

Innovation

Considerations for spreading healthcare innovations in the NHS

The East Midlands Academic Health Science Network (EMAHSN) has developed this quick read document to support healthcare innovators to think about how they can scale up and spread their impact across the NHS more effectively. It is sensible to consider adoption and spread of any innovation at the onset of any research or real-world evaluation - failure to adopt it far and wide will lead to missed opportunities to improve care for patients.

Drawing on learnings from the EMAHSN portfolio, there is no single approach to spread. Instead, it is likely to depend on the complexity of the intervention, the system, culture and circumstances of the environment in which it is to be implemented.

We would recommend using the questions to spark discussion and debate within your team.

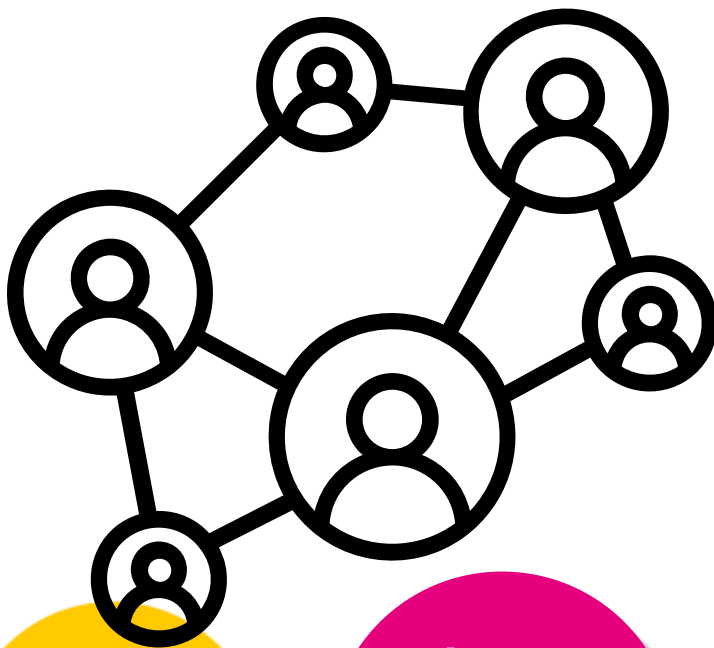
Commitment to spread

- How big is the opportunity to spread this innovation?
- Are you committed to spreading the innovation beyond where you are first trying it?
- What will your team's role be in working with other systems to implement?
- Have you the resource - skills, knowledge (clinical) and people - to lead the spread?
- Will you help implementers calculate the time and resources they will need to implement the intervention locally? Can you help them make a convincing business case to secure local resources?
- How simple or complex will the spread of this innovation be? What will be the barriers be and how will these be mitigated?

**What approach
will you take to
spread?**

Local context

- Can you clearly articulate what the problem is either nationally or system by system? What is broken? Is there a sense of urgency? Does the innovation fit with policy or system strategy?
- Are you clear about what is currently offered or what alternative products/innovations are available that meet the same need?
- Will the innovation require pathway changes?
- Do the systems want it? Why would it be desirable?
- Who will pay for the innovation and who will benefit from it?
- Is the innovation able to be adapted for local context? Are you clear what the core elements are that need to be included to provide the value added?
- Will the innovation reach everyone who needs it, taking into account social or economic factors including discrimination and cost?
- Could there be any unintended consequences of the innovation that could increase inequalities for particular patients or communities (and what are the mitigations)?



**Who can
you work
with?**

Partnership working

- Can you specify the type of partners and stakeholders you will need to enable spread? Are you clear about what your expectations are of the partners and how you will establish/maintain relationships with them?
- Will you be able to explain how the innovation has been informed by the views of patients and the public?
- Can you identify key clinicians and managers who will champion the adoption and spread of the innovation?

Evidence base

- Will you be able to articulate the “value added” that the innovation offers? Think about access, patient outcomes, clinical and patient/carer experience, patient safety and costs savings/avoidance. Will the evidence be compelling? Will it be what stakeholders will want to hear?
- What type of evidence will you be able to provide? Think about quantitative, qualitative (story telling) published research, grey literature, real world evaluation, health economic (financial) evaluation?
- Are you clear on the cost of implementing the innovation at system level?
- Will the value added be sustainable?
- Will you be able to effectively tell a clear, compelling story for why a stakeholders should support the innovation?
- Are you able to make a compelling case for how your innovation will address rather than widen inequalities?
- How will you measure the impacts of the wider spread of the innovation? Will further evaluation be required?

Contact us:

If you would like further information, please get in touch
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Engagement toolkits

- Do you have a clear process for capturing the learning (and adapt accordingly)?
- Are you able to generate an engagement toolkit for future implementers? These are documents that you can use to host the necessary conversations. These may include evaluations, case studies, cost-benefit analysis, films, FAQs, research summaries, example business cases, implementation strategies and plans, and communication plans.

Further reading:

AHSN Network report that provides an [In-depth review of spread and adoption approaches](#)