

- To: • ICB:
- chairs
 - chief executives
- NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Trust:
- chairs
 - chief executives

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

9 November 2022

- CC: • NHS England regional:
- directors
 - directors of strategy & transformation

Dear colleagues,

Provider collaborative innovators scheme

We are writing to you today about an opportunity for systems and providers to participate in a new Provider Collaborative Innovators scheme.

Our aim is to support sustainable improvement in the quality and efficiency of patient care across the country through collaboration and clinical leadership. As part of this, NHS England will provide hands-on support for 7-9 selected provider collaboratives to accelerate the benefits they can deliver for their populations. Through doing so, and through codesigning a support offer with them and others, we also then want to provide a strong platform and community of practice to help spread the benefits to every area.

This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of service improvement, and I would urge relevant colleagues – even if your provider collaboration is in its early stages – to apply. Details of how you can do so are below.

Accelerating the impact of provider collaboratives

Last August we published guidance describing the important role that provider collaboratives will play in supporting ICSs to meet their core purpose. We set out the range of benefits of scale that collaboratives could achieve, including reducing unwarranted variation in patient outcomes, access, and experience, and building greater resilience for services, for example, by sharing capacity and resources.

Since we published the guidance, we have seen providers coming together, developing stronger relationships between leaders and staff, and agreeing plans to deliver benefits. They are focused on a range of priorities for their systems including pandemic recovery, improvements in clinical pathways such as cancer, maternity and urgent care, strengthening fragile services, and joining up corporate and clinical support functions such as procurement, recruitment, diagnostics and pathology.

We now want to accelerate the pace so that more people and communities can gain the benefits of greater provider collaboration.

The key benefits of becoming a provider collaborative innovator

- **Access to development and improvement support.** This will be dedicated support based on what systems and collaboratives want to achieve, and may include for example, direct support on strategic planning, programme management, building partnerships across systems, good governance and mutual accountability, using data and digital to drive change.
- **Playing a greater role in leading service transformation and shaping national policy.** Selected systems and collaboratives will be empowered and supported to take advantage of new flexibilities under the Health and Care Act 2022. For example, we will develop and test models of joint decision making or ICBs delegating commissioning functions to provider collaboratives. We want to support ICBs and providers to work together in new ways that are less transactional, and more collaborative to achieve shared goals.
- **Learning from, and supporting, colleagues across the country to improve care.** We will create a sophisticated peer learning network, enabling the Provider Collaborative Innovators to share innovation and troubleshoot issues with each other, and we will create a national community of practice to share learning from the cohort with the wider sector.

The criteria for becoming a Provider Collaborative Innovator

We want to work with systems and provider collaboratives who are ambitious and collaborating well, and focused on key priorities including:

- Delivering mid to long term transformation to address key challenges that their ICSs want to solve. This might include for example, transforming and improving planned care, specialist acute care and non-specialist mental health, learning disability and autism services, and/or

- Delivering improvement and sustainability for challenged organisations or fragile services.

We will seek to ensure that selected Innovators represent all stages of development, ranging from emerging but ambitious to those that are more mature and ready to test delegation. We will seek to select at least one collaborative in each region, to support ways of working together across ICSs of different size, geographies and priorities, and look to work with those who are likely to have the greatest impact for their populations.

How can you become part of this work?

To express interest in becoming a Provider Collaboratives Innovator, provider collaboratives, with support of their system(s) leadership, should complete the expression of interest form below and return to NHS England’s Provider Development team at england.prov-dev.collaboration@nhs.net by 23:59 on 9 December 2022.

In consultation with NHSE regions and system leaders, we will select and announce a group of 7-9 Innovators in January 2023. The support scheme will run through March 2024.

If you would like an informal discussion about the process before submitting your provider collaborative’s expression of interest, please contact your regional team lead.

NHSE Regional Team	Regional Director of Strategy & Transformation
East of England	Simon Wood
London	Paul Bennett
Midlands	Kay Fradley
North East & Yorkshire	Tracey Grainger
North West	Clare Duggan
South East	David Radbourne
South West	Mark Cooke

Yours sincerely,



Mark Cubbon
 Chief Delivery Officer
 NHS England