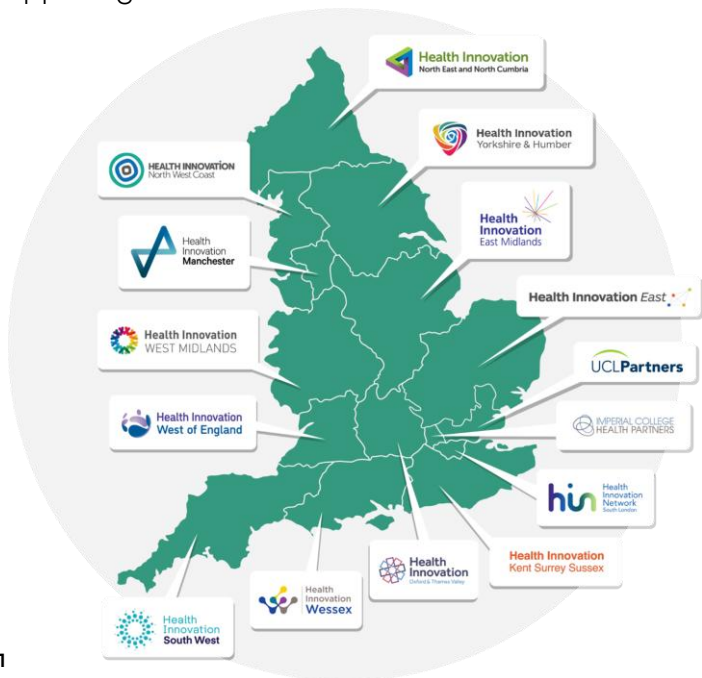




# Innovating and improving healthcare

## We are health innovation experts, bridging the gap between ideas and real world impact.

Our multi-disciplinary team of professionals advises innovators who are developing solutions that are ready for adoption, while supporting health and social care teams to test and scale new technologies that tackle the NHS's most pressing challenges.



**We're proud to be a part of a national network of 15 local organisations working together funded by the NHS and government to deliver change and impact by driving health innovation across the NHS at pace.**

Since 2018, nationally, almost five million patients have benefited from our national programmes and we've leveraged £3 billion of investment into the economy.

**284**  
innovators supported to develop their ideas

**6,425**  
hours of support provided by our teams

**£23.6m**  
leveraged in funding and private investment for innovators

# Health innovation is essential to supporting our rural and coastal communities across Wessex

We are health innovation experts, bridging the gap between ideas and real world impact.



Our diverse demography and geography mean new ways of working are needed to meet our population's needs. By sitting at the heart of our region's innovation ecosystem, we help **find, test and scale** solutions that are tailored to our people and our place. From **digitally enabled neighbourhood care** and **AI-powered monitoring**, to **point-of-care testing** and **new innovation models** that bring **treatment closer** to home, innovation is helping shift care from **hospital to community**, from **sickness to prevention** and from **analogue to digital**.

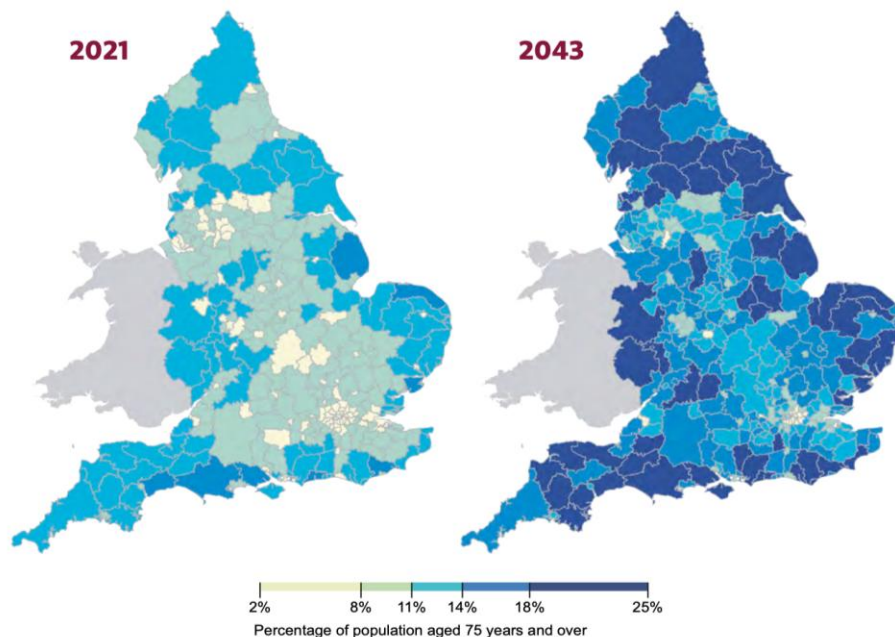
**Our work doesn't just improve health outcomes – it boosts productivity, supports our workforce, strengthens local life science industries and help people stay well and stay working.**

**Together with our members, stakeholders and partners across Wessex, we focus on closing the gap between the distinctive needs of rural and coastal communities and the scale of innovation required to meet them.**



## Our Wessex health challenge

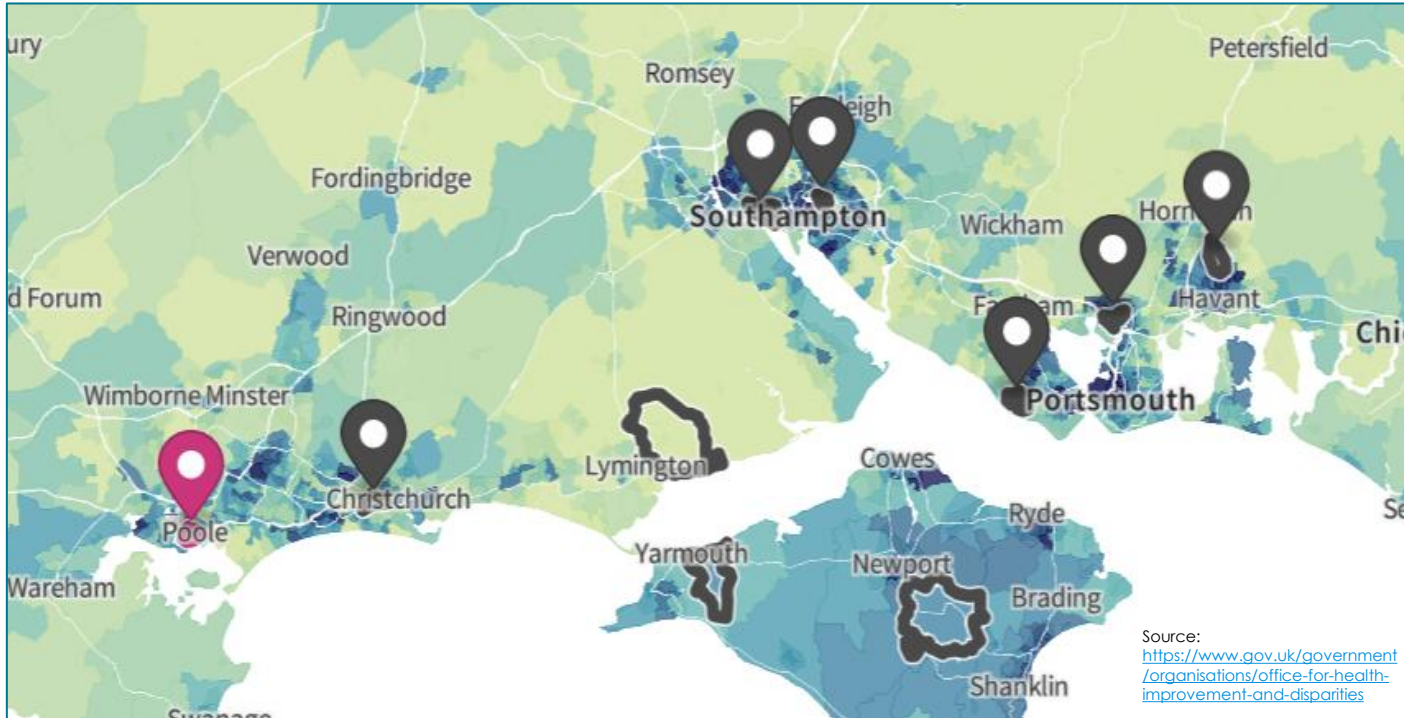
We identify scalable innovations that will meet the needs of our local population to age well and to live longer, independent lives within their communities.



Map of England showing the projected rise in the percentage of the population ages 75 years and over



# Our Wessex health challenge



Variation of health and disability deprivation across Wessex across both rural and coastal communities

Source:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-health-improvement-and-disparities>

Health & disability deprivation: **Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole O44C** is more deprived than 92% of neighbourhoods in England



Each pin shows a deprived neighbourhood, demonstrating the rural and coastal community divide

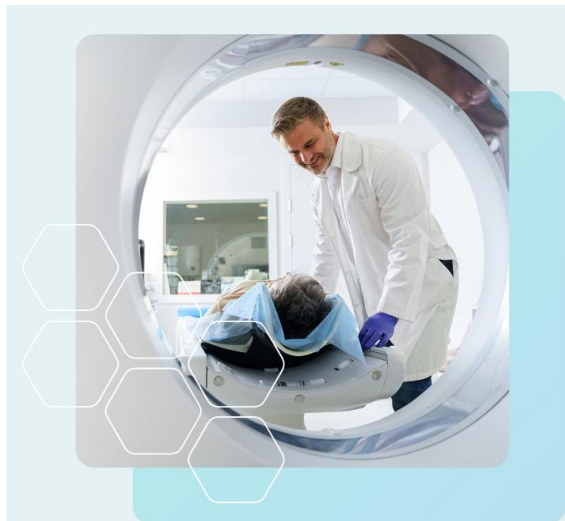


With such variability in our health deprivation across Wessex, what are the key health challenges within our rural and coastal communities that Health Innovation Wessex are addressing ?





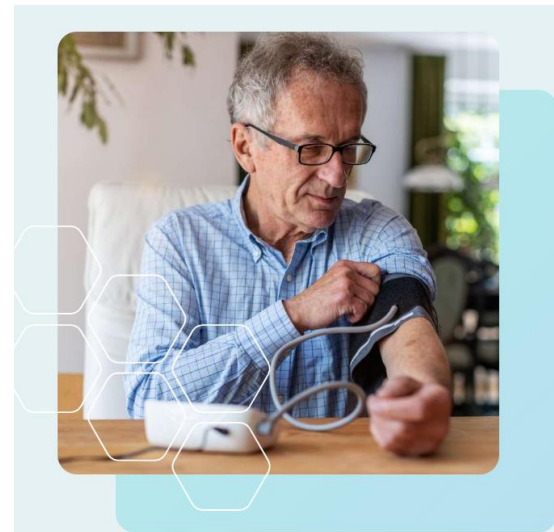
## What health challenges in rural and coastal communities are Health Innovation Wessex addressing?



Early cancer diagnosis



Polypharmacy



Cardiovascular disease

# Improving colorectal cancer outcomes in deprived and under-served communities

Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK, accounting for over 12% of all newly reported cases, with poorer outcomes affecting those living in communities with higher social deprivation.

Source: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/bowel-cancer>

The challenge: While the use of the NICE-approved faecal immunochemical test (FIT) is one way of supporting earlier detection, uptake remains low in some communities, particularly in areas of deprivation.



# How has HIW supported improving colorectal cancer outcomes in deprived and under-served communities?

Health Innovation Wessex (HIW) supported NHS Dorset Cancer Programme to engage with people across the county to understand their awareness and experiences of using FIT.

## This included:

- **Survey** to the Dorset public and those less likely to complete a test (people experiencing homelessness, living with learning disability, fishermen, farmers, and construction workers) to gather insight and identify interventions that would support uptake of the test by people with suspected colorectal cancer
- **Instructional videos and standardised patient information** were then tested through a second public survey and directly with the Core20PLUS5\* groups to understand if they would encourage people to complete a test.



- Outcomes of this work were independently **evaluated** by HIW to evidence its uptake and use for wider scaling. This provided benefit to both the NHS Dorset Cancer Programme and the innovator to enable a deep understanding of the impact within different communities.

## What was the impact?

Engagement with over **900** members of the public through an online survey led by Dorset ICB to support the programme of work.

C the Signs was implemented in all **73 practices** across all **18 primary care networks in Dorset**.

Work started with Mast Ltd to change the transparency of the packaging for completed kits, following patient feedback that it was embarrassing to return these in person. This update is anticipated to benefit patients across England.

Funding of **£292,000** was received from NHS England and Wessex Cancer Alliance, with industry providing **£30,000** in kind for evaluation.

**A clinical decision support tool, C the Signs, was also implemented** across all Dorset primary care networks (PCNs) to enable teams to track and monitor patient uptake of FIT. During its use, it was also used by primary care teams to make over **3500** suspected cancer referrals, resulting in **36** cancers detected.



“This project is a great example of the power public engagement can have on influencing how we make diagnostic tests more accessible.”

**Anna Wykes**  
Programme Manager for Cancer Care,  
Health Innovation Wessex



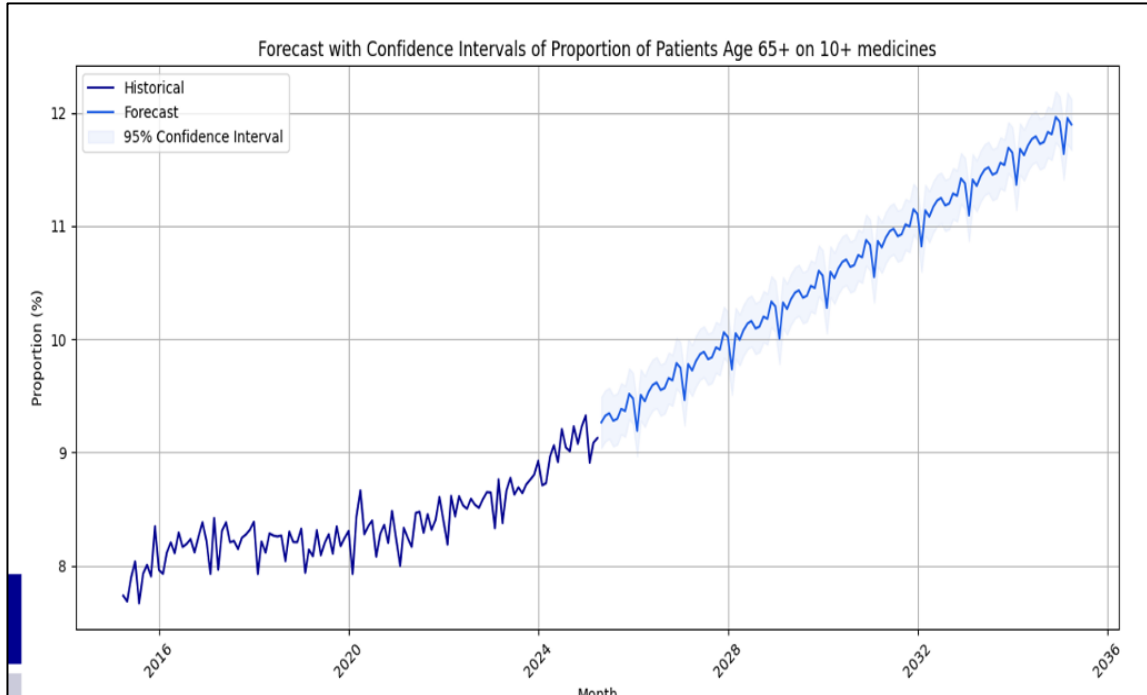
## Why is it important to address problematic polypharmacy in rural and coastal communities?

- Polypharmacy simply means the taking of multiple medicine. As we get older, this can increase the risk of harm.
- Problematic polypharmacy is used to describe when people experience problems either in the number of medicines that they are taking or clinical challenges around the combination of medicines that they are taking, or both.
- With a growing, ageing population across Wessex, our nationally renowned Polypharmacy Programme is pivotal in supporting rural and coastal communities in living well in reducing problematic polypharmacy.
- Data from the NHSBSA Polypharmacy Prescribing Comparators for March 2026 shows that – **765,776 patients aged 65** and over in England were prescribed 10 or more medicines, equal to 9.1% of the population.
- If the current trend continues, an estimated **1,148,279 patients aged 65 and over will be prescribed 10 or more medicines by 2036**, an additional 415,722 patients.
- 16.5% of unplanned hospital admission are caused by Adverse Drug Reactions with polypharmacy being a major driver. Current studies suggest that this might drive an additional 77.7k unplanned hospital admissions (adults) annually in England. (<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/7/e055551>)





# Why is it important to address problematic polypharmacy in rural and coastal communities?



Utilising an exponential smoothing model on current trends and forecasting forward 10 years, data from NHS BSA Polypharmacy prescribing comparators for England illustrates the growth in patients age **65+ on 10+ medicines by 2036**

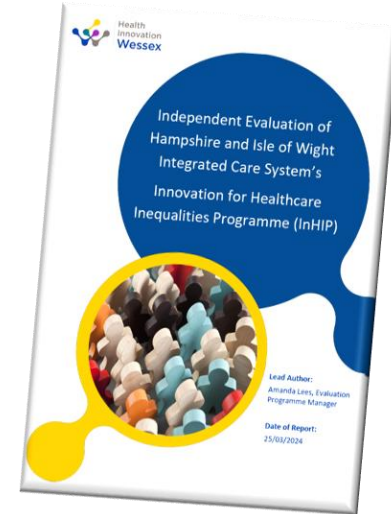


CVD causes one death every three minutes in the UK, with those in the most deprived areas four time more likely to die. 40% of people with hypertension in the UK are undiagnosed, and blood pressure monitoring is key. NHSE's Innovation for Healthcare Inequalities Programme addressed local healthcare inequalities in underserved populations.



# Independent Evaluations – Innovation for Healthcare Inequalities Programme (InHIP)

- The local focus of InHIP within Hampshire and Isle of Wight was to **increase hypertension (high blood pressure) and atrial fibrillation clinical checks** for people living in the **most deprived areas** of the region.
- The objective of the pilot was to **increase access to services** through outreach and engagement of local at-risk populations at community-based cardiovascular disease (CVD) testing events.
- Five PCNs located in deprived areas of Southampton (**Central PCN, Portsdown Practice Group, Woolston and Townhill PCN, Living Well PCN, and Strawberry Health PCN**) participated on the project and ran community-based events.



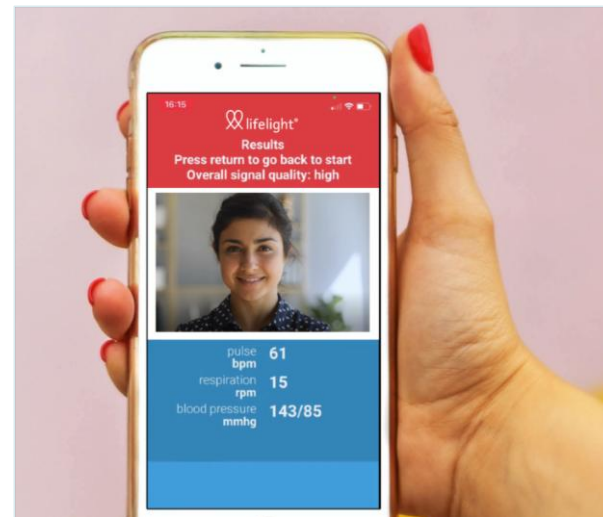
Scan to visit our website  
to read the report



## What impact did our InHIP approach make have on our local communities?

"There are loads of barriers, aren't there, to making an appointment, having the courage to go in, the worry about what you might find. And particularly with blood pressure, if it's all being taken in a really relaxed environment, we're pulling out the best in people. So, I think **if we can take any services to where people are at, it reduces the barriers, it makes it more straightforward, and that has to be a good thing.**"

**Astrid Vaswani, Minister, Thornhill Baptist Church**





# How can we help you?

## Developing innovations

We can help innovators and change makers working within rural and coastal communities to reach health and social care markets faster to propel their success, generate economic growth and improve patient outcomes.

## Testing and evaluating

We know that evaluation and data measurement can be complex and time-consuming. We can help you evidence the impact of your intervention on rural and coastal communities, utilising our extensive experience across health and social care to design a range of evaluation services tailored to your needs.

## Supporting adoption and spread

We recognise innovation adoption is hard. Implementing innovation is even more challenging within rural and coastal communities. We can work with you and local health and care systems to adopt and scale proven innovations using evidence-based tools and frameworks to help serve diverse populations.

## Creating the conditions to innovate and bring about change within rural and coastal communities.

We help health and care systems unlock innovation that aligns with their priorities and drives real impact. Our practical tools equip you and your teams to assess readiness, adopt proven technologies, and foster a culture of change within these communities.



Scan to visit our  
website and find  
out more



## Evaluation expertise

With first hand experience across the system, we know how to navigate complexity, engage professionals and capture meaningful data that leads to real change.

We will work closely with you as partners to create meaningful evaluations of innovative solutions within rural and coastal communities.

We can help you assess the value of a new product or process in real world settings, quickly, so you can act decisively and stay ahead of the curve.



Scan to visit our website  
to read the report

### Our services include:

- Evaluation co-design
- Impact framework design
- Full Service evaluation
- Rapid generation of insights
- Budget Impact Modelling
- Real World Evaluations of innovations
- Implementation and De-implementation expertise

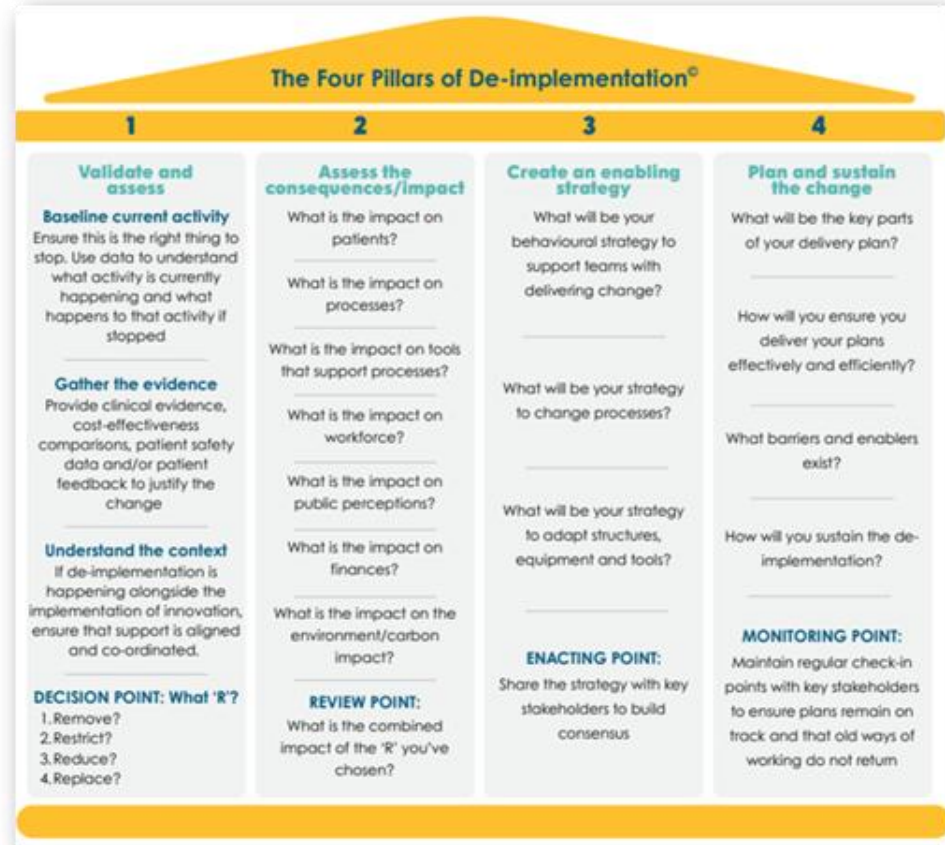
### Insight team

We are a team of academics, analysts, former clinicians and change managers with extensive expertise in evaluating innovation in health and social care. Established in 2015, our evaluations generate evidence and an in-depth understanding of implementation, enabling clients to make highly informed decisions. To date we have completed 100+ evaluations.

# Making way for innovation: the role of de-implementation

There is an integral role of **de-implementation** alongside innovation adoption. Utilising our methodology will enable you and your team understand the challenges to be addressed within our local communities.

It provides a firm structure for colleagues to consider how previous technology or ways of working are gracefully retired from use while the workforce is also supported to enable change within their teams and their patients.



# Our de-implementation support

De-implementation is not just about stopping something. It is about making space for something better.

Consider this approach when **exploring innovation and new ways of working to support rural and coastal communities – we can help train you and your team!**



Scan to visit our  
website to find  
out more