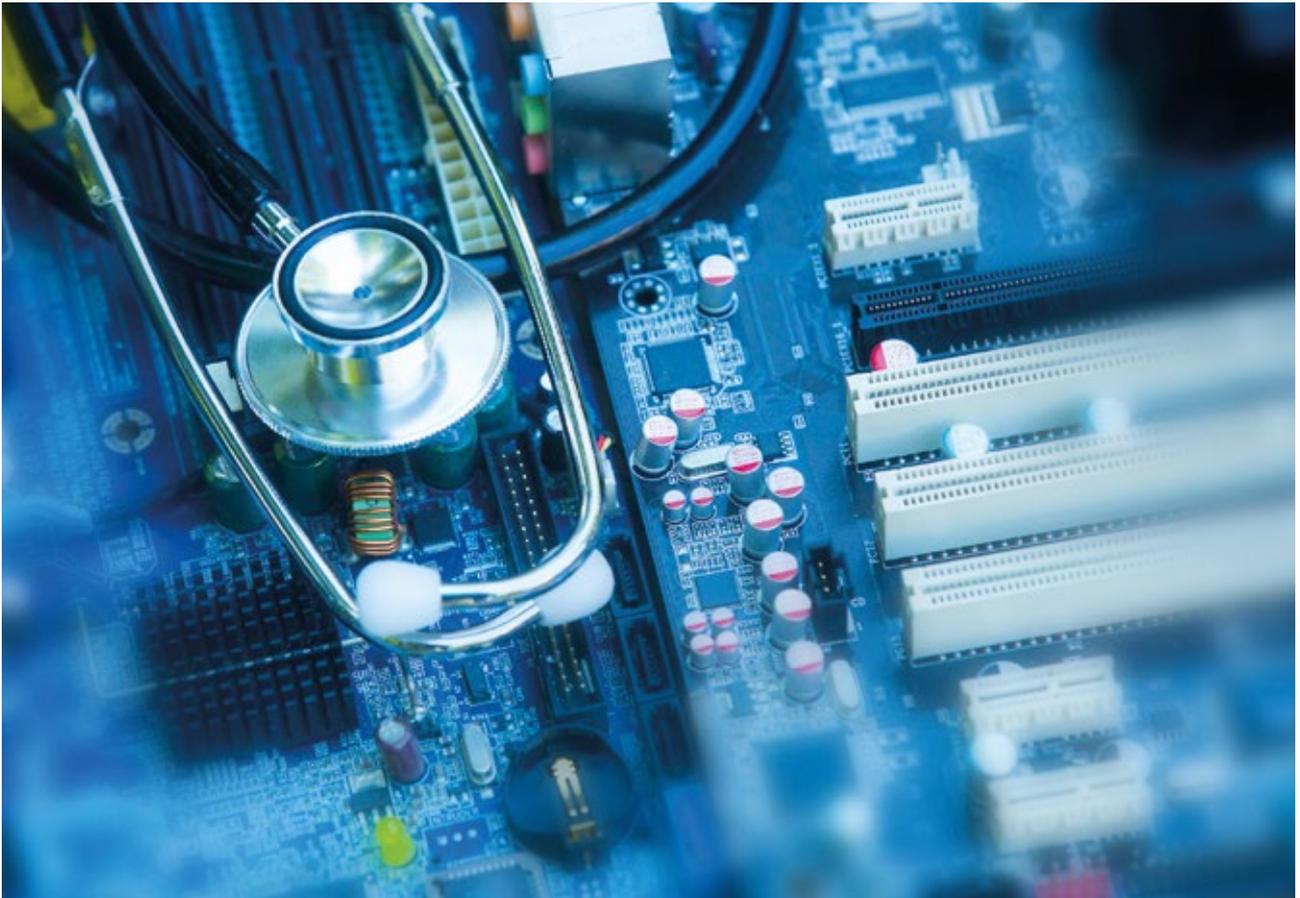


# Bringing innovation into healthcare practice



# Putting innovation at the top of the health and social care agenda

We have established a 45-strong network of senior decision makers across our entire health and social care community to facilitate the development and adoption of innovative technologies and practices. These include senior management, who are aware of their organisations' key immediate priorities and can provide us with decisions and delegate responsibilities; and operational managers who can support us in delivering projects on the ground and act as champions for innovative projects.

We are also helping the healthcare community embrace innovation by providing a range of supporting template documents: from confidentiality and collaboration agreements to model contracts.



## Mapping the innovation landscape

We have been the first to map out the Health and Life Sciences business sector in the West of England area. In doing so we have created a 435-strong regional register of medical technology, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies to continue to drive up and spread innovation in our healthcare sector. These contacts, plus others further afield, which have connected with us through a variety of channels, all have the potential to bring new ideas to the way we deliver healthcare in the West of England.



## Establishing a culture of collaboration

To date we have:

- provided advanced stage assistance to 63 companies wanting to work with our healthcare community;
- supported 16 businesses, 30 plus health and social care providers and four universities and research bodies in 14 live collaborative projects in the West of England;
- facilitated £12m plus in funding to support collaborative projects;
- created a Health Innovation Channel which features more than 20 videos of businesses looking for collaborations as well as successful partnerships between companies and the area's healthcare sector;
- established an electronic partnering system which has resulted in 100 plus new introductions being arranged between interested parties;
- joined forces with three other AHSNs in Southern England to develop a Healthcare Innovation Programme with Europe's top University Business Incubator SETsquared. This has been designed for entrepreneurs from the private and healthcare sectors;
- published a regular Funding Finder bulletin and Health and Life Sciences newsletter which together have 500 subscribers.

## Boosting the local economy

We have helped generate £12m plus for the economy through funding we have been involved in generating for collaborative projects.

To maximise economic growth opportunities from collaborative innovations, we are working closely with three Local Enterprise Partnerships to:

- provide outreach events and skills development;
- develop a growth vision for the sector;
- advise on strategic investment priorities;
- lead on specific health and life science groups.

We are also working to develop new ways of procuring innovation in order to simplify processes and boost partnerships between industry and the healthcare sector.

## Working with Universities

We have supported 10 joint projects linking the healthcare industry and academia, which have generated £6m plus in externally funded grants. These have included the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, West of England and Swansea. Examples include:

- supporting clinical trials for the Plessey Impulse cardiac monitor at the Clinical Trials Evaluation Unit at the University of Bristol;
- investigating social prescribing of wellbeing tools in a community setting with Digital Algorithms, University of Bath and healthcare services provider Sirona;
- supporting the Innovation 4 Growth fund for small businesses run from the University of the West of England.



## Directing innovation where it's most needed

To ensure innovation funding is directed at priority areas, we have worked closely with our healthcare providers to identify their key challenges and to connect them with businesses who have the background to provide a solution. We provide funding for these local challenges and gain matched funding from industry partners.

For example, we issued a call for new tools for self-management of diabetes in partnership with our seven Clinical Commissioning Groups, two NHS Acute Trusts and three community providers. We have received 27 applications from international companies, corporates and SMEs, and will be working with a selection to evaluate their solutions in collaboration with our health service community.

We have also been the conduit for national challenges such as the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI Healthcare) and we have directly issued a number of national challenges to companies.

Through SBRI-led challenges we have helped facilitate £5.5m of funding for projects focussed on patient safety, medicines adherence and child and adolescent mental health.



## Mobilising citizen-led innovation

We have successfully engaged members of the public in designing the healthcare solutions of the future through the launch of the Design Together, Live Better challenge. This has involved 100 plus citizens, including those with challenging health conditions, coming up with innovative ideas to maximise independent living. Twelve product designs were 'pioneered' and three have now been put forward to be developed as prototypes including: a seat harness that can be fastened with one hand, a "companion" trolley and a portable bidet.

## Enhancing learning and knowledge development

We have run outreach events, focus groups and workshops on a range of topics for healthcare professionals, businesses, universities and members of the public. These have covered telecommunications; modelling healthcare systems; nutrition, exercise and health; supporting self-management and care; commercialisation of Apps; and how members of the public can be involved in the co-design of new solutions.

Our one day masterclass on entrepreneurship in the NHS, three day Healthcare Innovation programme and entrepreneurs club for GPs have attracted more than 140 attendees.

# An injection of healthcare innovation

The West of England Academic Health Science Network is making great progress in putting innovation at the heart of healthcare by supporting collaborations between our health service community, industry and universities.

To date we have engaged with more than 450 innovative companies and a significant number of senior decision makers within our health and social care community. Currently we are supporting 14 live projects, which are tackling some key healthcare challenges in areas such as atrial fibrillation, medicines adherence, independent living, mental health, trauma and diabetes.

In line with our commitment to deliver a patient-led health service, we are also drawing on the experiences of people living with or supporting those with health problems to develop new products.

We hope that our achievements will inspire businesses, our healthcare providers and universities, as well as patients and the public to continue to come forward with ideas to collaborate with us and help drive innovation further in our region and beyond.

## Professor Lars Sundstrom

*Director for Enterprise & Translation*

*West of England Academic Health Science Network*



The West of England Academic Health Science Network focuses on four key areas:

- The needs of the patient and local people
- Accelerating the adoption of innovation into practice to improve clinical outcomes and patient experience
- Building a culture of partnership and collaboration
- Making a meaningful contribution to the local and UK economies

Companies we are working with include:



This report is also available in large print (16pt) for people who are visually impaired.

For more information on developing innovation collaborations in the healthcare sector please contact:

[West of England Academic Health Science Network South Plaza](#)

