



*The***AHSN***Network*

**Supporting the health
and care system
respond to COVID-19:
a snapshot summary of
AHSN activity**

April/May 2020

The AHSN approach: local focus, national impact

We each work within our regional health systems to spread innovation, whilst also operating as a connected national network. This ability to respond locally - and collaborate across England to enable rapid transformative change – enabled us to immediately realign our resources to the COVID-19 response.

Regionally our bespoke approach focuses on providing expertise to our NHS regions, identifying technologies to assist health organisations manage their response, helping source PPE, driving the digitisation of primary care and supporting our care homes.

We have responded at scale to support the national COVID-19 effort. Our contribution has been outstanding with all AHSNs supporting or deploying team members to assist the rapid rollout of digital primary care, supporting NHS England and Improvement, NHSX and NHS Digital to achieve a near-total uptake of video and online consultation technologies in only two months across GP practices in England.

We have also worked at scale to support the safety of patients, care home residents and clinical staff through providing training resources to care homes and supporting local PPE procurement initiatives. Many of our staff have gone back to support the NHS in managerial or clinical roles.

Finally, we are looking to the future by partnering with the NHS Confederation and the Health Foundation on the NHS Reset campaign.



March

RESPONSE KICK OFF

Cross-AHSN groups initiate plans to coordinate support (commercial, patient safety, communications).



March

TOP TECH

List of 200+ 'ready to go' innovations drawn up to support local systems.



March

ONLINE TRIAGE

Leading role to embed online consultations in primary care practices.



April

eRD GOES NATIONAL

We begin national roll out of Electronic Repeat Dispensing.



April

TECHFORCE19

TechForce19 winners announced – 1,600 applications reviewed by AHSNs in just three weeks



April

PATIENT SAFETY

Refocused Patient Safety work on COVID priorities: critical care & care homes.



April

ICU LEARNING

First in our series of COVID reports collating ICU learning from around Europe.



April

RCGP WEBINAR

Over 9,000 people have viewed our webinar run with the RCGP on patient assessment.



May

STROKE SERVICES

Guidance launched on adapting stroke services during & after COVID-19.



May

COMPANY SUPPORT

Planning underway to take our successful 'Bridging the Gap' events online.



May

RESET

Launched NHS Reset campaign with NHS Confederation & Health Foundation.

Our collective and immediate response to COVID-19: summary of activity so far

- **Within week one** every AHSN had realigned resources to support the national and regional response.
- **By week two**, our knowledge of adoption enabled us to share with local systems a list of 200+ 'ready to go' innovations that could respond to COVID-19.
- **By week three**, we pivoted our work and all AHSNs redeployed staff into the NHS to support COVID-19 activities.
- **Within less than a month** our Patient Safety Collaboratives were completely repurposed to drive rapid roll out of NHS priorities around deterioration and safer tracheostomy care, along with bespoke support for care homes and cascading of international COVID-19 learning to critical care networks.
- **Within weeks**, we supported the widespread rollout of key NHS initiatives, including primary care 'total triage' and electronic Repeat Dispensing. Our local knowledge, relationships and programme management skills played a key part in this.
- **Seven weeks in**, we continue to operate nationally and regionally, directing our resources and expertise to where they have the biggest impact and supporting the evolving plans around reset and recovery.

Providing care in the safest place

increase in primary care practices using **video consultation** from 85% to

99%



increase in primary care practices using **online triage** from 45% to

85%

Support for video and online consultations

We have come together to support the seven regional NHS teams accelerate uptake of **online patient triage and video consultations** in primary and secondary care; developing **reporting dashboards, building capability and optimising usage**. In some areas we've also supported **evaluation** and delivery of **digital hardware**.

Refocusing existing programmes

Some AHSNs have extended, speeded up or changed the delivery mechanism of existing programmes that support the response to COVID-19 by keeping people out of care settings. This includes working with PRIMIS to replace face-to-face **PINCER training with virtual learning**; promoting free use of **ESCAPE-pain digital tools** to people who can no longer attend classes; accelerating the rollout of **TCAM**, extending it to **care homes** or combining with AccuRx patient communication tool to support **video medicine reviews**.



Freeing up staff time



12,000+

views of our online events, including our first RCGP webinar



1 million

patients to date identified as suitable for electronic Repeat Dispensing

Electronic repeat dispensing (eRD)

AHSNs are encouraging use of electronic Repeat Dispensing, reducing the time GPs spend on providing repeat prescriptions. Our work includes practical support (from **initial baselining** through to **implementation**) for GP practices and regional procurement cells, offering **virtual training sessions and resources** to pharmacists, practices and CCG colleagues, **hosting networks and sharing sessions** and **evaluating results**.

Sharing learning

AHSNs have been instrumental in collating and disseminating rapid insights and learning to clinicians to **reduce duplication** and **improve outcomes**. This includes partnering with the Intensive Care Society and North Thames ARC to deliver a series of **IC knowledge sharing** sessions, producing **Nightingale induction materials**, developing a COVID-19 guide to support **early identification of deterioration**, and collaborating with Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) on guidance **for adapting stroke services** during the COVID-19 pandemic and reshaping them afterwards. We are partnering with the **RCGP** on a series of popular COVID related webinars.



Keeping staff and patients safe

75+

companies
supported with PPE
enquiries with...



100+

PPE products

Supporting the PPE agenda

We have been extremely active in supporting the system and industry around PPE. AHSNs have helped to **track supplies, collaborated with industry and universities** to develop PPE, **triaged offers from companies, provided communications support and shared resources**. In specific areas, we supported solutions for **staff with a hearing impairment or who wear glasses**, conducted **PPE audits**, tested **local processes** and developed **consolidation strategies**, and supported a working group on **reprocessing of PPE**. Our work with SMEs has resulted in **new sources of supply**.

Supporting care homes

Our Patient Safety Collaboratives are providing valuable training and resources to care homes, including use of **RESTORE2** to aid the recognition and response to deterioration. Some AHSNs are also extending **TCAM** into care homes, evaluating **tele-medicines, collaborating with industry** to develop and assess **innovations** in care homes, and providing support around **end-of-life care, treatment escalation plans, pharmacy dispensing and medications transport, and PPE**.



Enhancing capacity & capability

At least

157



AHSN FTEs
redeployed into the
NHS

Redeploying AHSN staff

Many AHSNs have deployed staff into the NHS, including **frontline positions**, **Nightingale Hospitals** and **clinical specialists**. Our staff are also part of NHSE/I national and regional teams, such as the **testing programme** and **regional digital teams**. At least 157 full-time equivalents were redeployed from AHSNs into the NHS in April and May.

Evaluating innovations and supporting procurement

AHSN staff have enhanced capability in the NHS through their unique and valued skill sets, in particular to **triage and assess COVID-19 related innovations** to signpost those with most potential, and to understand local need and match to the best solutions. This is complemented by our support to **Procurement Advisory Cells**, including identifying **procurement routes** and conducting **rapid procurement exercises**.



Looking ahead to reset & recovery

Supporting local health and care systems

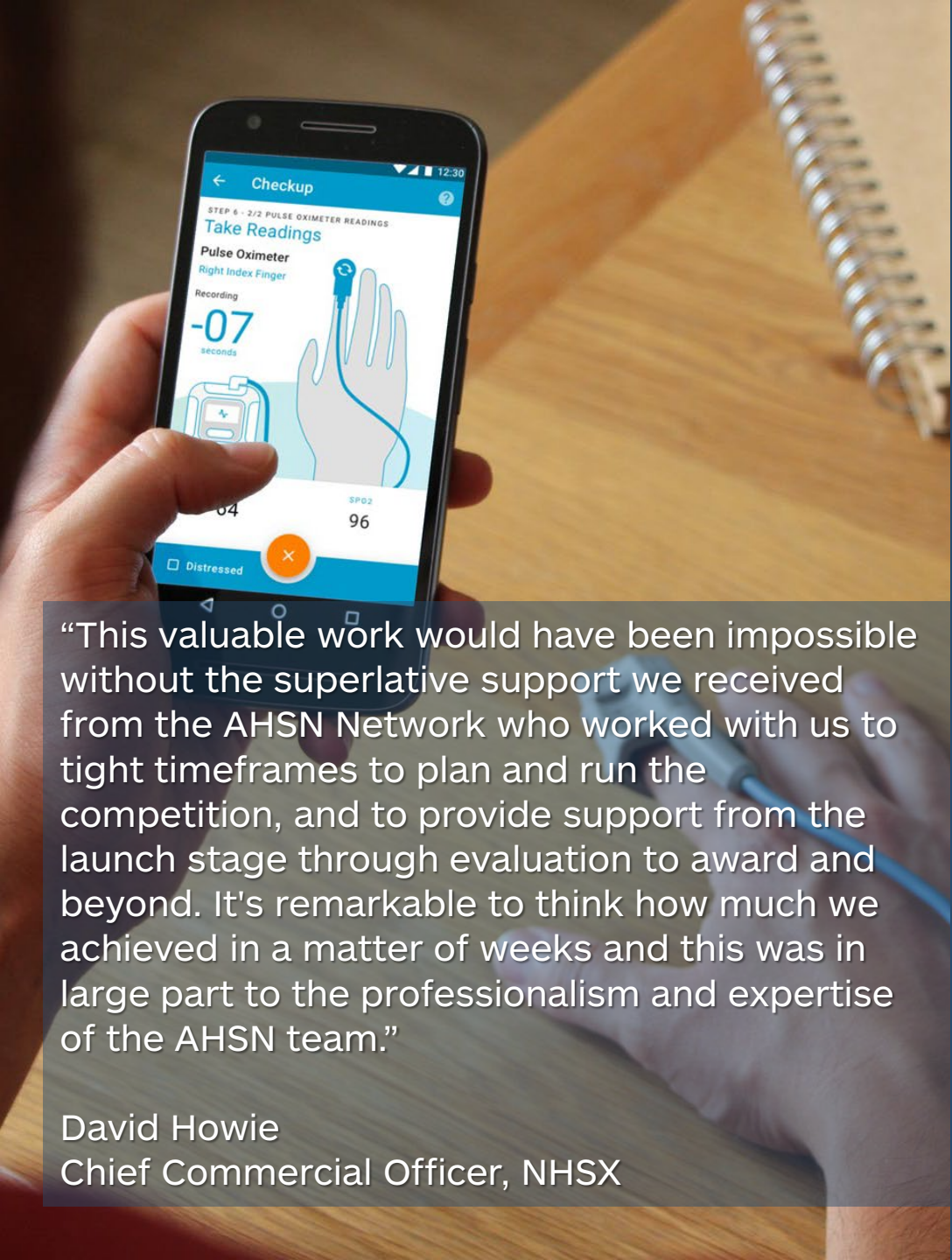
Every AHSN is involved with its local health and care system, supporting rapid insights and sharing lessons learned, including agile working methods and digital solutions.

Together with longer term evaluation and work around pathway development and treatment protocols for living with COVID-19, this will inform local and regional decisions on what changes should be discarded or retained, and what services should be brought back and when.

NHS Reset

We are a key partner in the NHS Confederation **Reset campaign**, alongside the Health Foundation, contributing to the public debate on what the health and care system should look like post COVID-19.





“This valuable work would have been impossible without the superlative support we received from the AHSN Network who worked with us to tight timeframes to plan and run the competition, and to provide support from the launch stage through evaluation to award and beyond. It's remarkable to think how much we achieved in a matter of weeks and this was in large part to the professionalism and expertise of the AHSN team.”

David Howie
Chief Commercial Officer, NHSX

Case study: TechForce19

The AHSN Network mobilised quickly to support the NHSX call-out to innovators for digital solutions to help the elderly, vulnerable and self-isolating during COVID-19.

We helped to evaluate the submissions, bringing in commercial experts from across the Network, as well as our seven digital leads.

As a result of an impactful social media campaign driven by the AHSNs, **1,643 applications** were received in just one week.

18 companies were awarded funding up to £25,000 to rapidly test their products over a two to three week period, each supported by an AHSN.

Further assessment is now taking place to better understand the potential and scope for accelerated deployment at scale, based on the evidence gathered.

Other activity

Launch of new national programmes

During Mental Health Awareness Week, we launched our new **Focus ADHD** and **Early Intervention Eating Disorder** programmes. We have also appointed a project manager to lead the scoping of our new **CVD Prevention programme**, which we anticipate will start in the autumn.

Adoption and spread

AHSNs are working together to capture learning around adoption and spread of innovation and transformative technologies. We have extended our work to take into consideration the current situation, focusing on the broad context of digital innovation during the COVID-19 emergency.

Our focus on the **experiential aspects** of adoption and spread continues. Work is underway to capture learning from our 2018-20 national programmes to inform current and future work, with quarterly learning sessions planned for our national programmes - including Rapid Uptake Products (RUP) and Patient Safety.

Medicines Safety in Care Homes

Based on intense engagement with care homes and stakeholders across the country, our Patient Safety Collaboratives have published a **national report** exploring the **reasons for medication errors** and how these could be avoided in the future.

Pipeline work

The implementation of the Manchester Pipeline Model is underway, with the Innovation Agency, North East and North Cumbria, Yorkshire and Humber, and East Midlands piloting the approach. Following an evaluation, the model will be spread to the other AHSNs.