Response to NHS Chief Executive’s Open Call for Evidence and Ideas

Respondent ID: 278

Organisation name: DocCom

Type of response: Online
**Respondent ID:**

| 278 |

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**Please choose the description below that best fits your organisation’s main role:**

| Private sector (med tech) |

### What can the NHS and NHS Commissioning Board learn from national and international best practice to accelerate the pace and scale of adoption of innovations throughout the NHS?

Effective communication and the sharing of information is key to the successful adoption of workable innovations. To this end, the NHS needs to work to dismantle organisational silos and look for communication models which do not rely on outdated technology (e.g. pagers, fax machines) and ineffective hierarchical information cascades (e.g. “spray and pray” e mailing campaigns).

Instead, look to stimulate the fast, viral spread of information using social media models (as proven by e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn). This form of innovative communication will deliver relevant information quickly to the right audiences, re-engage participants and deliver organisational efficiencies and financial savings. Social media platforms specifically for healthcare professionals are now starting to be available, but this innovation needs some publicity and encouragement.

Impetus should come from the bottom up, not top down. Pull is better than push (as demonstrated by Facebook spread driven by users themselves, or the organisation of social reform by Arab grass roots in Egypt etc). Look to frontline clinicians themselves to indicate what innovations must come next, and encourage and support them when they do.

Empower more Foundation Trusts with more organisational freedoms, and extend liberties to other parts of the NHS. This will encourage and reward innovative thinking and adoption.

Empower the individual citizen to get involved with his/her own healthcare teams, delivering healthcare and preventative solutions in the community. Innovative models of this type are currently being investigated and pioneered by, for example, the UK Technology Strategy Board in its DALLAS project (â€œDelivering Assisted Living and Lifestyles at Scaleâ€) â€” check their work.

### What specific actions do you think national NHS bodies, such as the NHS National Commissioning Board, need to take to encourage and stimulate the successful and rapid
**adoption and spread of innovations throughout the NHS?**

Active, high profile adoption of the above tools and projects (e.g. use communication by secure networking social media platform for the healthcare profession – see company.doccom.info to facilitate collaboration on strategic policy and leadership issues). Key communications with trusts and other parts of the NHS should be conducted through this medium to allow practical illustration of the benefits and evidence of the national NHS “leading from the front by example”. A networking platform may be the single most useful way of collecting together innovation information of all types contributed from relevant groups, then organising the deployment of trials or full roll-outs with willing participants.

A system of partnering/mentoring from equivalent levels of management in successful private sector industries would be helpful. Industry has been able to introduce innovation successfully based on clear ROIs and is typically considerably ahead of the NHS (by at least 20 years) in its use of technology to deliver savings, efficiencies and better staff and customer experiences.

Patient bodies (e.g. The Patients Association) should be formally included in innovation forums with a view to putting patients and their families at the heart of the team treating them, and empowering them to communicate their wishes and participate in decisions about them.

Local Authorities need to be able to work seamlessly across the silos that separate them from hospital care. Again, provision of a communication tool such as a social media platform will incentivise these exchanges.

**Do you have any further comments about accelerating the adoption and spread of innovation in healthcare?**

Work on a culture of encouragement rather than punishment: it’s OK to make some mistakes providing new avenues keep being explored.

It is important not to punish or marginalise those who have tried innovations in a controlled context – 10 attempts are likely to produce one good success, and it is critical that all ten efforts are made.

**We would like to be able to follow up interesting comments and case studies. Can we contact you for this purpose?**

Yes

**Do you want to be kept in touch with the next steps in this process?**

Yes

**Do you want to be included in a wider community of interest?**

Yes

**What specific actions do you think local NHS bodies, such as providers and Clinical Commissioning Groups, need to take to encourage and stimulate the successful and rapid adoption and spread of innovations throughout the NHS?**

Important NHS reform activity can be expedited and coordinated through the same innovative communication medium, e.g. organising the new commissioning responsibilities and actions for GP consortia worth £80bn annually).

Adopting technology which is practical to use, intuitive to operate, which interlinks with existing systems and is intrinsically low cost will be an influential move in driving through local innovations.
Local NHS bodies (e.g. GP practices and consortia) will be persuaded by technologies that can assist them with practical budget savings, efficiency of communications with colleagues and patients, and access to best practice information through contact the relevant professional groups.