



**INNOVATION AGENCY**  
Academic Health Science Network  
for the North West Coast

# Annual Review

2021-2022



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
European Regional Development Fund





# INTRODUCTION

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Much has changed in the past year for our local health and care services and our team has been agile in responding to local needs while continuing to support the adoption and spread of national innovation and improvement programmes.

The national programmes we help to deliver in the North West Coast have focussed on essential areas such as maternity and neonatal, CVD and respiratory, remote monitoring, mental health, management of deterioration and medicines safety.

We are working in all care settings – primary and community; care homes; secondary and tertiary; at system level and nationally through the AHSN Network.

We have developed a model for supporting partners through complex service change and this has been successfully deployed in redesigning pathways for adult ADHD and for pulmonary rehabilitation.

“This is a shared mission across the Innovation Agency and I am immensely proud of my colleagues’ role in making a difference where it is most needed.”





Working across systems gives us the opportunity to view a challenge from different perspectives; and facilitating a co-designed approach allows us to bring in expertise from different areas.

Our focus on economic growth enables us to support local businesses and introduce pioneering innovations from around the world to bring best-in-class products to our region, presenting partners with opportunities for international collaborations.

At the core of all our work is a determination to address health inequalities and sustainability and this can be seen throughout this annual report as we show how we target those communities which often miss opportunities for screening and for innovative treatments.

This is a shared mission across the Innovation Agency and I am immensely proud of my colleagues' role in making a difference where it is most needed, alongside our partners in NHS, social care, businesses and the third sector. Thank you to our staff and our partners for your energy, passion and shared commitment in the last year.

**Dr Phil Jennings**  
Chief Executive

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

**The environment in which we work has changed enormously in the past two years; our partners are addressing huge challenges with increased waiting lists, workforce pressures and the ongoing burden of COVID 19.**

We recognise the need to work differently to adapt to these challenges and our focus continues to be on aligning our work to support our local systems. I am proud to see that the Innovation Agency is also playing its part in helping the NHS to achieve net zero carbon emissions; to end the inequalities in service access experienced by some parts of our population; and to ensure that no one from any minority group is excluded from our work – as recipients of care, as partners in innovation or as members of staff.

We said goodbye to non-executive director Dr Bina Rawal last year, as she left us after six years of providing wise

counsel. And we welcomed new non-executive director Raj Jain, formerly chief executive of the Northern Care Alliance – and in an earlier role, the founding chief executive of our fellow AHSN in Greater Manchester.

Since he joined us, Raj has also taken on the role of Chair-designate of Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, which is fantastic news for our region.

My thanks go to Bina and to Raj; and to my vice chair Bruce Ash for his support through the past year, in advising and guiding the leadership team and in chairing our Performance, Finance and Strategy Committee.

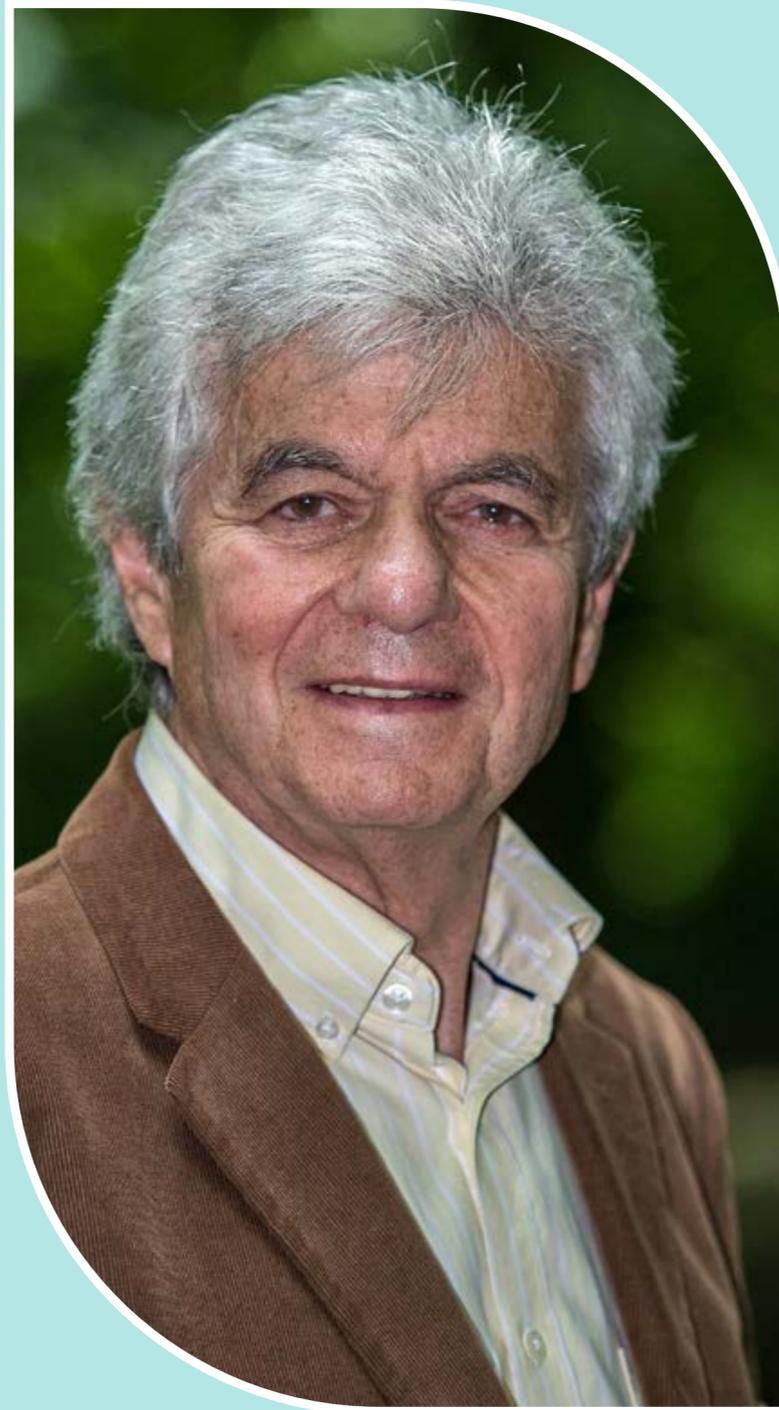
I would also like to thank all members of the Innovation Agency Partnership Board for helping to shape our plans through their feedback and input.

*Gideon Ben-Tovim*

**Gideon Ben-Tovim OBE  
Chair**



Non-executive director Raj Jain



# ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Throughout our work we ensure that we address health inequalities, using the tool HEAT – Health Equity Assessment Tool – when planning projects.

This is because there is clear evidence that reducing health inequalities improves life expectancy and reduces disability across the social gradient. Tackling health inequalities is therefore a core part of improving access to services, quality of services, and health outcomes for the whole population.

Examples of how our programmes are targeting parts of the population who might otherwise be excluded can be found throughout this report.

A podcast about how the Innovation Agency is supporting the Core20Plus5 approach to reducing health inequalities features our Clinical Director Andrew Cooper and Eileen O’Meara, Clinical Director of the NW Health Inequalities Hub.

**[Listen here.](#)**

**More information about HEAT can be found on the [Government website.](#)**





CARDIOVASCULAR AND  
RESPIRATORY DISEASE  
MANAGEMENT



# INCLISIRAN OFFERS NEW OPTION FOR HEART HEALTH

When the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) approved the use of Inclisiran in late 2021, it presented a new opportunity to make a real difference to those patients at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke, using a population health approach.

In our region, more than 27 per cent of deaths are due to cardiovascular disease (CVD) and high cholesterol plays a major role in these events.

Inclisiran bridges a gap in the lipid management pathway, offering an additional medication to use alongside statins and other lipid-lowering products used in primary care. This helps to support the large numbers of patients who are already taking medicines but not seeing their lipids reduce by enough to prevent a future heart attack or stroke.

Evidence from trials shows that when a patient is receiving statins as part of their treatment and is prescribed Inclisiran, their low-density lipoprotein level (ldl) reduces by around 50 per cent.

The Innovation Agency is working with local teams to develop different models of Inclisiran delivery.

Associate Director for Transformation Dr Julia Reynolds said:

**“Inclisiran is another tool for primary care and others to use in the lipid management pathway to reduce cholesterol for those patients who have already suffered from a heart attack or stroke.”**

“Inclisiran is another tool to reduce cholesterol.”

Dr Julia Reynolds



690

face-to-face  
consultations



146

started lipid  
lowering therapy



## LIPIDS WORK ACCELERATES

**Our work to support the NICE lipids pathway and improve outcomes for people with high cholesterol accelerated in the past year.**

A successful Pathway Transformation Bid enabled the Innovation Agency to support a pharmacy-led lipids secondary care clinic, supporting patients referred from cardiac rehabilitation.

This has now been adopted as 'business as usual' and supported by three Primary Care Network clinical pharmacists.

An innovative multidisciplinary team approach is being piloted by colleagues

at Liverpool University Hospitals and in primary care.

There are five projects supporting primary care networks in their approaches to managing lipids patients; three with a nurse-led approach, in East Lancashire, Winsford and Southport and Formby; one with a medicines management approach, in Halton; and one using external pharmacists, in Southport and Formby; and the other working with consultants, in Blackpool South.

**View presentations at an Innovation Agency lipid innovation symposium [here](#).**





Laila Milne, Deputy Practice Manager at Swanlow Medical Centre, with the child parent testing kit

# PARENT-CHILD SCREENING FOR FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA

**The Innovation Agency is one of seven AHSNs taking part in a national parent-child screening programme to detect familial hypercholesterolemia, an inherited condition which can lead to very high levels of cholesterol.**

Infants are offered a heel prick at their screening appointment at the GP surgery. If high cholesterol levels are detected, the

sample is sent to the regional genomics hub for genetic testing. If familial hypercholesterolemia is identified the family can receive genetic counselling and be registered as having the condition and offered treatment.

Innovation Agency clinical lead, GP Sue Kemsley, said: "While it's early days there is already a determination within

the region to roll out this simple test in the hope it will help significantly reduce the number of people with high levels of cholesterol to enable us to offer life-changing support."

**Listen to a podcast with Dr Sue Kemsley [here](#).**



# BLOOD PRESSURE MONITORING AT HOME

**We are working with partners in primary care to encourage blood pressure monitoring at home, empowering patients and improving care.**

Jane Briers, who is leading the BP @Home programme for the Innovation Agency, said: "We collaborate with partners to support regular monitoring of blood pressure at home while being conscious of not widening healthcare inequalities."

Dr Jonathan Griffiths, a GP in Cheshire and clinical lead for Cheshire and Merseyside for the BP at home project, said: "Remote monitoring helps GPs to better manage their patients and through the pandemic we have found benefits from empowering patients to measure their own blood pressure."

The Innovation Agency provides a Blood Pressure Quality Improvement (BPQI) Toolkit to help general practices deliver best practice through dashboards and

other tools. By the end of April 2022 140 GPs had taken up the offer and the Innovation Agency has a team supporting partners to improve the management of hypertension.

**Listen to a podcast with Dr Jonathan Griffiths and our programme manager Jane Briers about BP@Home [here](#).**



Dr Jonathan Griffiths

**140**  
GPs using  
BPQI Toolkit



# HEART HEROES IN ACTION ACROSS THE REGION

**Our community outreach work to support CVD prevention increased as lockdown restrictions eased.**

From Kendal to Burnley, Runcorn to the Fylde coast, our Patient and Public Involvement Team have worked alongside partners to provide screening and information at public events.

They have recruited a growing number of 'Heart Heroes', volunteers who are trained to test blood pressure and pulses and offer advice and useful information.

The Heart Heroes have tested more than 500 people, with 60 referred for further blood pressure checks and eight for possible atrial fibrillation.

Debbie Parkinson, Patient and Public Involvement Manager for the Innovation Agency, said: "At each event we had a brilliant response. In Kendal within minutes we'd offered advice to a visitor who was referred to her GP for a more detailed assessment. It's important to 'know your numbers' when it comes to your health."

More than 100 people were screened at the Masjid E Sajedeen Mosque in Blackburn with a similar session held at the Merkazie Jamia Mosque Ghosia in Burnley.





Heart Heroes in Kendal

“We are really fortunate to have the Innovation Agency team on board and they are making a valuable contribution to society.”

Hasan Sidat

Hasan Sidat, Senior Operational Manager for Recovery and Resilience, Nursing, Experience and Engagement for Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust said: “We are really fortunate to have the Innovation Agency team on board and they are making a valuable contribution to society.”

Heart Heroes were created after the success of the Innovation Agency’s AF Ambassadors, who test pulses to detect possible atrial fibrillation. The work of the AF Ambassadors won the HSJ Providers Collaboration of the Year Award 2021.



Heart screening at the Masjid E Sajeeden Mosque

**500**  
heart tests

# REDUCING RISKS FOR ASTHMA SUFFERERS IN KNOWSLEY

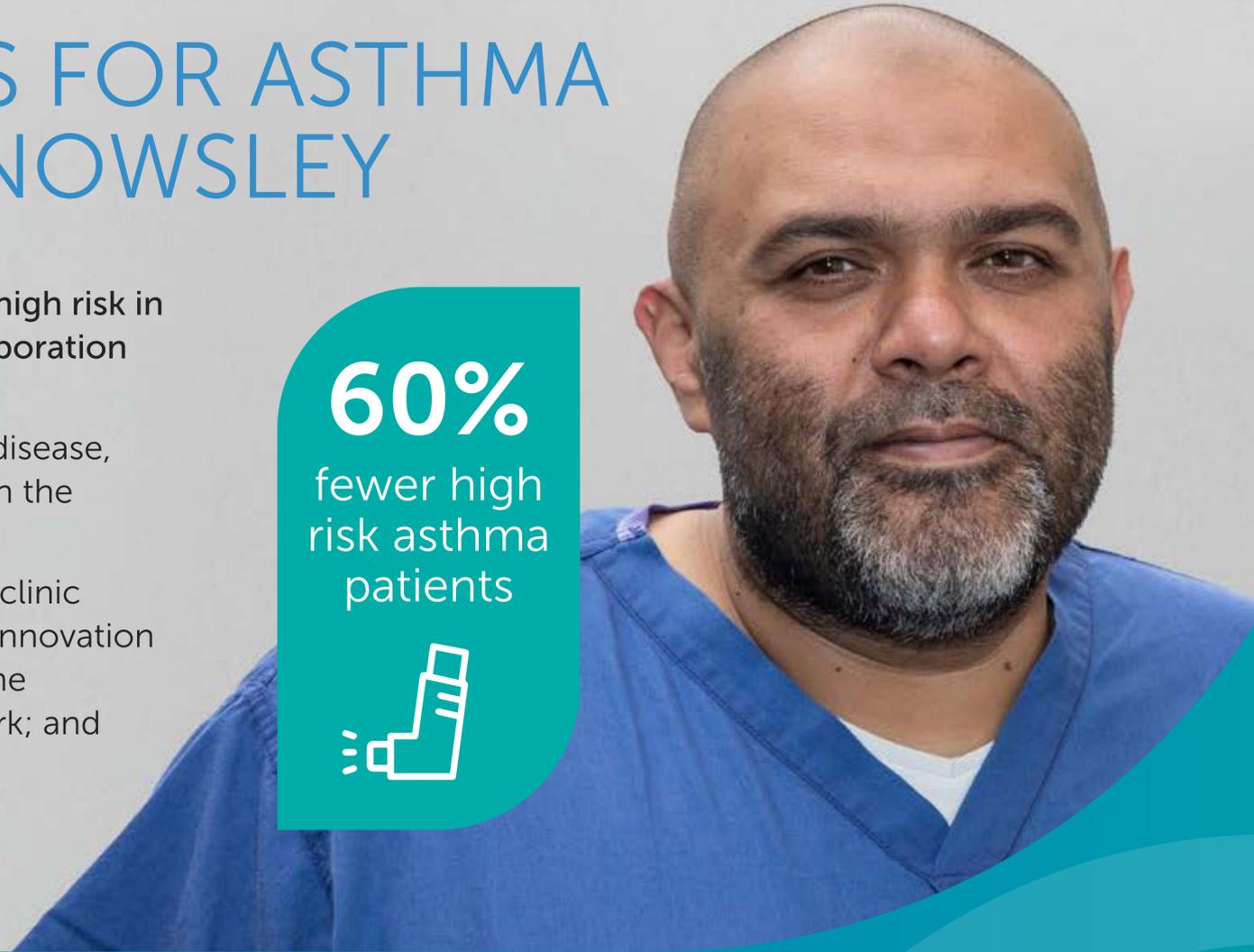
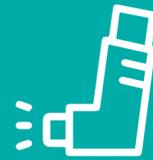
The number of asthma patients identified as high risk in Knowsley was more than halved after a collaboration involving the Innovation Agency.

The aim is to reduce deaths from respiratory disease, which in Knowsley are 42 per cent higher than the national average.

It included the creation of a high-risk asthma clinic with a specialist asthma nurse funded by the Innovation Agency; risk stratification of patients; use of the UCLPartners Proactive Care asthma framework; and FeNO testing devices.

60%

fewer high risk asthma patients



“I am convinced these results will serve to encourage more people to ask for the kind of help that can make a real difference.”

Hassan Burhan



**Working across one GP federation, Primary Care Knowsley, with its shared systems was an important enabler to the impact of this work.**

The goal was to move high-risk patients to lower groups to ensure they were stable. Within 10 months there was a reduction of nearly 60 per cent in high-risk groups; medium risk increased by just over 10 per cent and lower risk groups increased by around 15 per cent.

The number of patients on three or fewer SABA inhalers nearly doubled, from 63 to 117.

GP surgeries from all Knowsley Primary Care Networks are now supporting a physician associate programme alongside Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, with physician associates leading the stratification process and running the clinics, supported by admin teams and other colleagues.

The work was shortlisted for three HSJ awards in 2021.

Respiratory Consultant Dr Hassan Burhan, clinical lead for the Liverpool asthma programme, said:

“These results will encourage more people to ask for the kind of help that can make a real difference.”

**Asthma specialist nurse Shauna Johnston said: “The patients really appreciated the time spent with them, we were able to get lots of information and carry out a FeNO test to measure the severity of their asthma. It felt as though we were really making a difference.”**

**A case study about the work can be viewed here. (link to follow)**



Shauna Johnston with an asthma patient

## A COACHED COLLABORATION REDESIGNS THE PR PATHWAY

The referral pathway for pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) in Cheshire and Merseyside was redesigned through a coached collaboration led by the Innovation Agency.

Nine of the area's PR teams took part in a series of workshops in which they were helped to review the current state of PR services and create a future model, supported by coaches and using innovations curated by the Innovation Agency.

**Sam Pilsworth, Cheshire and Merseyside's PR Lead and Consultant Respiratory Physiotherapist at Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, said:** "The Innovation Agency have been brilliant; they co-ordinated sessions, supported us to co-design a new pathway, giving us space to think – which is something we don't usually get in the NHS when we are so busy delivering services; they have supported staff to lead teams through change and the challenge and opportunities that can bring.

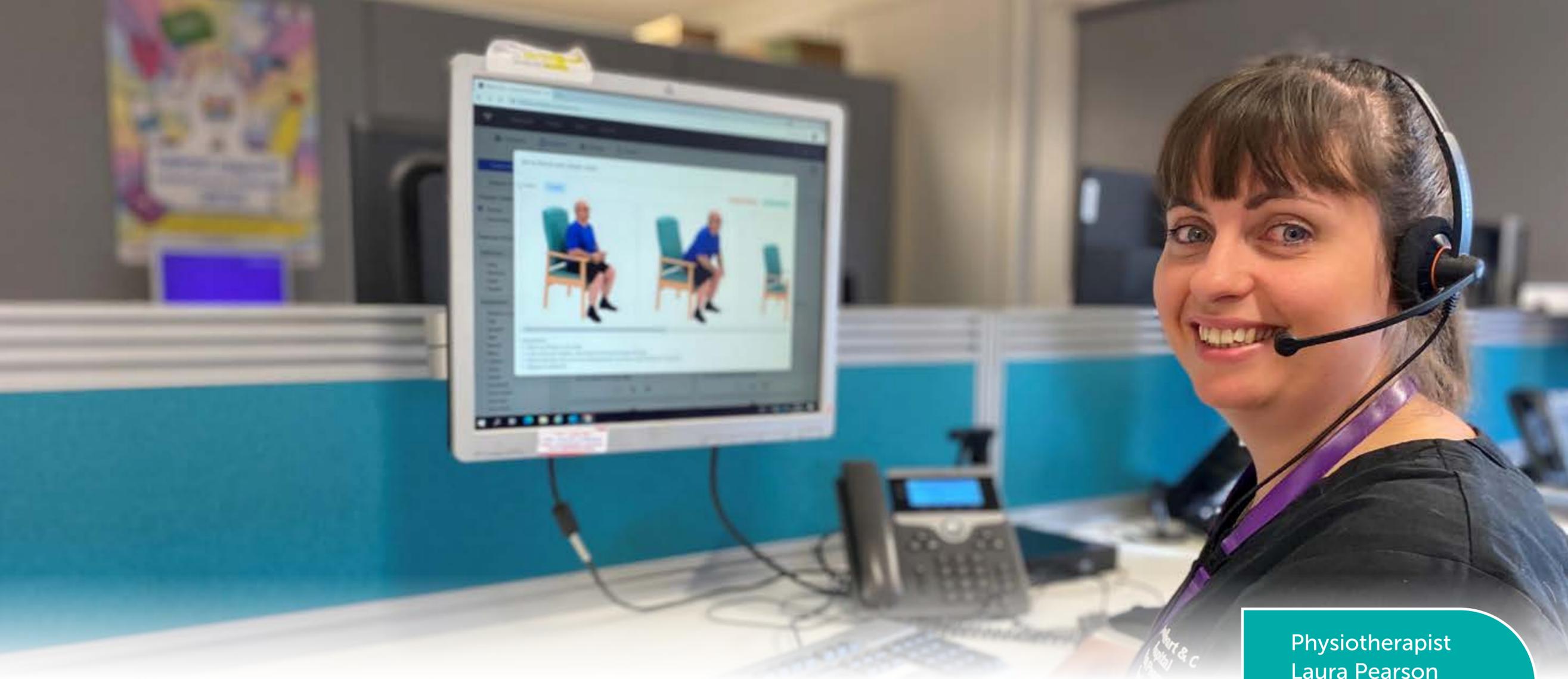
"We have all had the chance to co-produce useful materials, including a new website called 'Breathing Point' for patients, carers and clinicians which provides information and signposting and offers a forum for online discussion; and the evaluation of the digital platform, Rehab Guru."

A similar project involving the Innovation Agency Coaching Academy is now under way in Lancashire and South Cumbria.

"The Innovation Agency have been brilliant... giving us space to think, something we don't usually get."

Sam Pilsworth





Physiotherapist  
Laura Pearson  
monitors patients  
on Rehab Guru

## PATIENTS TRY OUT EXERCISE PRESCRIPTION SOFTWARE

**An exercise prescription platform, Rehab Guru, which was originally designed for injured armed forces personnel, has been tailored for use by pulmonary rehabilitation patients in Cheshire and Merseyside.**

It was selected after the Innovation Agency responded to a need to switch to online solutions at the start of the pandemic, when face-to-face sessions were stopped.

Our team carried out a rapid exploration of available software and produced an [Innovation Insights report](#), profiling the options.

**Rehab Guru was selected by the PR leads to be used in a pilot project.**

Rehab Guru user Dave Ditchfield, who has pulmonary fibrosis, said: “The programme was first class. The exercises were fine tuned to my requirements, the software was excellent, it was easy to use and the video clips were really good. A picture paints a thousand words and the videos allowed me to set the correct ‘pace’ for the exercises.

**“A big advantage was the remote monitoring and the feedback. It was a very big motivator knowing that my ‘teacher’ was checking up on me so there was no escape! It definitely made me feel better overall.”**

Cheshire and Merseyside Pulmonary Rehabilitation Lead and Consultant Respiratory Physiotherapist Sam Pilsworth said: “Patients like the flexibility of doing their exercises at home at a time that is convenient for them and people are reassured they are being monitored by their clinical team.

“Clinicians can view the metrics entered by patients, making telephone consultations more meaningful and you can tailor the programme to meet each individual patient need.”

A digital inclusion pilot project will ensure that Rehab Guru is accessible to all eligible patients, by providing loaned iPads, data, education and support to people in marginalised and excluded groups, as well as those who for different reasons would not attend in-person sessions.

Dave Ditchfield





Credit: Blackpool  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust



# NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME



# INTRODUCTION

**The Innovation Agency leads the Patient Safety Collaborative for the North West Coast and delivers the National Patient Safety Improvement Programme in the region.**

The National Patient Safety Improvement Programme addresses national patient safety concerns and works with patients, carers, clinicians, managers and safety experts, supporting the system to improve and uphold safety as a top priority.





## MILESTONE FOR CARE HOME STAFF TRAINING

**A tool to help care home staff recognise and respond to signs of deterioration has been introduced to more than 1,000 individuals in homes across our region.**

RESTORE2 – Recognise Early Soft-signs, Take Observations, Respond, Escalate – has been shared with care staff across our region since 2019. During the pandemic, training has continued remotely.

Jeanette Gow, who works at the Madison Court Care Home in St Helens, said: “Now, whenever staff need to speak with a GP, 111 and ambulance staff it’s like they are all speaking the same language. It has helped to speed up the process of getting the correct care when residents are at their most vulnerable.”

Johannah Houghton, Manager of Sable Cottage Care Home at Tarporley in Cheshire, said: “The training makes you focus on

residents’ general state of health. You learn to be so much more aware of signs that could mean deterioration and it gives you confidence, especially for non-clinical staff, to discuss a deteriorating resident with a clinician.”

The number of staff training in Liverpool is set to increase as Liverpool City Council has offered the training to agency care and nursing staff in private care homes.

**Michelle Barry, Quality Assurance and Adult Safeguarding Lead for Liverpool City Council, said: “We want to offer the training to agency staff and to our social work teams so they know what systems and tools they will be expected to use in Liverpool care homes.”**

# BEST PRACTICE IN MATERNITY AND NEONATAL CARE

**10%**  
fewer new  
mums who  
smoke



**Our Patient Safety Network is supporting improvement within maternal and neonatal units across the North West Coast.**

We work closely with maternity and neonatal staff at 11 trusts on the implementation of the Maternal and Neonatal Safety Improvement Programme (MatNeoSIP) using Quality Improvement methodology, creating communities of practice and sharing local learning.

By building local knowledge and expertise with a regional programme of events, we aim to encourage a culture of safety, continuous learning and improvement as well as offering quality improvement coaching.

In early 2022 we launched a newsletter, complementing quarterly webinars for colleagues across the region.

This work has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of Blackpool mums classed as smokers when they give birth. Of the 3,000 women who give birth in the resort each year, around 21 per cent are now classed as smokers, down from 31 per cent and making Blackpool one of the most improved areas in the country.

Shelley Piper, Head of Hospital Based Services within the Families and Integrated Community Care Division of Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: **“By being part of a community led by the Innovation Agency we have been able to tap into techniques in use elsewhere which are now paying off in Blackpool.”**

We are working closely with the North West Operational Delivery Network and local improvement teams on embedding a care bundle for the optimisation of the preterm infant, offering improvement data to local trusts to support implementation.

“By being part of a community led by the Innovation Agency we have been able to tap into techniques in use elsewhere which are now paying off in Blackpool.”

Shelley Piper



# HELPING MENTAL HEALTH TRUSTS TO REDUCE RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE

**A two-person Innovation Agency team has been working with mental health trusts to help reduce restrictive practice in inpatient mental health, learning disabilities and autism wards.**

In the last year, Alice Fletcher and Heather Morrison have worked with nurses, psychologists and healthcare assistants in 14 mental health and learning disability wards across the North West Coast with the aim of reducing restrictive practice by 25 per cent by April 2023, as part of the national Mental Health Safety Improvement Programme (MH-SIP).

They have visited all the wards to establish what their approach to restrictive practice is and how it compares with national guidance.

A safety cross chart has been created to record occasions where restrictive practice has been used and these have helped inform a series of Quality Improvement sessions with staff. All the wards have created their own Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycles where they are testing their ideas and looking at the impact these changes has on restrictive practice use.

**Other activities include quarterly learning webinars to bring together ward staff; drop-in sessions; a dedicated Whatsapp group and an anonymous question platform to offer support seven days a week.**

**14**  
wards engaged in reducing restrictive practice

Alice Fletcher prepares ward packs





Working with Taylor Ward staff, Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Rebecca Spence, Clinical Lead for Least Restrictive Practice and Positive Behavioural Support within the Mid Mersey division of Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, said: **"We have been testing three change ideas and we have already seen a reduction in our restrictive practice rates - our ward**

**feels like a nicer place to work and has a better culture. Having time away from the ward to discuss and reflect on what might be impacting our patients has been invaluable."**



Rebecca Spence

# EARLY INTERVENTION FOR EATING DISORDERS

**More young people than ever before are starting treatment for eating disorders, according to NHS statistics.**

Almost 10,000 children and young people started treatment in the UK between April and December 2021, with record demand for services – an increase of a quarter compared to the same period last year and up by almost two thirds since before the pandemic.

**The Innovation Agency and AHSN Network are supporting the spread of a programme to help meet the increased need.**

The First Episode Rapid Early Intervention for Eating Disorders (FREED) programme, aimed at 16 to 25-year-olds who have had an eating disorder for three years or less, has been adopted by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust and by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, with the support of the Innovation Agency.

Almost 10,000 children and young people started treatment in the UK between April and December 2021



## INNOVATION TO DIAGNOSE ADHD

**Our work to help develop the care received in our region by patients with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) moved forward at pace in the last year.**

A computer-based assessment that combines a test of attention ability with a movement analysis based on an infrared measurement system, known as a Qbtest, has been installed in 12 sites in the North West Coast, with another due to start in summer 2022 and six more developing a business case to adopt the innovation.

Dene Drive  
Primary Care Centre

Annual  
Review  
2021-2022



SUPPORTING OUR  
SYSTEMS

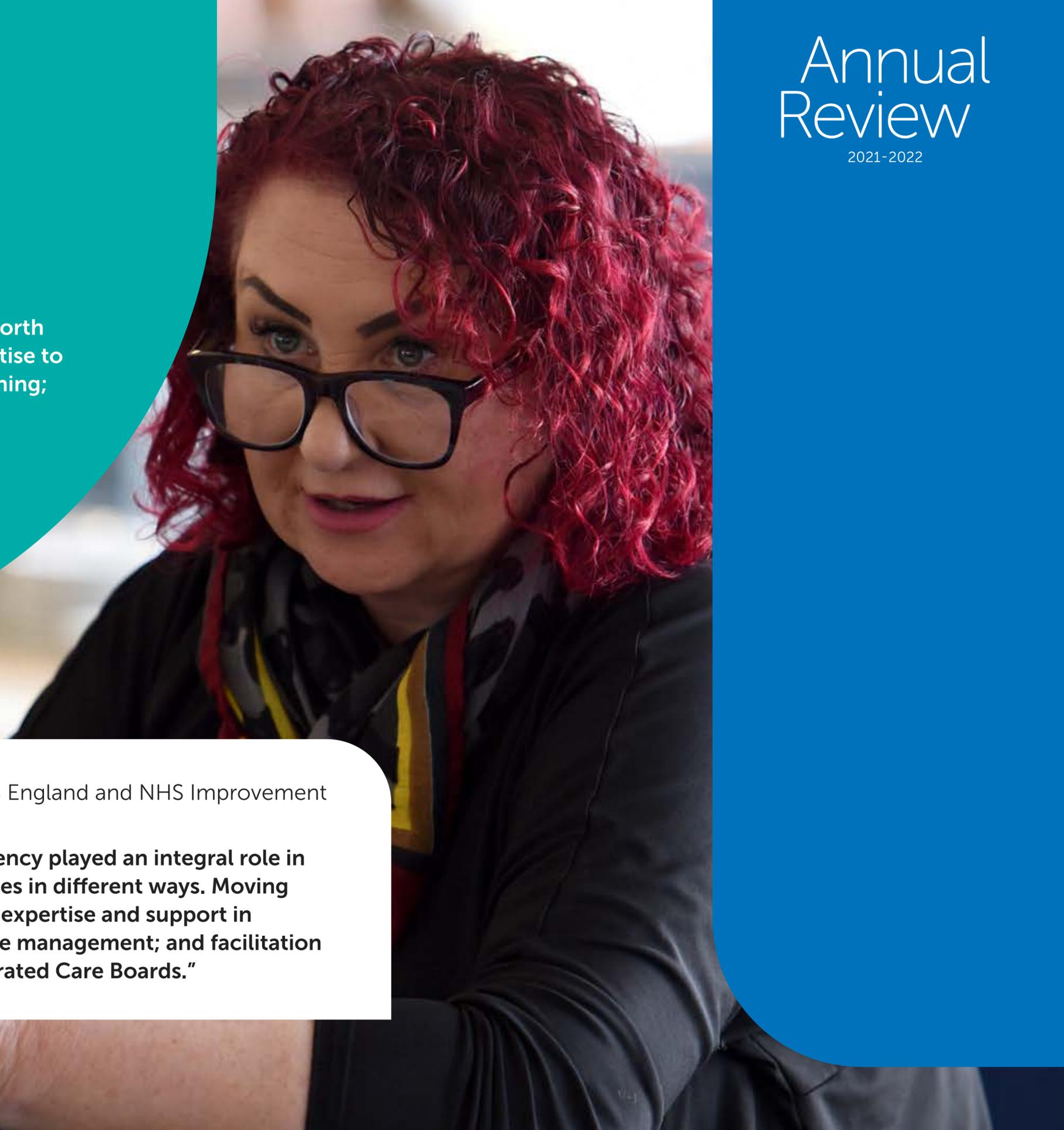


# INTRODUCTION

The Innovation Agency supports the two integrated care systems in the North West Coast with innovation and transformation. Our team provides expertise to source and adopt innovations; facilitate system and service change; coaching; and programme management.

We also support partners to adopt and spread products and programmes in national initiatives such as MedTech Funding Mandate, Rapid Uptake Products and National Innovation Accelerator.

Examples of our system support can be found in this summary of our role [here](#)



Dr David Levy, Regional Medical Director at NHS England and NHS Improvement North West, said:

**“Throughout the pandemic, the Innovation Agency played an integral role in supporting local organisations to deliver services in different ways. Moving forward, they will be fundamental in providing expertise and support in sourcing and adopting innovations; programme management; and facilitation of system and service change to the new Integrated Care Boards.”**

# SPREADING INNOVATION

The Innovation Agency played a significant role in securing funds for innovations that improve cancer diagnosis



Patient Tony Bayliss  
and Gemma Norris  
(Gastrointestinal Physiology  
Service Lead)

## CYTOSPONGE – 'PILL ON A STRING'

We helped land £500,000 SBRI Healthcare funding to spread the Cytosponge 'sponge on a string' diagnostic test from secondary care into the community.

The potentially life-saving device helps to identify patients most at risk of developing oesophageal cancer and will be available closer to people's homes.

The patient swallows the Cytosponge capsule which dissolves in the stomach after a few minutes to release a sponge which is gently withdrawn on a string and collects cells from the oesophagus.

The test, which is minimally invasive and generally more comfortable for patients, will be offered in community settings to individuals on endoscopy waiting lists in the Liverpool City Region and in Lancashire, relieving pressure on secondary services.

Patient Tony Bayliss said: **"I prefer the sponge because it's much quicker and it's very simple. I had a bit of trepidation to start with but it was no bother at all in the end and I'd recommend it to anyone."**

**1.25m**  
SBRI  
Healthcare  
funding

# SPREADING INNOVATION

Dr Ash Bassi, Consultant Gastroenterologist at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and co-chair of the Cheshire and Merseyside Endoscopy Network, said: **“The great strength of the Innovation Agency is that it can identify best practice in an area and then make sure it spreads across the healthcare system.”**

Dr Ash Bassi, Consultant Gastroenterologist;  
Dr David McClements, Consultant  
Gastroenterologist; Lauren Dodgson,  
Senior GI Physiologist; Gemma Norris,  
Gastrointestinal Physiology Service Lead,  
St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals



## PINPOINT – CANCER BLOOD TEST

**A strategic collaboration, including the Innovation Agency, the Cancer Alliances in the North West Coast and industry, as well as specialist networks, was developed to bid for money to support an innovative 'intelligent triage' test.**

We helped PinPoint Data Sciences to secure £750,000 SBRI funding to spread its PinPoint test in North West Coast primary services.

The test applies machine learning to a blood sample to determine the risk that a given individual has cancer. Using the test at the earliest stage means doctors will be able to determine within 72 hours how likely it is a patient has cancer and either prioritise them for hospital testing or rule them out of the cancer pathway entirely.

**Jon Hayes, Managing Director of Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance, said: "This new tool will allow us to safely remove patients from those urgent referral pathways, reducing backlogs and allowing high-risk patients to access the specialists and facilities they need sooner."**



**Jon Hayes**  
Managing Director of  
Cheshire and Merseyside  
Cancer Alliance

## BOOSTING ENDOSCOPY UNIT PRODUCTIVITY

**The Innovation Agency commissioned an evaluation by health economists of the digital tool THRIVE, which aims to boost productivity in endoscopy units.**

**THRIVE** (theatre rooms in a virtual environment) was developed by Manchester digital platform providers Inform People and was refined for health service use in Cheshire and Merseyside.

Local clinicians worked alongside the company to create a simple dashboard that displays room use and other measures that help managers to improve the unit's efficiency.

Funding came initially from the Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance and the tool was developed with input from the endoscopy team at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals.

Once its potential for adoption was established, further funding was provided by the Alliance to the area's Endoscopy Network to support spread into other trusts. The funding covers the cost of Thrive licences for each of the endoscopy units, removing procurement barriers.

Dr Ash Bassi, Consultant Gastroenterologist at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals and co-chair of the Cheshire and Merseyside endoscopy network, said: **"The evaluation confirms what we have always believed, that there is a correlation between the increased productivity of endoscopy units and reduced waiting lists. This will help other units to present a case for using THRIVE – and improve their own efficiency."**



# BLUEPRINT FOR ADHD SERVICES

**A blueprint to redesign services for adults with ADHD in the North West Coast has been developed with the support of the Innovation Agency.**

Around five per cent of the population in the UK has ADHD and most adults living with the condition are thought to be undiagnosed.

Mental health programme leads identified adult ADHD services as a significant problem because of lack of capacity and fragmented services. We agreed with them to deliver a programme to co-design a service model that would embrace technology, where appropriate, to make best use of resources and include integrated care concepts.

Our team developed a change model that identified the future state as a primary care-based service enhancement that will result in improved access, patient flow and workforce efficiencies. It also features:

- **An online educational repository, including self-care resources**
- **The creation of a new mental health practitioner role**
- **A self-management platform**

Dr Helen Pears, Consultant General Adult Psychiatrist at Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, said:

**“The Innovation Agency team’s energy, inclusivity and skill have been instrumental in bringing together a truly collaborative approach and outcome.”**

“The Innovation Agency team’s energy and skills have been instrumental in creating a truly collaborative approach.”

Dr Helen Pears



# DIGITAL TOOL DELIVERS SERVICE EFFICIENCIES

**A digital dashboard helped an NHS trust deliver improved mental health care and make around £1.7m worth of efficiency gains.**

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust was the first trust in the country to trial the Management and Supervision Tool, or MaST, which uses predictive analytics to help staff to improve decision-making. The software has supported the trust's community mental health teams in managing growing caseloads and rising numbers of people with complex mental health needs during the pandemic.

The system was progressed through the Innovation Pipeline and the Innovation Agency commissioned a health economics report to evaluate its impact. This found a shift in activity from inpatient to community care which led to the efficiency gains in the period after MaST was introduced.

Adam Drage, Clinical Service Lead at Mersey Care, said: "MaST allows us to see where the risk and complexity is in our caseloads, so we can prioritise who we need to see right now and who might be ready to move on to a different care

pathway. We have the right data and intelligence to inform safer decisions about the people on our caseloads."

MaST is provided by the company Holmusk, whose director Caroline Gadd is a Fellow of the NHS Innovation Accelerator.

She said: **"We're really pleased that our work with Mersey Care has delivered such positive results and that the Innovation Agency has highlighted them for us."**

"MaST allows us to see where the risk and complexity is in our caseloads, so we can prioritise who we need to see right now."

Adam Drage



# HOW THE INNOVATION PIPELINE WORKS

The Innovation Pipeline facilitates the progression of healthcare innovations from an idea or prototype to national spread and adoption.

It provides a process to triage, develop and implement an innovation that is needed by our local system. It involves a series of decision-making meetings and collaborative activity such as first-stage reviews, product demonstrations and submission to an innovation curation and assessment panel.

Our team identifies the most relevant products to address a challenge and develops Innovation Insight reports.

The North West Coast process feeds into a national dashboard which is a portfolio of more than 1,000 innovations submitted by all 15 AHSNs.

The system complements the **Innovation Agency Exchange**, a website that showcases innovations helpful to address North West Coast priorities, with more than 2,300 active members.

## North West Coast Innovation Pipeline



**1,000**  
products  
on Pipeline



# MEASURING THE BENEFITS OF DIGITALLY ENABLED CARE

**How to measure the value of digitally enabled care has been the focus of a project led by the Innovation Agency.**

As different health and care services introduce tech into people's homes to help monitor and manage their condition, questions remain about how to evaluate the benefits.

The first step to coming up with answers was taken by the Innovation Agency in collaboration with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust and the NIHR ARC North West Coast, exploring the impact of 'virtual wards', in which patients' care is monitored by the use of technology at home, for instance after surgery.

Innovation Agency Associate Director of Digital Transformation Jenni West said: "What we found in our study was that the most meaningful benefits were in the quality of experience for the patient in being able to recover in their own homes.

"For both patient and hospital, another important benefit was that the chances of being readmitted to hospital, were reduced."

With evaluation design expertise provided by ARC colleagues at Lancaster University and funding from NHS England North West, an advisory group drawn from organisations around the region progressed ideas; identified what data, both quantitative and qualitative, was available; and highlighted gaps where further work will be required.



"What we found in our study was that the most meaningful benefits were in the quality of experience for the patient in being able to recover in their own homes."

Jenni West



The project was co-led by Dr Rosie Kaur, Associate Medical Director for Physical Health at Mersey Care, who said: **“This has been a really valuable piece of work. If we are to transform out-of-hospital care we need to be able to articulate the benefits of digitally enabled care at home, in a narrative that will speak to clinicians and patients.**

“This group has drawn together expertise and enthusiasm to critically review what we already know about the benefits of digitally enabled care at home - and crucially ask the questions about what we don’t know.”

A report was produced identifying key outcomes and data that would prove the benefits when collected into a dashboard that can monitor them over time.

“If we are to transform out-of-hospital care we need to be able to articulate the benefits of digitally enabled care at home.”

Dr Rosie Kaur

## Accelerating change

**Our Senior Programme Manager for Digital Change, Adrian Quinn, worked with colleagues in both ICSs on successful bids to become ICS Accelerators for Digital Social Care Records (DSCR) systems and falls prevention technology. NHS England awarded £1.3m to enable care providers in our region to implement these systems, enhancing the quality, safety and efficiency of their care.**

NHS England has set a national target of 80 per cent of providers using DCSRs by 2024, while currently only 40 per cent do so. This means carers are spending more time on paper-based admin tasks which could be spent on direct care.

DSCRs enable collaborative working, better care planning and information sharing between social care and health. They are also a catalyst for wider digital change in regulated care, improving connectivity, providing digital devices and boosting staff digital confidence.

# INSIGHTS INTO BENEFITS AND BARRIERS IN REMOTE CONSULTATIONS

**The challenge of relieving pressures on the health and care workforce and improving productivity continues to be a theme throughout our work.**

NHS England North West commissioned us to explore the opportunities for further development in remote consultations. Part of this work explored the barriers that would need to be removed for further growth to be achieved.

The result was 'Outpatient remote consultation: an appreciative enquiry', the product of 40 in-depth conversations with 15 clinical teams in our region.

## **The report found:**

- Health professionals want to use remote consultations at the right clinical time and for the right patient group
- Many such consultations are done by phone. While video consultations are often more effective, it's acknowledged that this option is harder to deliver
- Several significant changes to procedures and processes must take place for remote consultations to be delivered to a consistently high standard

**Peter Jenkinson, Chief of Digital Operations at NHS England North West, said: "The Innovation Agency team has carried out a piece of work that few people are in a position to do, and it has given us valuable insights into how to effectively develop the use of remote consultations."**



**40**

interviews  
re: remote  
consultations



"The Innovation Agency team has carried out a piece of work that few people are in a position to do."

Peter Jenkinson



## STUDENTS ARE PIONEERS OF NEW ROLE

**The first cohort of graduates to complete a ground-breaking programme aimed at tackling a shortage of psychological professionals in the NHS received their certificates at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).**

After a project led by the Innovation Agency and funded by Health Education England, a pilot cohort of 50 received training towards a new Postgraduate Diploma Associate Practitioner Psychologist (PGDip APP).

Recruitment was through Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust and several other North West Coast trusts.

The trainees were employed on NHS contracts during their training in community, hospital and primary care settings.

After the success of the first trainee APPs, a second wave of recruitment in 2021 was funded by Health Education England across the North West, to 100 posts in primary and secondary care.

An evaluation report was published, highlighting the programme's positive impact.

Naim Ismail, an Associate Psychological Practitioner working in East Burnley for Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust, said: **"This novel initiative is a brilliant step-up for newly qualified psychology graduates and I'd recommend it as an initial stepping stone to those who aspire to a career in psychology."**



# COACHING FOR CULTURE AND CHANGE

# HOLDING SPACE FOR TEAMS

Innovation Agency Associate Director of Culture and Workforce Juliette Kumar, said: **“Over the last few years the Coaching Academy has evolved, continuously improved and adapted in response to the needs in our local organisations and systems.**

“People have seen the value of expert convenors, facilitators and educators, holding space for teams to learn, truly understand the challenges they have and provide them with tools and techniques to work through these challenges.”



“People have seen the value of expert convenors, facilitators and educators, holding space for teams to learn, truly understand the challenges they have and provide them with tools and techniques to work through these challenges.”

Juliette Kumar

**2,000**  
people  
coached



**382**  
programmes  
and sessions



**37**  
people achieved  
coaching  
accreditation



# HELPING PEOPLE FROM PROTECTED GROUPS GET A SEAT AT THE BOARD TABLE

**NHS England and NHS Improvement North West commissioned the Innovation Agency Coaching Academy to develop a pilot leadership development coaching programme in Cheshire and Merseyside, to support people who identify with protected groups to step into a board level role in health and care.**

One of the participants was Natasha Odita, Strategic Workforce Lead at Bolton CCG, who said: **“The future I envisage is one where we can change the dynamics of traditional boards; better represent the world we live in; and demonstrate that diverse boards are much more than a check-box exercise and a real source of corporate strength.**

“I’ve had a very diverse career path and know I have a lot to offer as a NED.

This programme has provided me with a community of practice where we can grow and achieve our aspirations together. It has given me confidence to know I am not alone. I also value being provided with space to clearly think about my strengths, discover strengths I didn’t realise I had, and how to maximise them.”

The programme was well over-subscribed and a second cohort is planned for later in 2022.



“I’ve had a very diverse career path and know I have a lot to offer as a NED. This programme has provided me with a community of practice where we can grow and achieve our aspirations together.”

Natasha Odita



## TRAINING FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

To embed and grow a coaching culture in mental health services, the Coaching Academy was asked to deliver coach practitioner training to a group of 20 service managers at North West Boroughs Healthcare, now Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust.

The manager of a children's mental health crisis service said his 'lightbulb moment' during the training was when he realised how similar coaching conversations are to assessing patients as a clinician.

Liam Stowell said: **"It's all about having meaningful conversations with everyone – your team and patients. It gives a good framework and foundation for the rest of your career."**

The Coaching Academy's coach practitioner training is spread across one year and leads to accreditation by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

"It's all about having meaningful conversations with everyone. It gives a good framework and foundation for the rest of your career."

Liam Stowell

# LEARNING FROM THOUGHT LEADERS AND DISRUPTORS

Leading thinkers and influencers continue to be introduced to our region through the North West Masterclass Collaborative, which includes the Innovation Agency Coaching Academy.

The most popular sessions of the last year include Professor Sir Michael Marmot on health inequalities and 'levelling up'; and IMPOWER Consulting, introducing a model of behaviour change and how it was used to transform adult social care in Manchester.

Video recordings of the events can be found [here](#); and upcoming masterclasses are listed on the [Innovation Agency's website](#).

"The health of a population tells us something fundamental about society. If health inequalities are getting bigger it's a reflection that inequalities in society are getting bigger."

Professor Sir Michael Marmot

Credit: ourtime.org.uk





## HELPING TO SHAPE DECISION-MAKING IN CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

**A clinical and care leadership framework for Cheshire and Merseyside was developed with support from the Coaching Academy, laying the foundations for decision-making in the system.**

Leaders in different roles and organisations from the NHS and social care were brought together in a series of workshops to agree principles on how different levels of leadership will interact on decision-making, learning and development, equity and diversity and communication.

The work involved the use of an interactive collaboration tool called Idea Drop which made it possible to involve more people in making suggestions and commenting on ideas.





Dr Fiona Lemmens, Designate Associate Medical Director for the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, said: **“I was excited by the creativity from the Coaching Academy and their suggestion to use ‘design thinking’ methodology in creating the framework.**

“Using Idea Drop also opened up the design process to a much wider audience in a shorter timeframe than we have ever been able to do before. It has been so easy to engage and work with the Coaching Academy. They are full of energy and ideas; and flexible in their approach to meet the national guidance and agreed project deliverables.”



**Read this blog** from Jen Kohan, Head of the Coaching Academy.



**Watch this video** by Prof Rowan Pritchard Jones, Medical Director, Cheshire and Merseyside ICB

## NATIONAL COMMISSION

**The Coaching Academy was commissioned by NHS England and Improvement to develop two new assessment tools for all 42 ICSs in England. These will gauge the impact of their clinical and care professional leadership frameworks and monitor their cultural development as they evolve.**

## DEVELOPING A COACHING CULTURE

A Coaching Community of Practice was created by the Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership's Organisation Development (OD) network, with support from the Coaching Academy.

The group's goal is to mobilise, support and develop a coaching culture across Cheshire and Merseyside and it includes around 60 OD practitioners from community, mental health, and primary and secondary care. They come together virtually every two months to share coaching resources, access CPD and have facilitated conversations about system needs, such as career coaching and restorative practice.

The group has been awarded bids to continue to mobilise and develop coaching culture across the system.

Gill Phazey, OD and Leadership Development Associate, said: **"This has been such a helpful community for coaches; it works in a very practical way, identifying development and learning opportunities and funding to support the coaches, which in turn better enables them to support the organisations and individuals they work with. We really value having this inclusive space."**

More information [here](#).

A close-up portrait of Gill Phazey, a woman with short, light-colored hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a black top. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Gill Phazey

# Welcome and introduction



STRENGTHENING  
LOCAL ECONOMIES



# INTRODUCTION

Our role in strengthening local economies includes three ERDF programmes, funding business support in Lancashire; Cheshire and Warrington; and Merseyside.

Local companies with health and care products are offered bespoke packages which include introductions to key decision-makers, help with grant applications and real-world evaluation of products.



**53**  
jobs  
created



**487**  
companies  
supported



**£21.8M**  
investment  
secured



# NEW £10.5M INVESTMENT COMPANY FOR HEALTH INNOVATORS

The Innovation Agency played a leading role in creating a new company which will provide funding and support for early-stage innovations in healthcare in Liverpool City Region.

The company, LYVA Labs, was launched by Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham with £10.5m investment as part of a vision for the Liverpool City Region to be a UK innovation powerhouse.

The initial idea was championed by the Innovation Agency with local NHS trusts. Innovation Agency Director of Enterprise and Economic Growth, Lorna Green, now

also founding chief executive of LYVA Labs, said: **“The idea came about because of the lack of funding for great ideas to improve healthcare; we have fantastic clinicians in the NHS and creative businesses who want to help. Without that early-stage funding and professional business advice, these ideas fail to get off the ground.**

“We want to see an explosion in innovative, high-growth businesses which will provide opportunities for young people to gain skills, keep our innovative clinicians within the NHS – and ultimately boost our local economy as well as raise standards in healthcare.”

The founder of a business supported by the Innovation Agency, Dr Elliot Street of St Helens-based Inovus Medical, said:

**“I know from my experience as a clinician with an innovative idea just how important early-stage support is in turning that idea into a commercially viable reality. The Innovation Agency has opened doors to funding, supported our funding bids and helped spread the word on the innovative work we are doing at Inovus.”**

Listen to a podcast with Lorna Green and NHS Clinical Director of Innovation Professor Tony Young OBE [here](#)



Dr Elliot Street of Inovus Medical, and Steve Rotherham, Metro Mayor of Liverpool City Region

“We want to see an explosion in innovative, high-growth businesses which will provide opportunities for young people to gain skills.”

Lorna Green

## INNOVATOR DEVELOPS DEVICE TO STOP SNORING

**Snorgo is a device that aims to significantly reduce snoring, developed by former GP Dr Pete Naylor. He has a patent pending on the product, which an individual puts between their lips and teeth while carrying out short exercises.**

Around one quarter of all UK adults snore, which can have a damaging impact on mental health, physical wellbeing and family life. Snoring is associated with sleep apnoea, a potentially serious condition in which people stop breathing while asleep and which can lead to raised blood pressure and a greater risk of stroke.

Cheshire-based Dr Naylor reports '100 per cent satisfaction' with the T-shaped device which was trialled by a group of users convened by the Innovation Agency.

Our Enterprise and Growth Team also helped Dr Naylor secure grant funding and product evaluation and introductions to NHS clinicians. He now aims to make Snorgo commercially viable.

Dr Naylor said: **"I'd always had an interest in mental health as a GP and felt that sleep was absolutely at the core of the issue, both as a monitor of mental health and a precipitator.**

**"We know we have a very good product, but the Innovation Agency has been very supportive in helping us focus our energies in the right areas to help make it viable."**



Cheshire Commercial  
Programme Manager Indi  
Singh, left, with Dr Pete Naylor



Emma Jarvis of  
Dearbump

## BACKING FOR PREGNANCY OFFER

**A Merseyside entrepreneur was given support to develop a package for employers to offer their pregnant staff.**

Emma Jarvis set up Dearbump in 2018 to supply care packages to pregnant women and their families.

Emma expanded the offer to companies and Dearbump is now supporting pregnant employees with a digital wellbeing service that includes checks at several stages of pregnancy and parenthood, backed by fitness and nutrition plans.

She said that around 54,000 pregnant women leave their employer every year, many because they feel they have lacked

support; and UK businesses spend around £1.6 billion on replacing new mothers who don't return.

Dearbump aims to help companies attract and retain the best employees.

The Innovation Agency supported Emma with commercial and marketing guidance.

**Emma Jarvis said: "My focus had previously been on individual women, not on larger employers, and the Innovation Agency were really great in helping me open doors to the right people – the decision-makers."**

# FUNDING BOOST FOR LANCASHIRE HEALTH TECH EXPERTS

**A Lancashire health tech company won a £500,000 funding boost to develop technology that supports patients to better manage their medicines in their own homes.**

CONNECT Care has developed a dashboard that links patients, carers and clinicians and empowers patients to take medications with greater confidence.

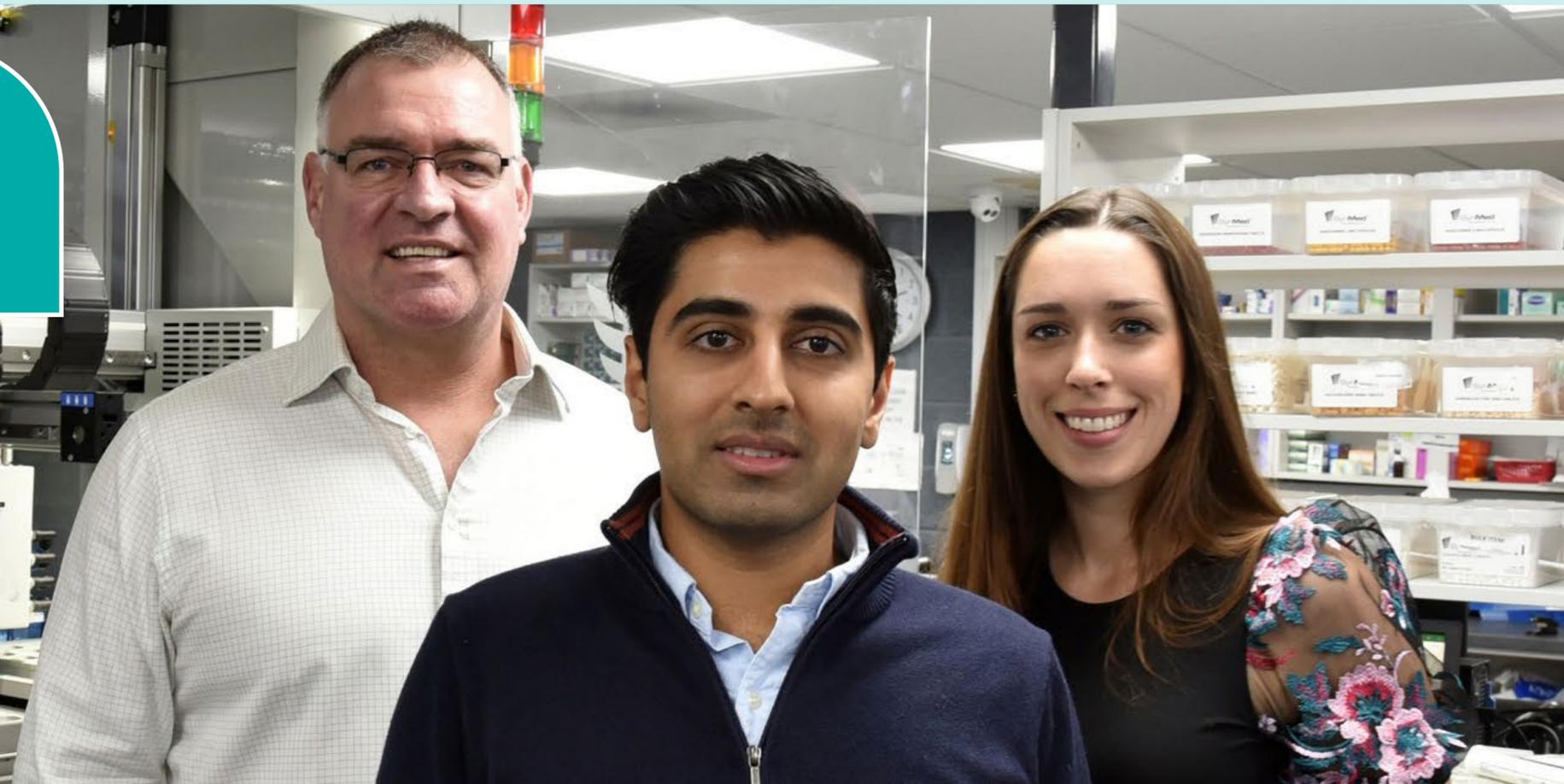
The funding package from Innovate UK will help the Preston company create a 'novel data insights engine' that will generate predictive insights and notifications with greater context for carers.

Our Enterprise and Growth Team helped the company with its funding bid and supported a pilot of its existing technology.

Medication non-adherence is a major challenge for the health and care system: up to half of medicines prescribed for long-term health conditions are not taken as intended, costing the NHS more than £500m every year.

**Issa Dasu Patel, Chief Executive Officer of CONNECT Care, said: "The Innovation Agency has been vital for us in developing our value proposition so that it's in line with what the NHS needs. They've facilitated the introductions we needed to get the pilot off the ground, so they've been fundamental to it happening."**

Innovation Agency Commercial Programme Manager Steve Adams with Issa Dasu Patel and Rachel Wickenden from CONNECT Care



## INTRODUCING INTERNATIONAL INNOVATORS

**Our Enterprise and Growth Team helps the most promising overseas innovators to introduce their products and services to the NHS.**

The team offers a bespoke package of support to start-ups and scale-ups from continental Europe – and, increasingly, further afield – as part of the EIT Bridgehead programme.

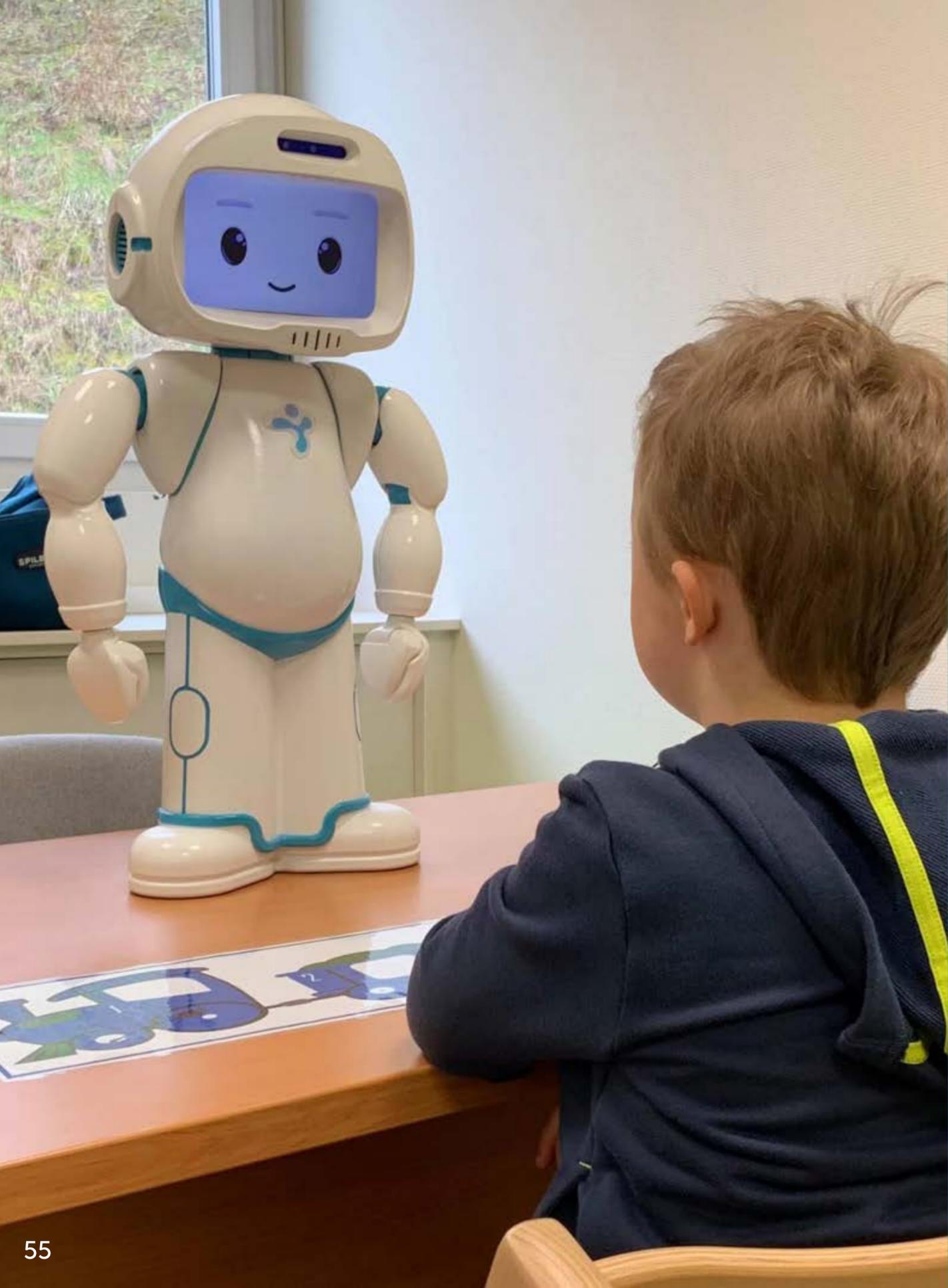
One such company was tech firm LuxAI, from Luxembourg, whose small human-like robots are boosting the life chances of children with learning difficulties, disabilities and autism in the North West.

Known as QTrobots, they help teach children cognitive, social and other skills by acting as a pivot between the educator and pupil.

Several of the 'expressive social robots' have been introduced into specialist schools run by the Together Trust charity in Greater Manchester as part of a project initiated by the Innovation Agency.

The Enterprise and Growth Team's role was to introduce the company to potential partners in the UK.

**Dr Aida Nazari, Head of Human-AI Interaction at LuxAI, said: "We're delighted the QTrobot is having such a positive impact and this success wouldn't have been possible without the support we've had from the Innovation Agency."**



# CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN SUPPLIER PARTNERSHIPS

The NHS in the North Excellence in Supply Awards 2021 celebrated inspirational collaborations between the health service and suppliers across the North of England – many prompted by the fight against COVID-19.

Keynote speaker Sir Jim Mackey, the Chief Executive of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Chairman of the NHS Customer Board for Procurement and Supply and a former head of NHS Improvement, paid tribute to suppliers who stepped up to help the NHS during the pandemic.

Eight awards were made to suppliers and NHS staff as part of an event hosted by the Innovation Agency and NHS Northern Customer Board; sponsored by Health Innovation Manchester, Yorkshire and Humber AHSN and North East and North Cumbria AHSN.

View recordings of presentations and the keynote address, [here](#).  
Listen to a podcast with Sir Jim Mackey, [here](#).





**INNOVATION** AGENCY  
Academic Health Science Network  
for the North West Coast

Annual  
Review  
2021-2022

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**EUROPEAN UNION**  
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