

A Cluster Development Plan for the Health and Care Enterprise Sector in Greater Lincolnshire

Prioritised Opportunities and Associated Enablers

Produced for Greater Lincolnshire Health and Care Enterprise Board

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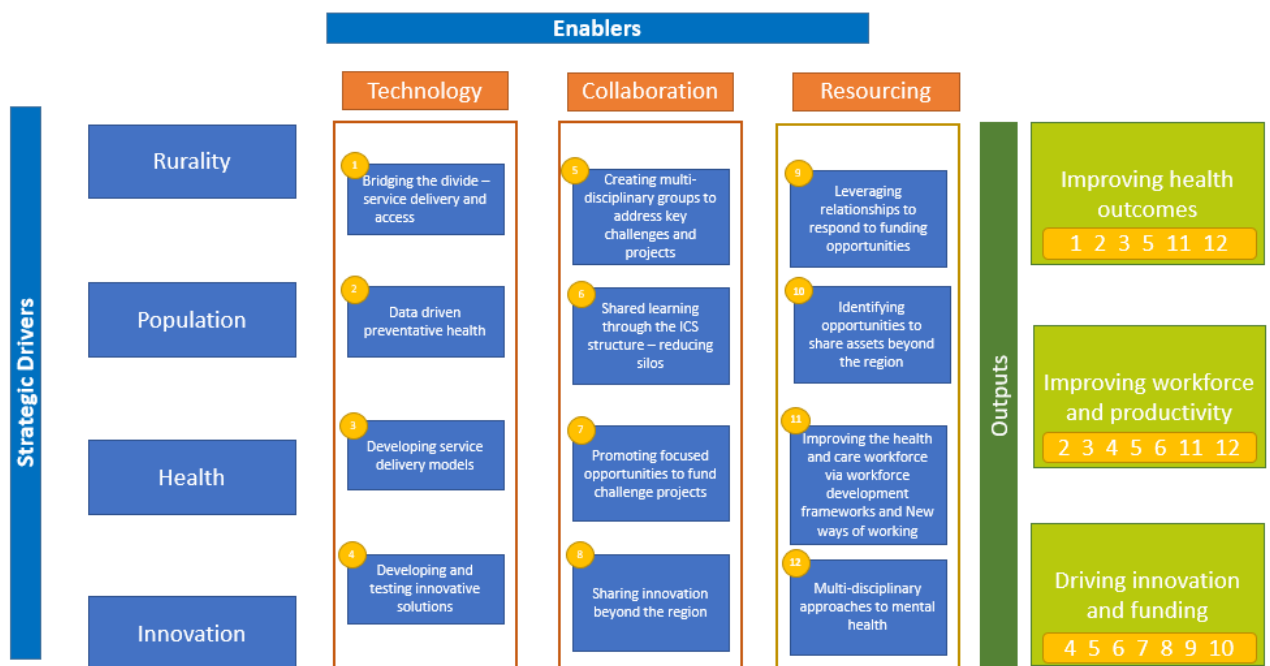
Purpose and Approach

This short Cluster Development Plan for the Health and Care Enterprise Sector of Greater Lincolnshire draws upon the evidence base of the associated Mapping the Health and Care Enterprise Sector in Greater Lincolnshire report.

In order to maximise the chance of delivery of growth in the sector of the scale envisaged in the Local Industrial Strategy, it seeks to prioritise a small number of key strategic drivers as the most propitious foci of attention for impactful development of the cluster and to elucidate the related actions and resources that best enable delivery of three key desired outputs, viz. improved health outcomes; improved workforce availability and skill base, and hence improved productivity; and delivery of innovation and securing of investment. It is intended to provide a framework to facilitate articulation of strategy for the sector by the members of the GLLEP's Health and Care Enterprise Board as per that body's core Terms of Reference:

"The Health and Care Enterprise Board takes a lead on strategy development for health and care sectors in Greater Lincolnshire, and its aim is to shape and influence the future Health and Care Enterprise in the LEP area. This includes reviewing and framework progression of the current and long-term outcomes and opportunities to the Health & Care system approach, and for bringing forward the transformation of new solutions which support people to live well for longer in rural areas"

The drivers and enablers and their relation to desired outputs are represented diagrammatically below. The rest of the report addresses the intertwined key strategic drivers identified and articulates their relationships with the enablers that can facilitate delivery of the outcomes the board is charged with realising. The desire to drive innovation and investment is present throughout.



Rurality

Key characteristics of interest

Greater Lincolnshire is predominantly rural nature with one of the lowest population densities in the country. Rural residents are disadvantaged compared to those living in urban areas and the provision of services, particularly in health and care, is poorer in rural areas; a situation exacerbated by lower availability of resourcing to fund care per head of population, compared to more urban areas. Lower-income residents of rural and coastal areas are also susceptible to poorer health due to deprivation amplification.

Sparsely populated areas also tend to have less access to and less ability to utilise digital services and can thus experience additional digital poverty, particularly prevalent and problematic for the vulnerable and hardest to reach. Concentration of specialist health services in urban centres further restricts access, with relatively poor road and limited public transport infrastructure further exacerbating this.

Recruitment and retention of health and care staff is difficult across the country and in rural areas is particularly challenging. Indeed, in East Lindsey employment in the health and care sector has declined against a backdrop of growth both nationally and elsewhere in the region; an issue of particular concern given health and care delivery challenges in such a rural/coastal area and its high retiree population. Whilst employment in the health and care sector is strongly concentrated in urban centres where hospitals are located, several rural areas also demonstrate high rates of employment in the broader sector, related to the presence of residential care facilities for the elderly and other vulnerable groups.

This raises issues around the recruitment, retention and development of care staff in particular, both community based and domiciliary care workers.

Opportunities

The innovation needed to effectively provide care in rural locations means Lincolnshire has potential to further develop as a leader in novel approaches to health and care delivery in such environments.

- Local assets such as The Centre for Innovation in Rural Health at Lincoln University and the National Centre for Rural Health & Care (NCRHC) both focus on addressing the challenges of rural healthcare delivery. Based at Lincoln Medical School, both these centres should be at the heart of strategic collaboration to address the challenges presented.
- The partnership between SERCO, University of Lincoln and Lincolnshire County Council in the “Social Care Technology Innovation for the Citizens of Lincolnshire” project is exploring ways of delivering interventions outside of care homes in rural areas to avoid the necessity of moving older people into care, through affordable solutions, including those delivered via accessible technology such as smart phones and tablets.
- Implementations of different models of care that combine primary care with opportunities for research and the application of assistive technology, if successful, could provide a mode for healthcare delivery in other rural/coastal locations. E.g., the Campus for Future Living in Mablethorpe, to be funded through the Towns Deal, is designed to address the challenges of healthcare delivery in rural/coastal locations. It will include a medical centre with a training area for teams from Lincoln and Nottingham Medical Schools, laboratories and spaces for patients to access technology-enabled care, and accommodation for students and

professionals.

- More use of remote healthcare monitoring, using devices like tablets and smartphones, as part of a preventative health strategy that prevents people from becoming ill rather than treating them in an emergency.
- Workforce challenges could be innovatively addressed by offering health and care educational opportunities for younger and more mature students, including via implementing technological solutions to deliver distance learning; ensuring health and care student placements are better distributed across the Lincolnshire, and not so predominantly in urban centres; improving pay structures and recognition of social care as a professional vocation, and by providing continuous professional development opportunities across all health and care occupations.
- The development of innovative solutions to support the recruitment, retention and development of health and care staff in the region and beyond. One current example of such work has been commissioned by a range of funders including Health Education England and the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICS research and innovation hub. Adapting work previously undertaken in Social Work (<https://sword.researchinpractice.org.uk/about/>), the ICS is developing a larger project to address health and care staffing challenges in their region. Opportunities therefore exist to support innovative and regional activities to address these challenges, working with stakeholders from care, education, and health.

Potential enablers within the scope of the broader LEP remit

- Improvement of broadband infrastructure, enhancement of digital skills and concerted action to address the other dimensions of digital poverty could facilitate roll out of technological solutions that reduce the burden of distance – e.g., e-prescribing, assistive technology
- Coherent promotion of the health and care sector as a rewarding place to work and a sound investment opportunity for the private sector. This could be delivered by strengthening links with the Education and Skills Advisory board to enhance recognition of social care as a profession and broadening health and care educational opportunities for workers of all ages and by improving the availability of seed corn funding to trial assistive technology approaches to facilitate informed scaling up of provision of this sort.
- Strong relationships with education providers in the region and the development of the ICS offer opportunities to develop frameworks for long-term workforce planning in the region.
- Opportunities for consortia to bid for funds to develop and test a workforce development framework applicable to the region.

A Distinctive Population with Distinctive Health and Care Needs

Key characteristics of interest

Greater Lincolnshire has a distinctly older population compared to the national picture, with this distinction being even more pronounced in areas such as East Lindsey. The proportion of the population that is older looks set to increase dramatically over the next twenty years, alongside similar increases in the proportion of the ageing population dealing with limiting long term illness. These challenging population characteristics necessitate creative approaches to deliver Health and Care services that can sustainably support living well for longer and make this issue more acute in the region than elsewhere.

Mental health provision in Greater Lincolnshire faces similar challenges as other sectors of health and social care including systems integration, access and rurality, communications, and funding. The virtue of the development and use of technology, in the context of the need for decentralisation of services, is clear. Additionally, the presence of specific demographic groups in Greater Lincolnshire including an ageing population, a significant ex-military population and a significant proportion of individuals working in small and medium sized enterprises shape both demand and opportunity significantly.

Opportunities

The core associated opportunity of the region's distinctiveness is as the developer of a leading-edge response to the challenges faced that can leverage investment through exemplary status.

- Preventative approaches around healthy and active ageing should be a primary driver for developing the cluster of health and care businesses
- There should be a strategic ambition for the health and care cluster to be market leader in rural healthcare and better ageing
- Greater Lincolnshire's reputation as a trailblazer in supporting healthy ageing – e.g., it has been recognised by the Centre for Ageing Better as its strategic rural partner - presents an opportunity for the region to become a research test bed for ageing better
- This could build on the work of the Talk Eat Drink (TED) East Lindsey Project, a 7-year Community Lottery Ageing Better project which delivered support and activities to promote health ageing and reduce social isolation to over 50s in East Lindsey. The project brought together many community and voluntary sector partners to test different approaches to support the wellbeing of older people and could offer a model for further partnership working in this area. A similarly propitious building block is presented by the 'Communities of the Future' project which seeks to meet the needs of an ageing population by exploring improved physical and digital connectivity to local services and transformation of health and care services.

Potential enablers within the scope of the broader LEP remit

The introduction of the Integrated Care System provides an opportunity for an improved and more open relationship between sector partners, potentially reducing constraints associated with partners working under different levels of regulation. Realising opportunity requires delivery of...

- A coordinated point of entry for enterprises seeking to work in health and care, e.g., via collaboration with anchor institutions such as the FSB, the Chamber and the LEP itself
- Facilitation for networking and capacity building in the sector, across NHS, Local Authority and VCSE Sectors via the integrative action of the LEP working with the ICS
- To include those addressing the diverse drivers of health inequality, such as those focussing on employment (e.g., those running employability initiatives such as Lincolnshire VCS) and housing (e.g., YMCA and housing associations)
- Enhancement of the profile the LEP's work in relation to the health and care sector, via inclusion of it as a Levelling up Growth area.
- The distinct features of Lincolnshire, its rurality and ageing population, could enable the new ICS to become a test bed for innovation in this type of geographical area.
- Support for collaborative grant applications that bring together public and private organisations (including SMEs from outside Lincolnshire) with specialist support needed specifically around issues such as intellectual property and data sharing.
- Linking health and care sector businesses with existing innovation support – e.g., Made Smarter, KTPs

- The development of a mental health observatory that takes an integrated approach to mental health services (community, occupational etc) may offer the opportunity to engage partners across Lincolnshire. A co-ordinated hub, aligned with the integrated care system would offer opportunities to address the needs of specific demographic groups whilst developing cross-service development opportunities to address key challenges in Greater Lincolnshire such as rurality, digitisation and workforce development.