ICB Innovation Adoption Learning Collaborative

Summary of innovation

The ICB Innovation Adoption Learning Collaborative, commissioned by NHS England and NHS Alliance, aimed to understand how integrated care boards (ICBs) can strengthen their capability to adopt innovation at pace and scale and create a platform for knowledge sharing.

Innovation is key to supporting the NHS, but adopting innovation at scale is more challenging than ever. There is a critical need to create the right conditions to optimise innovation, and a system-wide approach to innovation is considered fundamental.

The project consisted of three interconnected activities, delivered by Health Innovation Wessex (HIW) and Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria (HINENC): Attitudes Toward Innovation Survey (ATIS); Innovation Design Service (IDS); and a Community of Practice.

Across the survey and sessions, individuals reported openness to innovation, but lower confidence in organisational readiness to adopt and scale it. To accelerate adoption, ICBs need to create consistent conditions, governance routes, leadership permission and resourcing, enabling innovations to move from ideas to routine practice.

Network support

- ✓ **ATIS:** Shared with system leaders in 42 ICBs with 56 responses.
- ✓ **IDS:** 2 sessions, 20 participants each. Design thinking methodology was used to enable rapid discovery of solutions. 3 prioritised areas – strategies and culture, staff confidence and training.
- ✓ **Community of Practice:** 1 session, 18 participants.

Scalability prospect / next steps

The report has been shared with NHS England and NHS Alliance.

Impact of innovation

The project gained insights and solutions to aid the understanding of how ICBs can strengthen their capability to adopt innovation at pace and scale. Recommendations included:

- ✓ **NHSE/NHS Alliance:** National expectations, incentives and practical adoption support can reduce variation and accelerate scale.
- ✓ **ICBs:** Align innovation to national policy, embed adoption into strategic commissioning cycles, strengthen governance routes and leadership permission, consider resourcing & workforce capability and consider a community of practice to support shared learning.
- ✓ **Providers:** Focus on mission-led, shared goals, take responsibility for governance of innovation with clear organisational structures and decision-making, offer support and training to embed innovation as core business, ensure that innovation is organisationally aligned, safe, value-driven and does not unintentionally create conflict, duplication or competing approaches across departments**.**
- ✓ **Clinical leaders:** Enable activities to support teams to innovate using proven methodologies and support individuals to develop confidence and competence.

Health Innovation Network
Local change, national impact

Health Innovation Wessex

Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria