



Health
Innovation
Wessex

Impact Report 2025-26



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Office for
Life Sciences

Part of the
**Health
Innovation
Network**



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Foreword



In 2025–26, we worked with local and national partners to scale innovation, improve outcomes and support economic growth by transforming how health and care services find, test and implement evidence-based innovations.

This Impact Report 2025–26 reflects the strength of Health Innovation Wessex and the collective effort of our partners across integrated care boards, NHS trusts and primary care, universities and industry. Together, we have accelerated innovation, improved outcomes and supported economic growth, delivering impact that directly aligns with the ambitions of the NHS 10-Year Health Plan and the UK Life Sciences Sector Vision.

Over the past year, we have focused on the work that matters most: transforming how health and care services find, test, implement and scale evidence-based innovations that improve lives, strengthen the NHS and contribute to economic growth.

Our programmes have supported earlier diagnosis, strengthened personalised and preventative care, and enabled the shift towards digitally-enabled, community-based services. These are central commitments of the NHS 10-Year Health Plan, and our delivery model ensures that innovation is not an abstract concept but a practical tool for improving lives.

Our approach is rooted in collaboration. We work across the whole ecosystem with ICBs, provider trusts, primary care, universities, research organisations, local government and industry, to co-develop solutions that are innovative, scalable and sustainable.

This partnership model is essential to realising the Life Sciences Sector Vision, which calls for stronger adoption pathways, better access to real-world evidence, and deeper collaboration between the NHS and industry to unlock growth and productivity.

We have continued to invest in our capabilities, particularly in data, digital and genomics. These are not only enablers of innovation; they are the foundations of a modern, responsive and equitable health system. Through platforms such as the Wessex Secure Data Environment and our collaboration with the Central and South Genomic Medicine Service, we are harnessing cutting-edge science to inform new care pathways and accelerate the adoption of life-changing technologies.

We also recognise that innovation is about people. Our values of inclusivity, collaboration and curiosity are embedded in everything we do. We are committed to fostering a culture where our team, partners and communities feel empowered to look at challenges differently, share ideas and co-create solutions.

Our mission and our delivery against the national three shifts from hospital to community, analogue to digital and treatment to prevention demonstrate our ongoing commitment to transforming health and care through innovation. Together, this positions Health Innovation Wessex as a trusted leader in our local ecosystem, supporting our partners to deliver solutions that meet the health and care priorities of our population now and in future years.



Fiona Driscoll
Chair
Health Innovation Wessex



Nicola Bent
Chief Executive Officer
Health Innovation Wessex

Our core missions

Our work is driven both through NHS England and Office for Life Sciences commissions and local delivery programmes which are co-created to align with the strategic needs of our integrated care systems.

Our core objectives from NHS England are to:

- Generate a rich pipeline of demonstrably useful evidence-based innovations
- Support the spread and adoption of proven evidence-based innovations across England.

We are the delivery arm to support the provision of the national patient safety programmes:

- Maternity and Neonatal
- Medicines Safety
- System Safety
- Managing Deterioration and Martha's Rule.

Our four areas of focused delivery enable Health Innovation Wessex to deliver a pipeline of innovation for adoption and scale, which support improved patient outcomes and drives growth both for our region and the wider UK economy.

In 2025-26 we continued to develop our business portfolio to create impact for our member organisations, such as through the offer of health economics and data analytics capabilities, genomics innovations, real world evidence and evaluation support, as well as the system benefits derived from working with industry partners.

1

Finding and connecting innovators to health and care systems

2

Developing, testing and evaluating innovations in the real world

3

Adopting and spreading innovations

4

Creating the conditions to innovate and bring about change

2025-26: The Wessex year in numbers

Local



Over
300
companies and
310
innovations supported
in Wessex in 2025-26



Innovative triage has
resolved **60%+**
of maternity enquiries
without attending
healthcare services,
reducing pressure on
frontline teams



1,100
Squeezy app licences
deployed to improve
access to women's
health support and
self-management tools



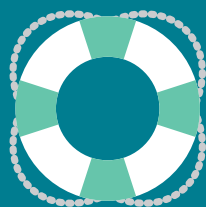
220%
increase in structured
medication reviews
across participating
primary care
networks



600+
Martha's Rule escalation
calls made since October
2024, demonstrating
increased patient and
family empowerment



More than
4,200
hours of support
provided by our
Industry team



50
babies' lives saved
through earlier
recognition and escalation
of maternity risks



724
clinicians attended
training courses to
improve medicines
safety



£143,000
secured for clinics
supporting earlier
detection of
oesophageal cancer



300
Pocketalk translation
devices purchased
to improve inclusive
maternity care

2025-26: The year in numbers

National



More than
2.1 million
patients have
benefited
from Health Innovation
Network programmes



Almost
£1.5 billion
investment leveraged



Over
2,300
innovators supported
nationally



More than
1,500
jobs created or
safeguarded





Analogue to digital

We support the development, adoption and spread of new technologies and digital approaches to modernise the NHS across a range of clinical areas, to improve health outcomes, system efficiency and economic activity.

Case study: Inclusive communication in maternity care

The health system strives to provide inclusive care and language barriers remain a critical challenge. The NHS spends approximately £64 million per year on translation and interpreting services (2024-25), with costs rising annually due to increased demand from a linguistically diverse population.

A local departmental audit at Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust found that not all non-English speaking service users were offered access to interpretation services consistently.

Maternity and neonatal services at the Trust support many women for whom English is not a first language, which creates barriers to timely and safe care. Pre-arranging translators is not always possible, and using family members is not best practice.

Pocketalk is an innovation that bridges this gap, enhancing translation services by enabling real-time communication at the point of care. Its two-way, multi-sensory translation device provides access to over 90 languages and improves communication and quality of care.

The handheld AI-powered translation device can be used during conversations between patients, carers and healthcare professionals. Pocketalk supports over 90 languages, aiming to enhance patient safety, increase efficient care and ensure more patients feel heard.



Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust listened to their patients and staff. Surveys were undertaken asking women if they felt that their ethnicity impacted on their care in Salisbury.

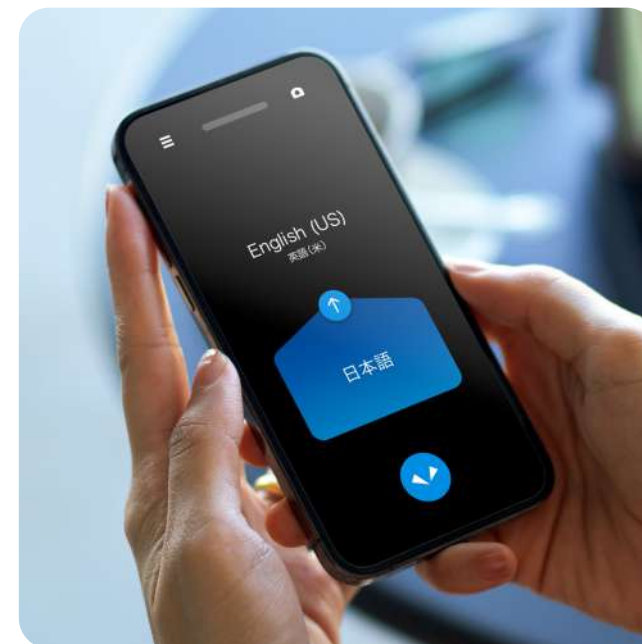
Feedback included:

“Translation services were not offered during my antenatal appointments...”

“I didn’t feel heard, or I had to repeat myself.”

What we did

- Scale Innovation (the authorised UK distributor of Pocketalk) joined our Health Innovation Programme accelerator to better understand and navigate NHS processes, developing a clearer value proposition and understanding of the pathways, processes and people they were looking to impact.
- We identified a high priority pathway, where Pocketalk could reduce health inequalities as well as delivering cash-releasing savings. With our introductions, Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust decided to integrate an initial ten Pocketalk devices into their Maternity and Neonatal services.
- We helped both NHS and Scale Innovation staff to navigate governance arrangements, project management documentation, obtain IT support, and arrange training to enable successful implementation.
- We worked with NHS staff and Scale Innovation to identify suitable data collection methods, content and evaluation approaches, and worked in partnership with people and local communities to gather feedback.
- We delivered a fully funded independent real world evaluation of Pocketalk’s implementation. The report is available on the [HIW Insight library](#).



What did the evaluation show?

- Data from staff and service user feedback alongside staff interviews found that using Pocketalk demonstrated clear benefits, enabling more confident communication between staff and patients.
- Pocketalk was considered convenient and easy to use, enabling immediate communication. Staff felt more confident information was understood, reducing reliance on informal interpreters. Despite some mistranslations and unsupported dialects, it remained generally accurate for simple conversations and effective in routine care.
- Staff reported improved communication, more equitable care, and better patient experience. Alongside interest in using it for complex discussions, Pocketalk was mainly seen as a practical, low-burden tool that improved efficiency and supported inclusive, person-centred care.

What difference has Pocketalk made to Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust?

- Pocketalk has been successfully implemented in the local maternity unit, with strong readiness to scale across the Trust – supporting safer, more equitable, and responsive services. Individuals feel more supported with their translation needs, and staff confidence during consultations increased.



Spread and adoption

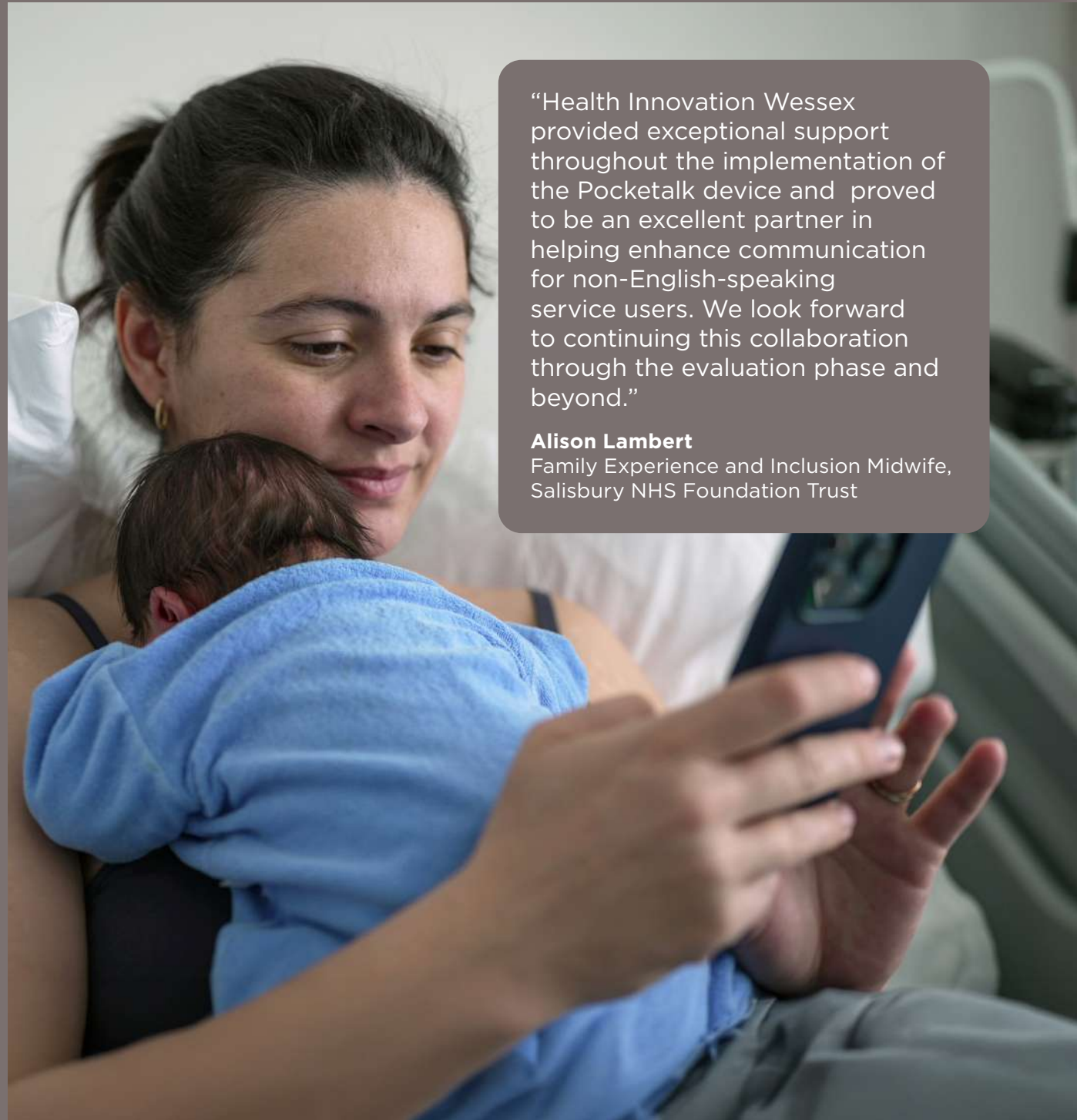
- Early use at Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust has also generated wider interest, with shared learning underway and NHS England exploring it as a best-practice model for inclusive patient outcomes and workflow efficiency.
- Due to HIW support, Pocketalk has spread to other maternity units in Wessex and on a pilot basis to an ambulance service. Scale Innovation has supported over 25 healthcare institutions with devices across England.
- As a result of our support, the local maternity and neonatal system purchased **300 devices** for use across four acute trusts in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Scale Innovation have intentions and contracts to deploy the device in several other services across the NHS, primarily maternity but with other use cases also being explored.

Economic impact

If a device reduces interpreter use even modestly, it can pay for itself rapidly.

Whilst Pocketalk is enhancing not replacing translation services in this scenario, if one device in a ward saves just one hour per day of interpreter time at £60/hour, **the annual saving is over £21,000 per device per year.**

Using this calculation, the **300 devices** purchased by the local maternity and neonatal system could generate an annual saving of **£6.3m.**



“Health Innovation Wessex provided exceptional support throughout the implementation of the Pocketalk device and proved to be an excellent partner in helping enhance communication for non-English-speaking service users. We look forward to continuing this collaboration through the evaluation phase and beyond.”

Alison Lambert

Family Experience and Inclusion Midwife,
Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

Case study: Evaluating digital enhanced CBT for eating disorders

There is significant unmet need in eating disorder treatment and care across the UK. According to Beat, the UK's eating disorder charity, around 1.25 million people are affected by an eating disorder. Binge eating is a key feature of bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder and affects people of all genders, ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Many people do not seek treatment due to stigma and shame, and those who do often face long waiting times. Services therefore need more accessible, evidence-based treatment options that can be delivered flexibly and at scale, while maintaining clinical effectiveness and patient safety.

Digital enhanced cognitive behavioural therapy (digital CBTe) is a treatment for binge eating disorder. Developed by the Centre for Research on Eating Disorders at Oxford (CREDO) and delivered by Credo Therapies Ltd, it can be accessed via an app or website; independently or with supporter guidance.

We undertook real world evaluations of two NHS pilot projects which explored:

- a self help model delivered through Dorset HealthCare University NHS FT's All-Age Eating Disorders Service
- a guided self-help model delivered through North East London NHS FT for the Kent and Medway All-Age Eating Disorders Service.
- The evaluation in Dorset was funded by the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) and in Kent, by Health Innovation Kent Surrey Sussex, via their OLS commission.

"This has been an innovative pilot study to be a part of. Our team have enjoyed supporting our patients to engage with the digital programme; and have appreciated the opportunity to develop our skills with an additional treatment method."

Natasha Shaw

Senior CBT Therapist, Interim Clinical Lead, Kent & Medway Eating Disorders Service

Evaluation

Evaluation activity took place between 2023 and 2025, with dissemination following in late 2025.

Health Innovation Wessex was responsible for delivering independent mixed methods real world evaluations across both pilot sites.

We also:

- coordinated dissemination through the Health Innovation Network
- shared findings via websites, social media and learning events, convening a national online learning event in October 2025 attended by 70 delegates from commissioning organisations, NHS trusts and academic institutions
- contributed to peer review publications based on the findings of both evaluations.

Patient impact

Across both pilots, patients who completed Digital CBTe reported statistically and clinically significant reductions in:

- frequency of objective binge eating
- eating disorder related symptoms
- the impact of eating problems on daily life
- symptoms of depression.



Health and care system impact

Staff involved in both pilots reported:

- improved patient flow
- reduced treatment intensity required after programme completion
- improved confidence and job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that Digital CBTe may offer services an additional treatment option within existing care pathways. The combination of self help and guided self help formats allows services to adapt delivery based on local capacity and patient need.

Evaluation findings have also informed peer reviewed publications. Read the evaluations here:

[Dorset All-Age Eating Disorders Service](#)

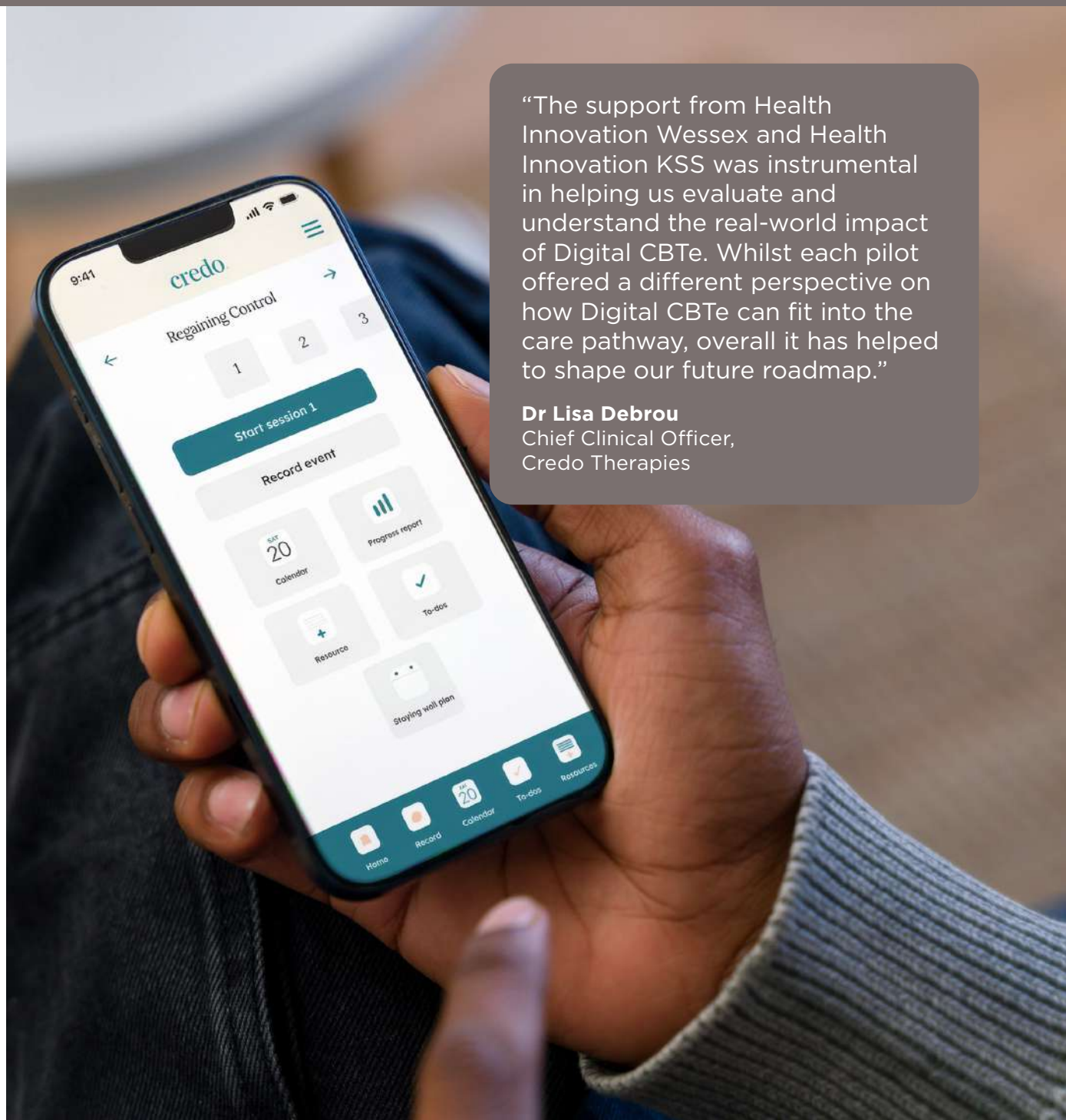
[Kent and Medway All-Age Eating Disorders Service](#)

Spread and adoption

Findings from the pilots have supported further exploration of Digital CBTe across the NHS:

- Credo Therapies is working with additional NHS mental health trusts across the UK to expand access
- Following a national dissemination event, implementation is being explored with five additional mental health NHS trusts
- Findings are being shared via NHS England, integrated care boards, NHS trusts and the wider Health Innovation Network to inform decision making and potential integration into care pathways.

The use of real world evaluation has supported learning about how the intervention fits within NHS services and has informed improvements to Digital CBTe, including changes to support processes and eligibility criteria.



“The support from Health Innovation Wessex and Health Innovation KSS was instrumental in helping us evaluate and understand the real-world impact of Digital CBTe. Whilst each pilot offered a different perspective on how Digital CBTe can fit into the care pathway, overall it has helped to shape our future roadmap.”

Dr Lisa Debrou
Chief Clinical Officer,
Credo Therapies



Treatment to prevention

Our innovation programmes contribute to a healthier population, personalised care and neighbourhood initiatives focusing on early diagnosis, health equity and supporting an NHS fit for the future.

Case study: Transforming health outcomes for Dorset's women and girls

In March 2023, the Government committed £25 million to establish Women's Health Hubs, alongside the publication of the Women's Health Strategy for England (July 2022), which set out a ten-year vision to improve health outcomes for women and girls and strengthen how services respond to their needs.

The strategy drew on extensive national engagement, including responses from nearly 100,000 women, highlighting systemic gaps in access, information, and experience of care.

These findings were mirrored locally through a Dorset-wide survey conducted by NHS Dorset and analysed by HIW in 2024.

In response, a multi-agency partnership across Dorset was established, bringing together NHS Dorset, Health Innovation Wessex, University Hospitals Dorset, Dorset County Hospital, Dorset Women Community Interest Company, and Bournemouth University.

This collaboration focused on reviewing and enhancing the quality, accessibility, and consistency of women's health education and information.

Comprehensive public engagement, including prior community-led work, identified six priority areas: menopause, long-acting reversible contraception, pelvic health disorders, young women's physical and mental health, support for minoritised groups and mobile access, and the development of a Dorset-wide online women's health resource.

These priorities underpinned the Dorset Women's Health Programme delivered between December 2023 and March 2025.

What we did

- NHS Dorset commissioned our Innovation Adoption team to evaluate the impact of the qualitative and quantitative data, including feedback from healthcare professionals and Dorset women. The report incorporates survey results, audits, training evaluations, and digital engagement analytics.
- The Insight team delivered an independent programme level, qualitative evaluation of the Dorset Women's Health Programme:
 - Evaluated the programme against its aims to improve access, experience, and system working in women's health
 - Explored staff perceptions of programme design, implementation, and early impacts across all six priority areas.

Find out more about this work from the Women's Health area on our [website](#).

Spread and adoption

- Health innovation networks are supporting further work on women's health from 2026-2029.
- We attended the launch of the renewed Women's Health strategy in March 2026.
- Collaboration is already underway with NHS England and scoping has begun across England, to develop a national programme launching later in 2026.
- Health Innovation Wessex is leading this work on behalf of the Health Innovation Network.



“I remain hugely grateful for everything HIW have overseen, led on and supported with, under the Dorset Women's Health Programme. They are an incredible organisation and working in partnership with them has greatly increased the success of this programme and benefited thousands of clinicians and women across the Dorset system.”

Helen Crook

Programme Manager, Transformation Delivery, NHS Dorset

Patient impact

The Dorset Women's Health Programme has delivered measurable impact across access, workforce capability, digital innovation, and system collaboration.

Two new care pathways have improved timely access to services closer to home, supported by a comprehensive online resource offering evidence-based information and self-management tools to thousands of women.

Digital provision has been strengthened through the rollout of 1,100 licences for the pelvic health Squeezy app, and a range of additional health apps, increasing engagement and reach.

Significant investment in workforce development has enhanced clinician knowledge and confidence across key priority areas.

Training in pelvic health, menopause, and anti-discrimination has improved clinical capability, with over 350 hours of menopause training delivered and marked increases in clinician confidence.

These developments have led to more appropriate care, reduced referrals, and more efficient service delivery, alongside greater use of specialist advice services.

Extensive community engagement, including over 1,600 survey responses, has ensured women's voices shape service improvements and highlighted barriers faced by diverse and under-represented groups. Collaboration across more than ten partners has driven innovation, research, and national influence.

Independent evaluation demonstrates improved access to information, strengthened workforce capability, and enhanced system integration, providing a strong foundation for sustained improvements in women's health outcomes across Dorset.

Impact

- Improved access to women's health services and support
- Significant increase in clinician knowledge and confidence
- Measurable influence on referrals and clinical behaviour
- Strengthened community engagement and support
- Digital innovation driving reach and awareness
- Better understanding of women's experiences and barriers
- System-wide collaboration and national influence
- Improved workforce capacity for women's health
- Increased data and programme insight from the HIW independent evaluation.

[Read the evaluation on the HIW Insight Library](#)



Case study: Reducing harm from problematic polypharmacy

As people live longer, many are managing multiple long-term conditions, with medicines remaining the most common intervention. However, an ageing population is increasingly exposed to the risks associated with taking multiple medications, known as problematic polypharmacy.

Evidence highlights the scale of this challenge: a 2022 BMJ study found that 16.5% of unplanned hospital admissions in adults were due to adverse drug reactions (ADRs), with polypharmacy a key contributing factor. Patients experiencing ADRs were typically taking significantly more medicines, and over 40% of these reactions were considered avoidable.

This places a substantial burden on both patients – who often report feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of their medication regimes – and the NHS, with an estimated annual cost of £2.21 billion.



“I think it is a well-run, well-structured and one of the most refreshingly pragmatic approaches to healthcare I have heard for a long time. Regarding the commissioning – I was just acknowledging that having your local commissioner support was valuable.

I think the value to the system in terms of improved prescribing (both from a clinical and cost perspective) probably will pay for itself...”

Dr Ben Sharland

Clinical Director Bournemouth PCN,
Deputy Chair Dorset GP Alliance

Polypharmacy: 
getting the balance right

The programme aimed to support local health systems across Wessex to better identify patients at risk of harm from problematic polypharmacy and to increase the uptake of structured medication reviews (SMRs), a NICE-recommended intervention. A central focus was to build clinician confidence in having personalised, meaningful conversations with patients about their medicines, using a shared decision-making approach that aligns treatment with individual goals and priorities.

Key principles

Pillar 1: Population health management

NHSBSA polypharmacy prescribing comparators (developed with HIW) were used to identify high-risk groups and agree local therapeutic priorities with both ICBs, focusing on anticholinergic burden and use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) in people aged over 75.

Pillar 2: Education and training

In addition to supporting the national Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets, we delivered an additional polypharmacy course for clinicians across the south of England. We developed and delivered four Polypharmacy masterclasses to help clinicians focus on key topics such as Polypharmacy in Chronic Kidney Disease. View the masterclasses on our [Vimeo channel](#).

In collaboration with HIOW ICB we developed the Polypharmacy Action Learning Set Foundation Course for junior pharmacists to build capability and confidence.

Pillar 3: Public behaviour change

One local PCN was supported through the national programme, with a further six PCNs funded by HIW to implement targeted engagement materials.

These aimed to improve patient understanding of structured medication reviews and increase uptake among under-served groups, including housebound individuals and those in more deprived communities.

Health and care system impact

The programme has strengthened identification and management of problematic polypharmacy across Wessex. A total of **132 GPs and pharmacists were trained to use the NHSBSA Polypharmacy Prescribing Comparators** to identify patients at greatest risk of harm. Both Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Dorset ICBs selected priority therapeutic areas, supported by targeted education to highlight risks associated with specific medicines, particularly in older populations. Subsequent monitoring shows reductions in prescribing across these areas.

Workforce capability has been significantly enhanced, with **302 clinicians completing Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets and 422 attending masterclasses**, improving confidence and ability to address overprescribing. In parallel, seven primary care networks - the highest number nationally - implemented initiatives to improve communication around structured medication reviews.

This resulted in increased SMR uptake, reduced non-attendance, and improved quality of clinician-patient conversations.

Across five PCNs, SMRs rose from 24 to 77 (a 220% increase), with a focus on underserved groups, including housebound individuals and those in deprived communities.

Economic impact and evaluation

National evaluation indicates that the programme's three-pillar approach can **deliver savings exceeding £1.1 million** across selected therapeutic areas, through reduced medicines costs and lower healthcare utilisation.

These findings align with evidence from wider studies, including iSIMPATY.



Co-production with people and communities

Resources were co-developed with input from patient groups including Age UK. This patient-centred collaboration improved accessibility and engagement, particularly among under-served communities.

I have a really strong interest in coproduction and codesign, working very closely with patients, carers, healthcare professionals, care providers and industry to converge on ideas around innovation. I truly think that innovation from the ground up has the best chance of success. So I'm delighted to support Health Innovation Wessex to achieve their national strategic goals as well as their local goals of bringing new interventions implementing new and exciting evidence-based practice into care settings.

Professor Pete Worsley,
University of Southampton Board member, Health Innovation Wessex

“The Polypharmacy Action Learning Sets are delivered by knowledgeable, experienced speakers and have been really inspiring. They provide evidence and resources that empower you as a practitioner to take the pragmatic approach to prescribing that you know is best for your patient but at times can feel too daunting or uncertain to enact. They recognise the challenges in primary care, whether it be; time pressures, workload, complexity, multi-clinician inputs, QOF and yet, are able to provide practical advice for how you can realistically review medications and adapt your own approach to prescribing. I highly recommend this course for primary care prescribers”.

Dr Ben Saunders

GP Clinical Lead,
Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB





Hospital to community

We support the ambitions of the 10 Year Health Plan – including bringing care closer to where people are through a new neighbourhood health service delivering more proactive and personalised care.

Improving earlier diagnosis of oesophageal cancer in Wessex

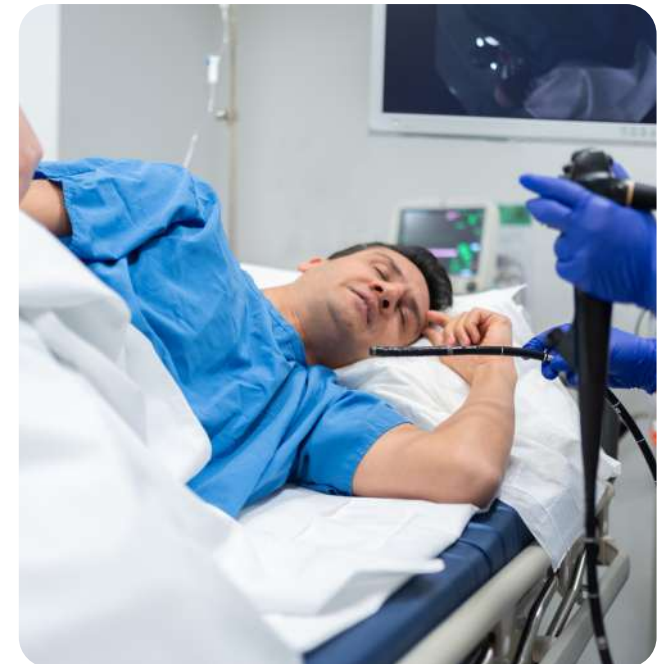
Oesophageal (OG) cancer is difficult to detect at an early stage with mortality rates increasing significantly with later diagnosis. Cancer Research UK reports only 13.0% of people diagnosed with this cancer type survive their disease for ten years or more, compared to breast cancer where there is a 76.6% survival rate over the same period.

In Wessex, local data suggests that two thirds of OG cancers are found at a later stage which highlights that many patients with this cancer type locally will not survive their diagnosis.

Barrett's Oesophagus (BO) can be a precursor for OG cancer and attempts to improve the earlier diagnosis have focused on close monitoring of people with this condition through regular gastroscopies.

However, with an increasing number of people waiting over 6 weeks for a gastroscopy in Wessex (rising from 27% in 2023-24 to 31% in 2024-25) an alternative ways to monitor these 'at risk' patients was needed.

The capsule sponge test is a regulated device with an evidence-base supporting use as a safe alternative option to gastroscopy for detecting and monitoring cellular changes within the oesophagus.



What we did

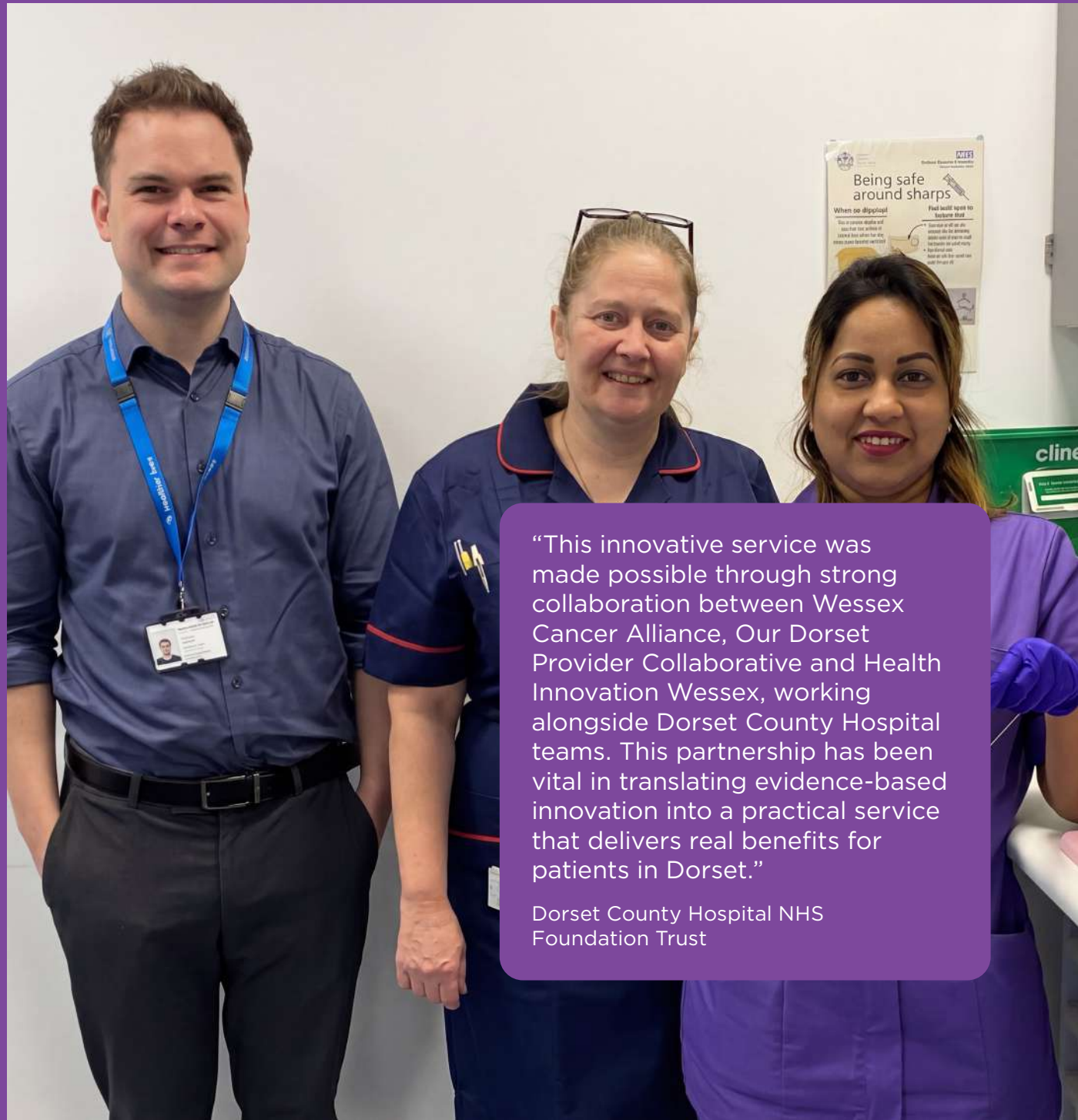
We helped teams from Dorset and Hampshire & Isle of Wight ICBs secure **£143,000** from the **Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) Pathway Development Fund**, enabling capsule sponge clinics in Portsmouth and Dorchester.

With local endoscopy networks and service teams, diagnostics innovator Cytel Health Ltd and Heartburn Cancer UK, clinics were designed and delivered across two CDC sites, offering testing to patients with confirmed Barrett's Oesophagus.

Impact

Once established, the clinics are expected to replicate national pilot outcomes, including:

- **Less than 40 days** from referral to test
- **£421.57** saved per patient through avoided gastroscopy procedures
- **93%** patient acceptance due to a less invasive test.



“This innovative service was made possible through strong collaboration between Wessex Cancer Alliance, Our Dorset Provider Collaborative and Health Innovation Wessex, working alongside Dorset County Hospital teams. This partnership has been vital in translating evidence-based innovation into a practical service that delivers real benefits for patients in Dorset.”

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

One call, safer care: The Healthier Together App and Maternity Triage Line

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Maternity and Neonatal System (HIOW LMNS) developed an innovative maternity triage model combining the Healthier Together (HT) app with a 24-hour centralised Maternity Triage Line (MTL). Launched in November 2022, the system supports around 17,000 pregnancies annually across five sites: Basingstoke, Winchester, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth.

The Healthier Together (HT) app provides guidance on managing pregnancy symptoms and directs women to appropriate support using a colour-coded system: red (emergency), amber (contact triage line), and green (self-care or pharmacy).

Midwives on the MTL can access, view and update digital maternity records, ensuring informed and consistent care.

What we did

Since 2019, we have supported development of the HT app by working with the developer, Cenigma, and ensuring clinical leads, service users, clinical guidance and user-friendly design are all prioritised as the platform developed.

We have engaged our regional clinical networks, helping to standardise antenatal care pathways, which were updated in 2025. Agreed standardised pathways have then been incorporated into the digital platform.

We have enabled rollout of the triage model with best practice and our adoption support across our neighbouring integrated care board (ICBs) through the de-implementation of the Maternity Matters website and implementation of Healthier Together.

We have completed a independent real world evaluation of the associated Maternity Triage Line in 2025.

The report is available on our [Insight library](#).

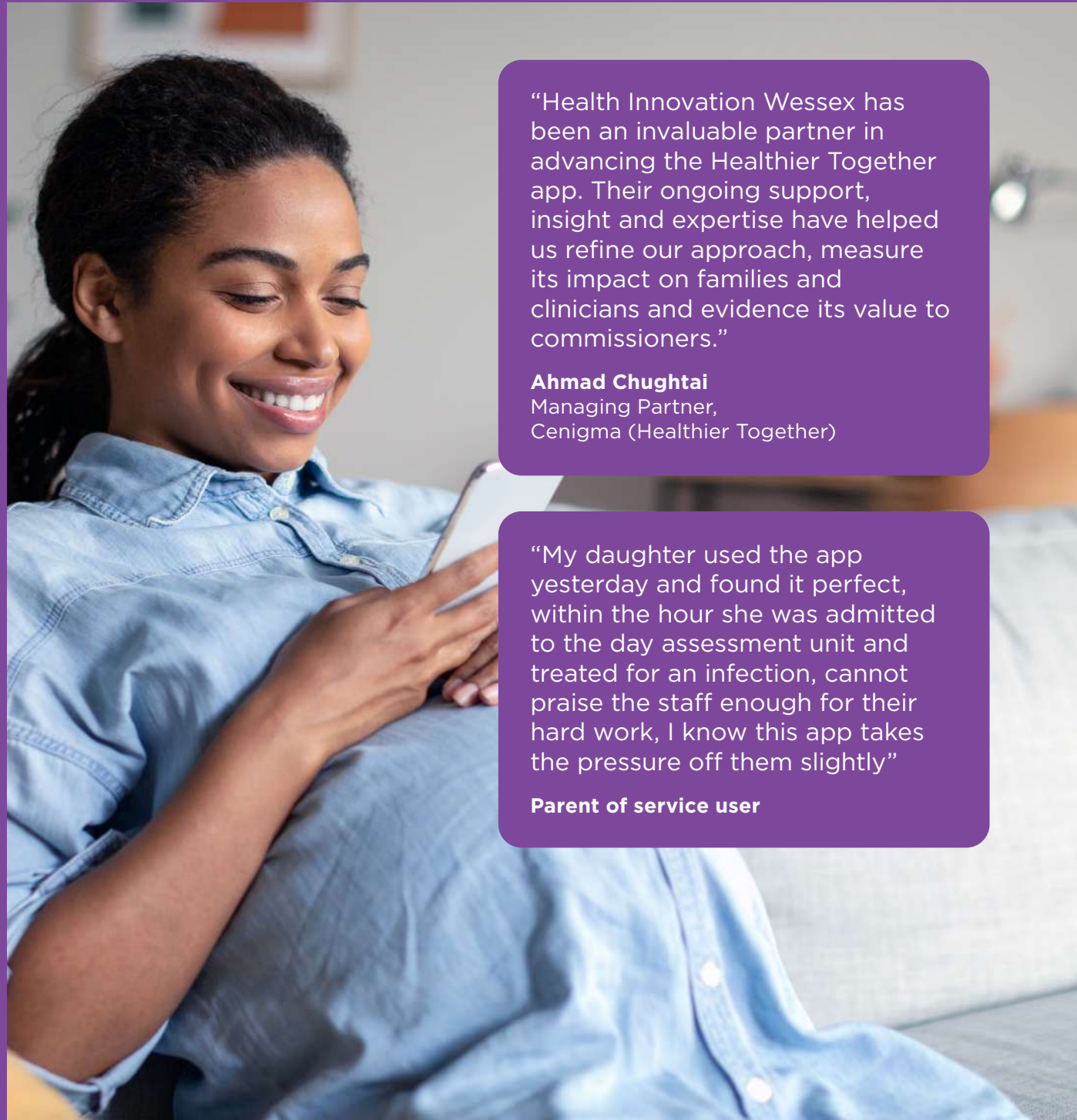
Patient impact

More than **42,700 women** have now registered on the app, with over 60% of queries resolved without contacting services – easing pressure on frontline teams.

Satisfaction is high: **94% of patients** report a positive experience and **95% of staff** say it improves equity of access. Demand on urgent care has fallen, with a **26% drop in 999 calls and ED attendances**.

Health and care system impact

The model is also delivering strong clinical and operational impact. Earlier recognition and escalation of risk – including threatened preterm birth – has contributed to saving an estimated **50 babies' lives** and preventing around **15 cases of cerebral palsy**. **Over 60% of interactions** require no clinician input, and **20% of triage calls** need no follow-up, freeing vital capacity across maternity services.



“Health Innovation Wessex has been an invaluable partner in advancing the Healthier Together app. Their ongoing support, insight and expertise have helped us refine our approach, measure its impact on families and clinicians and evidence its value to commissioners.”

Ahmad Chughtai
Managing Partner,
Cenigma (Healthier Together)

“My daughter used the app yesterday and found it perfect, within the hour she was admitted to the day assessment unit and treated for an infection, cannot praise the staff enough for their hard work, I know this app takes the pressure off them slightly”

Parent of service user

Safer beginnings: How innovation is transforming maternity triage in Wessex

The NHS Dorset website, Maternity Matters, had become outdated, raising concerns about the consistency and accuracy of information available to service users. Accessibility had also declined following the loss of funded translation tools, adding to clinical risk.

What we did

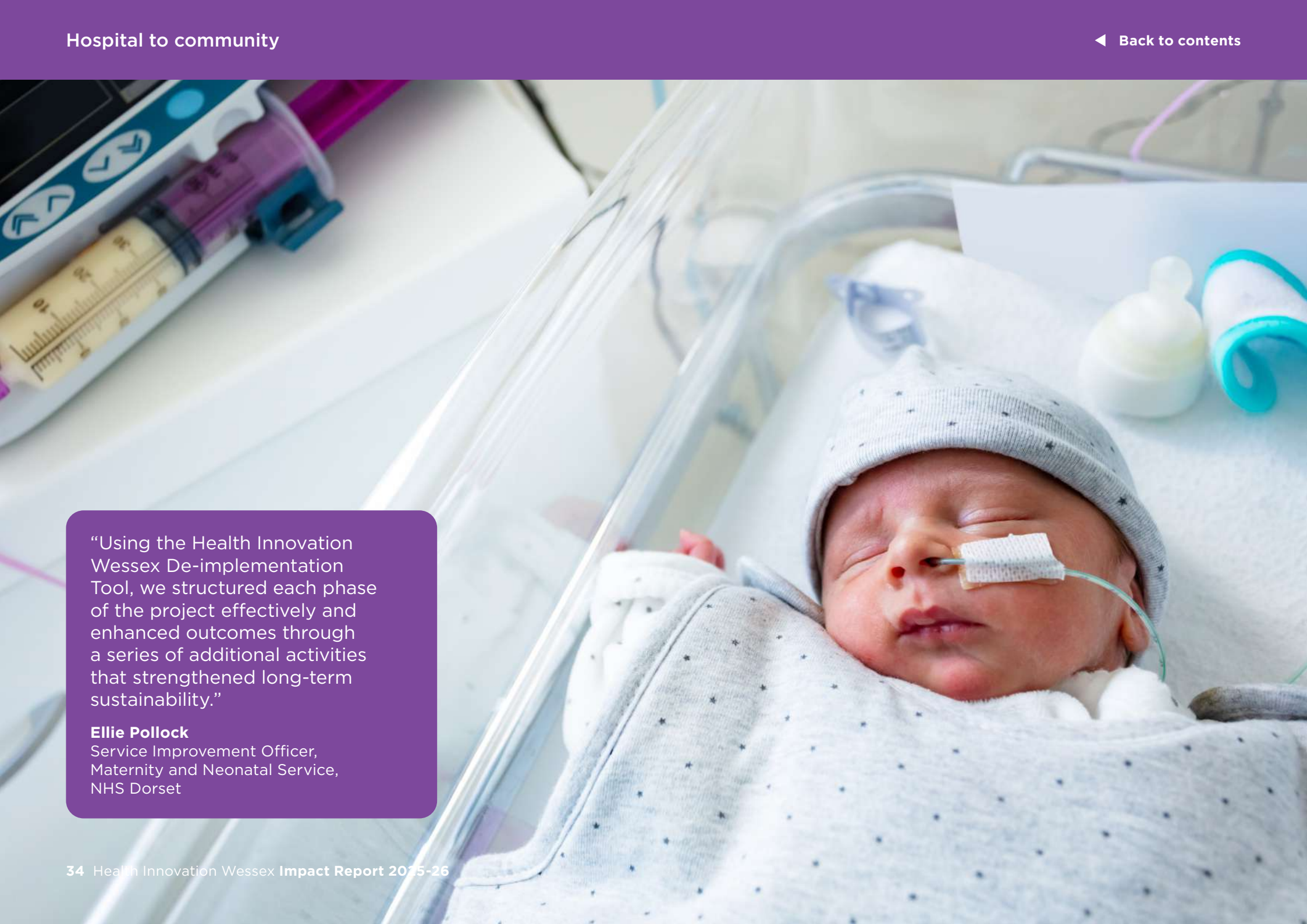
Working with NHS Dorset, we introduced the Health Innovation Wessex Four Pillars of De-implementation model to help retire this system and transition to Healthier Together, a sustainable and accessible digital platform aligned with NHS priorities for digital safety, equity, and efficiency.

We launched the Four Pillars of De-Implementation model in 2026 to help NHS organisations identify, reduce and stop low-value, outdated or inefficient ways of working, creating the capacity, resources and headspace needed for innovation to thrive.

The model shifted stakeholder thinking, establishing de-implementation as a deliberate workstream rather than a passive by-product of implementation.

An eCanvas that accompanies the model supported practical application by enabling collaborative systematic planning, governance, and gap identification.

Health Innovation Wessex provided ongoing consultation, including regular check-ins, reflective discussions, and structured challenge to strengthen delivery.

A newborn baby is lying in a clear plastic incubator. The baby is wearing a grey knit hat with small black stars and is wrapped in a grey blanket with a similar star pattern. A nasal cannula is taped to the baby's nose. In the background, a yellow syringe with a purple plunger is visible on a white surface.

“Using the Health Innovation Wessex De-implementation Tool, we structured each phase of the project effectively and enhanced outcomes through a series of additional activities that strengthened long-term sustainability.”

Ellie Pollock

Service Improvement Officer,
Maternity and Neonatal Service,
NHS Dorset



Supporting the health and care system

Our place-based structures and specialist innovation capabilities position us to support local health systems in delivering priority transformation projects that benefit everyone.

Improving workforce productivity through patient safety

Wessex Patient Safety Collaborative (PSC) is one of 15 collaboratives commissioned by the NHS England Patient Safety Team to improve patient safety, reduce avoidable harm and deliver the NHS Patient Safety Strategy across Wessex.

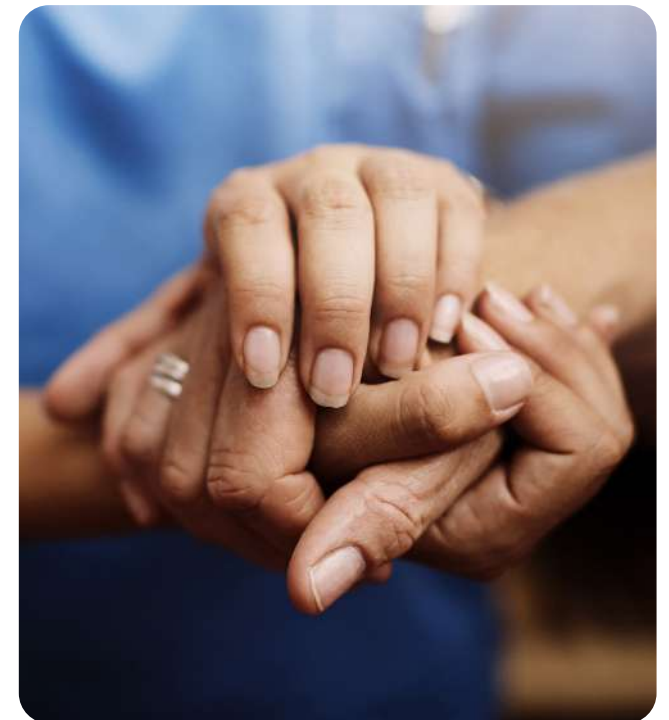
What we did

In 2025-26, we worked with staff, patients and system partners across health and social care pathways, using quality improvement, networking and scale-up methods to address shared safety challenges and spread effective practice.

Our programme focused on four priority areas: maternity and neonatal safety; medicines safety; managing deterioration and Martha's Rule; and system safety.

Across these areas, we brought together clinical, operational, improvement, insight and patient experience expertise to support coordinated delivery.

This approach helped trusts build capability, share learning and embed more reliable escalation processes, improving how quickly concerns about deterioration can be recognised, escalated and reviewed. It has also supported more productive use of workforce time by giving staff and patients clearer routes to raise concerns and access timely clinical response.



Across managing deterioration and Martha's Rule, we supported systems to strengthen the prevention, identification, escalation and response (PIER) to physical deterioration. We delivered a Breakthrough Series with four in-person workshops, regular Wessex communities of practice, joint learning with another PSC, site visits for local teams, and patient and staff surveys to assess awareness and experience.

Patient impact

More than **600 escalation calls** have been made since October 2024, **showing active use and growing awareness** amongst staff, patients and families.

Health and care system impact

All seven acute trusts in Wessex were supported to implement Martha's Rule. Community and mental health trusts were supported to prepare for local testing and adoption. Staff can escalate concerns about deteriorating patients to an independent team for **faster senior review and earlier intervention**.



“As a patient, I feel assured that hospitals are recognising challenges and taking action to improve patient safety.”

Mark Turnbull

Patient Safety Partner,
University Hospital Southampton NHS FT

“I found the workshop very insightful’ and ‘...practical, thought-provoking, offering valuable insights into how these approaches could guide and benefit our own project and within our clinical setting”

Dr Hafis Kallidampil

Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS
Trust

Genomics: innovation in personalised medicine

Through our partnership with the NHS Central and South Genomics and a co-funded Genomics Innovation Director, we're driving the adoption of novel genomic interventions that improve outcomes and position our organisations to be at the forefront of genomics and personalised medicine leadership.

What we did

For 2025-2026 we delivered on three impact areas:

- 1** Embedding the outputs of the Genomic Networks of Excellence
- 2** Driving support for and recruitment to clinical research trials, understanding active clinical trials within the region and nationally
- 3** Developing and sustaining knowledge of the drivers of genomic innovation and their impact on health care systems.

The programme delivered genomics training and education to HIW staff and healthcare professionals across Wessex.

We provided evaluation support to four AI innovators, built system-wide networks with ICBs, universities and innovators, and contributed to funding bids for two research projects.

It also scoped projects to strengthen links between innovators and the NHS Genomic Medicine Service for 2026-27, strengthened the relationship with the Genomics Unit, and improved understanding of genomics maturity across the health innovation networks.

“Working with Health Innovation Wessex has been genuinely transformative for SigBio.

Their team opened doors we didn't even know existed, brought deep expertise, and proactively connected us into the right parts of the NHS ecosystem.

The support has accelerated our progress in ways we couldn't have achieved alone.”

Celestin de Wergifosse
CEO,
Signatur Biosciences Ltd

Health and care system impact

“Our established partnership with Health Innovation Wessex gives us confidence they will support us to harness the benefits of genomic technology for our population now and for generations to come.”

Lara Alloway

Chief Medical Officer,
Hampshire & Isle of Wight ICB

Research funding

Contributed knowledge to two successful bids, which built trusted networks and collaboration communities:

- **£2.9m PRIMO bid** (Pharmacogenomics Research for Individualised Medicine in Older people)
- **£20k DEBIT bid** (Detection of Biomarkers for prosthetic Infection Type).

Training and engagement

Delivered genomics and pharmacogenomics training across 100+ professionals, to support increased confidence and capability:

- webinar to over 70 pharmacy professionals
- HIW staff training on the Generation Study and Genomics EDI
- three sessions for student nurses delivered at Bournemouth University.

Profile raising

Presented at **NHS England Genomics Unit Summit** ‘Working with Partners to Support Innovation’.

Income generation

£50,000 secured to provide evaluation support to four AI innovators.

“Our collaboration with Health Innovation Wessex and Health Innovation West Midlands has been outstanding. Their shared commitment, pace and practical support have helped us secure faster buy-in, drive wider adoption and unlock real-world benefits for patients far sooner than would have otherwise been possible.

Their combined network and advocacy have accelerated the positive impact our at-home test can have for the 320,000 people every year in the UK at risk of bladder cancer.”

Jeff Bousfield
CEO,
Nonacus



Economic growth

We help innovations reach health and social care faster to improve patient outcomes and value for the NHS, and to drive economic growth in health and life sciences.

Stimulating economic growth in Wessex and beyond

We support clinical, commercial and academic innovators to bring proven products into the NHS faster, improving patient outcomes, delivering better value for the NHS, and driving UK economic growth.

What we did

In 2025-26 we worked with over 300 companies from across the UK, helping them accelerate their route to market through customer insight, value proposition development, evidence generation planning and regulatory navigation.

Our support helped innovators secure public and private investment, gain crucial market understanding and form partnerships with NHS organisations leading to proof of concept and proof of value studies.

We have also sponsored innovators to attend events which enable them to reach further UK and overseas markets:

- In June 2025 we enabled Xim Ltd (Lifelight), Daye Biotech Ltd and Zeus Sleep Ltd to attend NHS Confed Expo
- In February 2026 we enabled Concentric Health and Zeus Sleep Ltd to attend the WHX Dubai expo.



In 2025-26:

Health Innovation Wessex supported **over 300 companies** and **310 innovations**, and provided **over 4200 hours of support**.

Since 2018, through the national Health Innovation Network:

- More than **£4.4bn** has been contributed to the UK economy through our innovator support, and
- Our support to innovators has directly created or safeguarded more than **12,600 jobs**.

Our Innovator Offer delivers a 3:1 return on investment (using Treasury Green Book methodology).



Shifting the dial for innovators

We provide multiple events and training courses throughout the year providing innovators with key advice, specialist knowledge and, crucially, in-depth understanding of NHS requirements, often directly from NHS stakeholders themselves.

Our bespoke courses bring together some of the best health and medtech entrepreneurs in the UK to hear and learn from some of the best experts in their fields – including regulatory, investment, research and business cases.

In 2025-26 **13 innovation companies** benefited from attending our Health Innovation Programme (HIP) Accelerator which focuses on understanding the NHS as a market.

This year we launched a new accelerator – **Scaling Health Innovation through Funding and Transformation** (SHIFT).

Our five-day programme is aimed at health innovators who have, at minimum, a viable product or proof of concept looking for investment to take them into the next development stage.

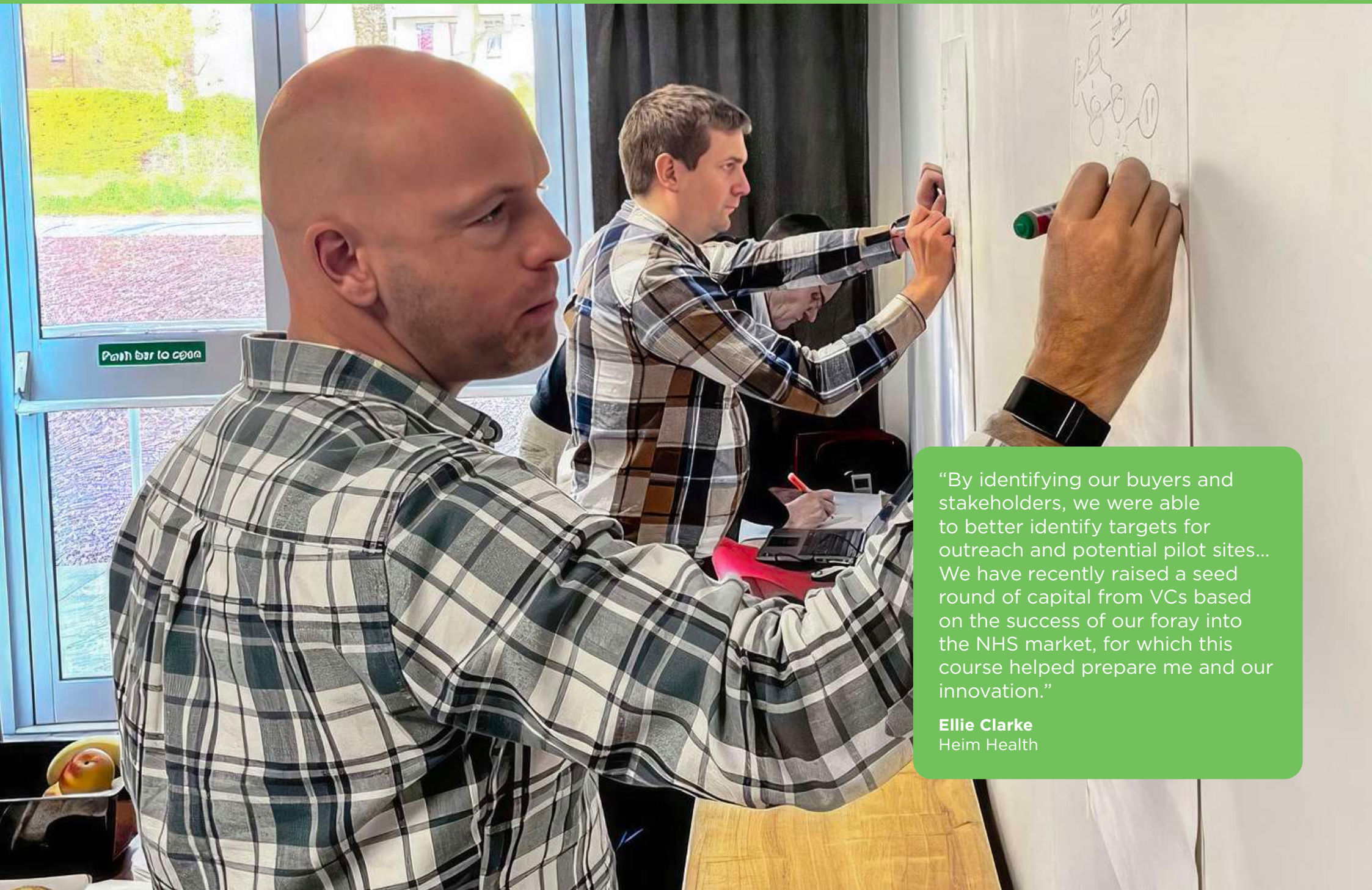
The programme provides insights to asset protection and business control, grant funding, angel investors, venture capital investment and business development.

Ten companies completed this SHIFT accelerator, with innovations across women's health, community care, dementia, neurodiversity, compliance and hospital management and biomarkers. SHIFT equips innovators with the knowledge and skills to attract investment and plan their next big move. We will continue to deliver this successful programme in 2026-27.



“At the time of the course I was an individual with an idea, now we are 6 months from CE marking with \$6.5M in LOIs and £100k contracts, [and] we received £850k in grants, thanks to the course.”

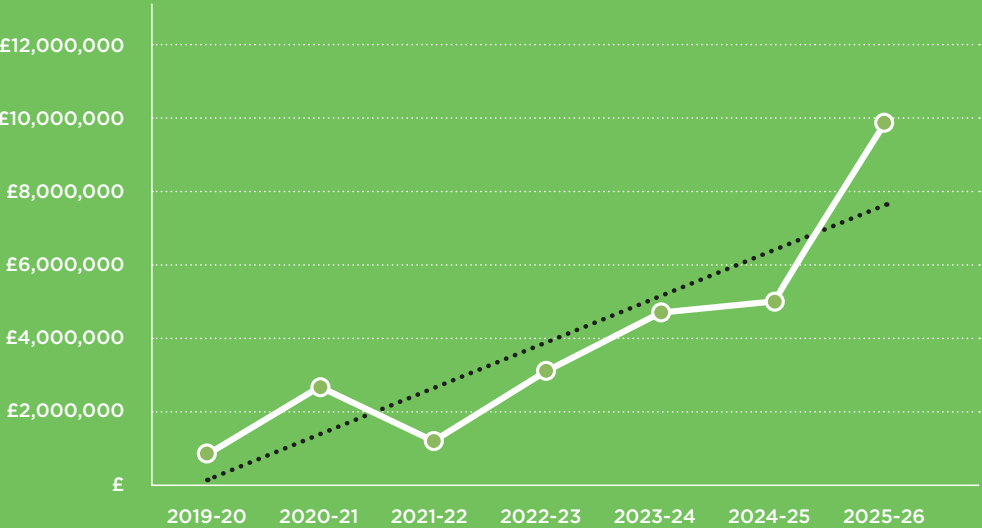
Dr Lucrezia Cester
Founder, LightHearted AI



“By identifying our buyers and stakeholders, we were able to better identify targets for outreach and potential pilot sites... We have recently raised a seed round of capital from VCs based on the success of our foray into the NHS market, for which this course helped prepare me and our innovation.”

Ellie Clarke
Heim Health

HIW accelerator participant economic growth



£27m+

Economic growth reported from participation in HIW accelerator programmes



96 jobs created

Reported by companies after completing Health Innovation Programme and SHIFT over the previous six years





BirthGlide Ltd is developing a simple, single-use birth assistance device designed to reduce friction during the second stage of labour. Placed manually on the baby's head by a trained midwife or obstetrician, the ultra-lubricious cap aims to reduce resistance, support safer vaginal births, and offer a less invasive alternative to instruments such as forceps. Since engaging with us in July 2023, BirthGlide has benefited from targeted support across PPIE, value proposition development, clinical engagement, and early manufacturing planning. This has contributed to strengthened product positioning, clearer adoption pathways, and significant economic outcomes, including **2 UK jobs safeguarded, 2 new jobs created, £2.5 million in public investment, and £300,000 in private investment** attributed to equity funding.



Daye (Anne's Day Ltd) is a women's health company developing innovative solutions to improve diagnosis and treatment of gynaecological conditions and period pain. Since January 2024, we have supported Daye across two distinct innovations: the **Daye Diagnostic Tampon** and the **Daye Period Pain Clinic**. Our work has focused on strengthening evaluation design, enabling pilot and implementation activity, supporting funding applications, and facilitating both NHS and internal pilot activity. Through implementation workshops, logic model development, grant-writing support, and participation in accelerator programmes, our support has helped Daye progress real-world testing, build robust evidence pathways, and position both innovations for wider adoption.



Fly Mama is an inclusive digital platform designed to support women's physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing throughout pregnancy and the postnatal period, including those experiencing perinatal trauma and loss. The company joined our Health Innovation Programme in 2023, seeking to strengthen its evidence base, clarify its NHS value proposition, and establish connections enabling real world deployment. Through structured accelerator support, strategic partnership brokering, and targeted support for grant applications, Fly Mama progressed from early engagement to achieving active deployments, workforce wellbeing contracts, and maturing commercial opportunities across multiple regions. Our support directly contributed to enhanced evaluation planning, improved system navigation, and expanded reach into NHS and non NHS settings.

Heim

Heim Health Ltd provides a clinically informed, technology-enabled rehabilitation platform designed to enhance community stroke care and support personalised, flexible therapy delivery. Since engaging with us in November 2025 through the Health Innovation Programme (HIP), Heim has rapidly expanded its NHS readiness, strengthened regional relationships, and progressed toward real-world deployment. Our support has helped them surface key implementation considerations, engage specialist clinical teams in Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Dorset, and prepare for a structured diagnostic and trial phase within a high-performing community stroke rehabilitation service. This partnership has contributed to safeguarding 20 UK jobs, creating two new roles, securing **£2.5 million in private investment**, and generating **£45,000 in UK contracts** in the last financial year.



Light-Hearted AI is developing a mobile-device, camera-based system for non-contact vital-sign monitoring, offering a scalable approach to screening and remote physiological assessment. Classified currently as **Medical Device Class I**, with **Class IIa certification in progress**, the technology aims to support earlier detection and monitoring across clinical and community environments. Since first engaging with us in December 2022, Light-Hearted AI has benefited from deep, repeated support through our Health Innovation Programme (HIP), strategic introductions to cardiology partners, bid-writing guidance, and targeted market insights. This partnership has contributed directly to strengthened clinical engagement, improved commercial readiness, and **£1.4 million in combined public and private investment** secured this financial year.

ZEUS

Zeus Sleep is developing **Zeus OSA**, a novel device designed to prevent obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA). Already available on the consumer market as an anti-snoring aid, the device is progressing toward regulatory approval for clinical OSA prevention. Since early 2023, we have supported the predecessor company (Morgan IAT) to strengthen clinical engagement, refine their evidence strategy, and progress NHS discussions. Zeus Sleep previously spun out of Morgan IAT as a separate company to enable investment. Through targeted introductions, specialist insights, bid-writing support, and facilitation of conversations with University Hospital Southampton, our partnership has helped to position Zeus OSA for early adoption opportunities and strengthened its pathway to regulatory and commercial readiness.



PneumoRator is an early-stage medical device innovation designed to monitor and record respiratory rate through chest wall movement – a critical vital sign in acute, community, and care-home settings. The team has received ongoing mentoring and innovation support from Health Innovation Wessex since early 2019 and has participated in the Catalyst Health Programme at the University of Southampton Science Park. HIW is the delivery partner for all health-related innovations on this accelerator. Over the past year, PneumoRator has secured **£1 million in public investment** through an NIHR i4i award, reflecting strong potential for clinical impact. Our support has strengthened their value proposition, clarified priority use cases, broadened their network of early-adopter stakeholders, and guided regulatory and PPIE planning as they advance toward UKCA marking and Class IIa requirements.



Zelemiq Life Science Limited is developing **Ripple**, a novel lactate sensor technology with potential application across acute, perioperative, and long-term condition pathways.

Since engaging with us in June 2023, we have supported Zelemiq through early use-case exploration, clinical and market insight engagement, bid development, and strategic repositioning through accelerator participation.

Our support has helped the company pivot its clinical focus, broaden its route-to-market strategy, strengthen funding and investment readiness, and progress toward collaboration opportunities that support future adoption and scale.



Partnerships

We are always keen to establish partnerships across a broad range of industry, pharmaceutical, government, academic and voluntary and community sector organisations both in the UK and overseas. We take a deliberate approach, focusing on long term relationships that meet our organisational missions.

The power of partnerships

Our partnerships help drive innovation, improve health and boost the Wessex economy.

We focus on long term relationships that reflect our ambition to:

- Be the trusted experts to support the deployment and sustainability of innovation at pace and scale
- Improve life and health outcomes by addressing regional population health priorities
- Increase economic growth for our region and UK through strategic partnerships and collaboration.



Central and South Genomics

Through our partnership with NHS Central and South (CAS) Genomics and a co-funded Genomics Innovation Director, we're driving the adoption of novel genomic interventions that improve outcomes and position our organisations to be at the forefront of genomics and personalised medicine leadership.

Wessex Cancer Alliance

Our co-funded programme manager with the Wessex Cancer Alliance delivers momentum in the uptake of early diagnostic technologies and the spread of innovations that align with national priorities, such as diagnosing 75% of cancers at stages 1 and 2 by 2028.

Wessex Health Partners

As a founding member of Wessex Health Partners, we work to strengthen our region's collective ability to tackle health and care system challenges, generate collaborative research, and increase the pace and scale of innovation adoption.

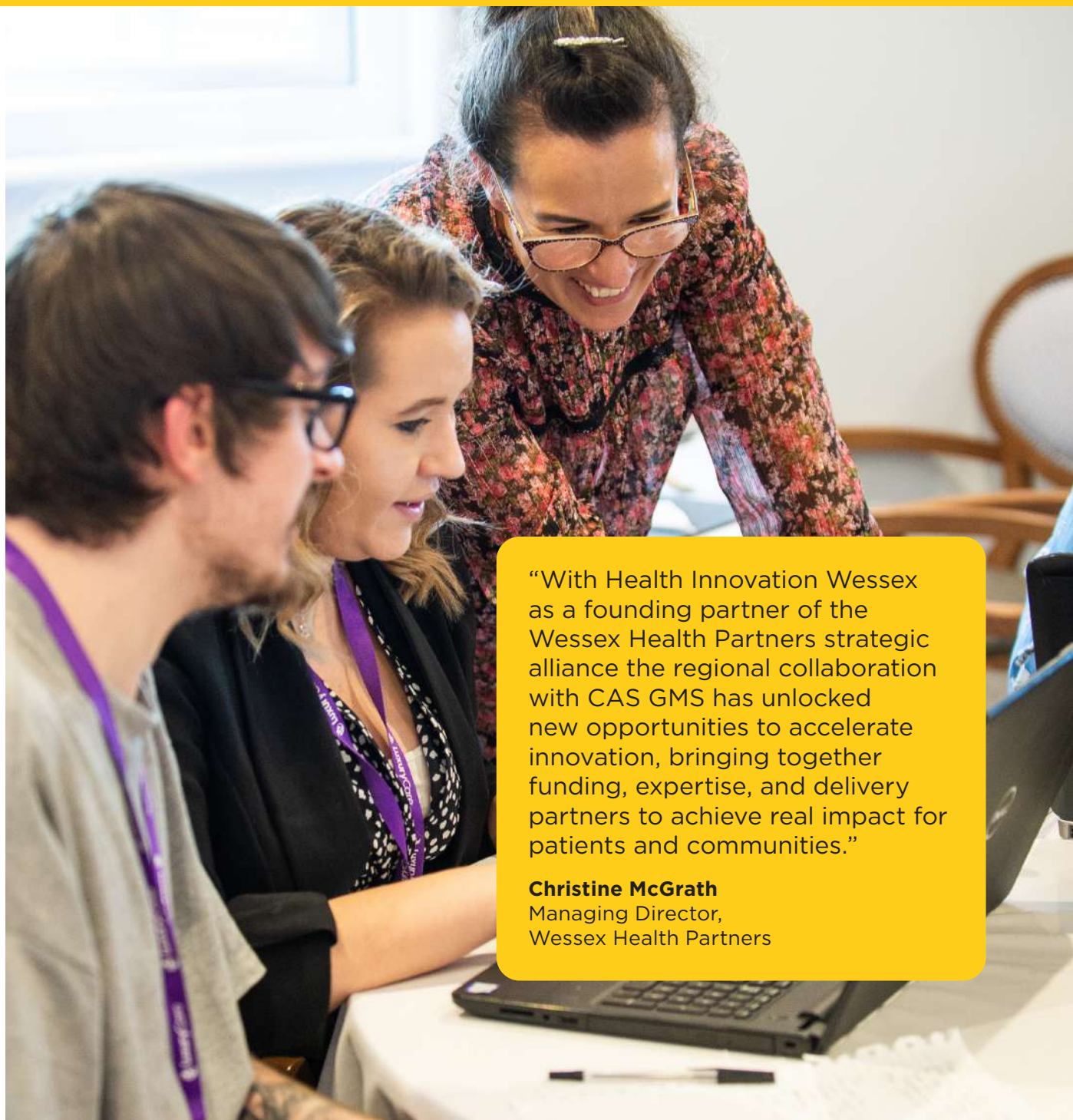
NIHR ARC Wessex

Our Director of Insight is also the Implementation Lead for NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Wessex and led the development of the ARC Wessex Knowledge Mobilisation programme. The team supports researchers to prepare for implementation and adoption of their research outputs by the wider health and care system.

Wessex Secure Data Environment

Health Innovation Wessex and the Wessex Secure Data Environment (Wessex SDE) combine expertise in innovation adoption and secure NHS data to accelerate research, real world evidence generation and data-enabled transformation.

The partnership connects organisations with NHS, academic, industry and national partners across pharmaceuticals, life sciences, medtech and digital health. By bringing together Wessex's collaborative culture, innovation capability and rich data assets, it helps translate evidence into improved services, better patient outcomes and regional economic growth.



“With Health Innovation Wessex as a founding partner of the Wessex Health Partners strategic alliance the regional collaboration with CAS GMS has unlocked new opportunities to accelerate innovation, bringing together funding, expertise, and delivery partners to achieve real impact for patients and communities.”

Christine McGrath
Managing Director,
Wessex Health Partners

Leveraging our leading life science sector

Wessex Working Together

In November 2025, Health Innovation Wessex convened leaders from health and care, academia, industry and local government to develop a shared vision for Wessex as a leading health and life sciences cluster.

The workshop highlighted the region's strengths in research, clinical expertise, data and innovation, while identifying opportunities to attract investment and accelerate health and economic impact.

Participants agreed to develop a Wessex roadmap to support future opportunities, including Innovation Zones and place-based life sciences investment.

Impact

By convening partners around a shared vision and creating a platform for collective advocacy, since the event Health Innovation Wessex has driven stronger regional collaboration, raising the profile of Wessex nationally and laying the foundations for future investment, innovation and growth across the health and life sciences sector.

A shared commitment

Following the event, Health Innovation Wessex launched the Wessex Pledge, inviting organisations to champion Wessex as a nationally significant centre for health and life sciences innovation.

Click [here](#) to watch the videos from the event on our website



“We are proud of the unique Wessex offer – including world-class research, rich data assets, and diverse urban, rural and island populations. We invite partners across health, academia, industry, and local government to join us in making our region a magnet for life sciences investment.”

Nicola Bent
CEO,
Health Innovation Wessex

Leveraging our leading life science sector

Wessex is home to world-class health and life sciences:

- World-class universities and research assets
- Nationally recognised clinical and environmental expertise
- Leading digital and data capabilities
- Thriving centres of excellence and science parks.

Add your voice. Champion Wessex

We're calling on organisations and leaders to come together, raise the region's profile, and strengthen a compelling case for future government investment.

Scan the QR code to pledge your support or visit www.wessexpledge.org.uk to find out more.

"The government is committed to supporting regions that can drive innovation and economic growth. Wessex has the right ingredients – research excellence, strong health systems, and industry partnerships – to play a leading role in the UK's life sciences future."

Alex McLaughlin

Deputy Director for Innovation and Growth, Office for Life Sciences



Work with us

Health innovation networks transform lives through innovation by supporting health and social care teams to find, test and implement new solutions at scale to the NHS' greatest challenges. We are the health innovation adoption experts.

How can we help you?

Health Innovation Wessex is a partnership organisation. We bring together the NHS, health and social care providers, universities, industry, community groups and voluntary organisations, helping to generate economic benefits and improve health outcomes.

We champion the value of convening and collaborating, evaluating impact and creating the conditions for innovation to flourish, and bringing fresh energy and inspired thinking to benefit the population of Wessex and beyond.

General enquiries

If you'd like to get in touch with the Health Innovation Wessex team, please email us at **enquiries@hiwessex.net** or call the main office on **023 8202 0840**.

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)

Sign up for our monthly Wessex Wire newsletter [here](#) to receive the latest news and regional updates.





Health Innovation Wessex

Innovation Centre
Southampton Science Park
2 Venture Road
Chilworth
Southampton
SO16 7NP

 [linkedin.com/company/healthinnovationwessex](https://www.linkedin.com/company/healthinnovationwessex)
 healthinnovationwessex.org.uk



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