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“ Seeing the big picture:

The Bevan Commission Exemplar Programme Cohort 3 - Evaluation Summary

Professor Nick Rich



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Professor Nick Rich is a senior Professor at Swansea University's School of Management. Nick has a distinguished academic career where he was a pioneer of lean ways of working in the 1990s and was one of very few foreign researchers to be awarded the Toyota Motor Corporation Fellowship of Japan whilst at Cardiff University. Nick's engineering skills were then applied to a wide range of manufacturing and service businesses, including a year at the Royal Mint where he was part of the team making the medals for the 2012 Olympics. After an experiment to enact a same day admission surgical pathway Nick developed a special interest and specialism in healthcare and patient safety/human factors, which led to him joining Warwick Medical School to conduct research into safer clinical systems for The Health Foundation. Nick is recognised as an expert in quality and safety management systems, lean healthcare systems and highly reliable organisations and joined Swansea University in 2013. Nick holds a number of major UK and international healthcare research projects including those with The Health Foundation.

Comisiwn Bevan Commission

ABOUT THE BEVAN COMMISSION

The Bevan Commission, hosted and supported by Swansea University, provides independent, authoritative advice on health and care to the Welsh Government and leaders in NHS Wales, the UK and beyond.

The Commission, chaired by Professor Sir Mansel Aylward, draws its expertise from members based in Wales, the UK and internationally. Its global reach is demonstrated by the firm links it has with national governments, academia and national health systems in Australasia, Europe and North America.

It is translating its thinking into action by supporting health and care professionals across NHS Wales, called Bevan Exemplars, to try out and test out their own expert ideas. These Bevan Exemplar projects demonstrated a project completion success rate of 70%, have to date a 5:1 return on investment in economic benefits, and improved health outcomes, patient experiences and service delivery.

The Bevan Commission believes that good health and care is everyone's responsibility, so it works with individual community members and community networks to ensure their views are heard and inform the health and care debate.

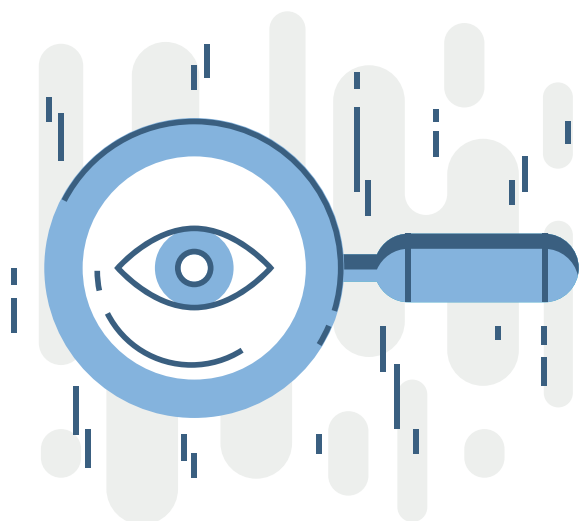
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The issue of healthcare innovation and technological transformation has gathered increasing interest in the last few years. The ‘era of managerialism’ and blind emulation of ‘best practices’ from other sectors has ended with the realisation that many of the enduring solutions needed for a modern NHS come from the innovations of local NHS staff.

Such staff must be armed with the necessary improvement skills, and the confidence to challenge current wisdom and generate innovations so that they own their solutions to their problems. The illogic of imposing ‘someone else’s’ solutions to similar-looking problems has proven ineffective and healthcare organisations have returned to the fundamentals of innovation – which is to identify a reason to change, identify the root cause of the issue and engage in experiments (with reviews to see whether improvement has happened) - then to learn from this experience to find the next transformation in care provision needed. Such a learning cycle must be based on quality of skills and a new process of learning and which is embedded into the very design of the Bevan Exemplar programme.



The Bevan Academy Exemplar programme has entered its fourth year and the fourth cohort is currently engaged in their initial learning and scoping cycle of innovation. The third programme, the subject of this report, has concluded and this report presents the findings. The programme has received significant national and international acclaim. The former Exemplars, many of whom are sustaining their initial projects and continue to drive change, have set a high level of expectation for the Exemplars of cohort three and this report finds:

- Cohort Three represents another high “value for money” programme in terms of the returns to the Welsh healthcare system, its patients and its staff. The success rate is again around 75% of projects.
- The cohort has focused on capacity building and key themes evident in cohort three are:
 1. Equipping staff to work more effectively and efficiently.
 2. Enhancing early support and triage.
 3. Enabling staff to address a greater variety of patient conditions.
 4. Capacity building.
- The projects and outcomes have great alignment with the national agenda and also the ‘Welsh NHS of the future’, and these pioneering projects demonstrate a new broadening of thinking and engagement with concepts that go beyond efficiency improvements to challenge current models of health and care provision.
- These capability building projects have resulted in a continued success of the overall Bevan Exemplars programme. It builds on the successes of previous cohorts and when combined there is now a ‘critical mass’ of transformational projects in key care contexts.

FINDINGS

Since the inception of the Bevan Exemplar programme, there have been major patient, clinical, managerial, leadership and staff skill benefits. Many notable Bevan Exemplar success stories have now been joined by even more from this third cohort. The previous cohorts and this one have written about their experiences and their knowledge has been published in the form of journal articles and conference presentations. This has been a very high quality cohort and it has delivered significant benefits to the Welsh NHS across a number of critical pathways and diagnostic/triage processes in particular.

The Cohort Three Exemplars have challenged traditional boundaries and undertaken projects within a much more 'big picture' approach to determine what is needed in the future. Such challenge brings risks with project execution and delivery but few projects have failed and many experiments (designed to test and prove new potential pathways and deployments of staff) have been highly successful.

These projects have been literally transformative in intent and have been well supported by employers and industry partners. The projects have brought together new skill sets and an ability to challenge and respond locally, to divert patients in a safe and controlled manner to other effective care models, and have enhanced safety and productivity whilst reducing the costs of healthcare operations.

The programme fits well with the Welsh Government's strategic direction and ambitions for the country. It has much potential to change Welsh healthcare provision at pace and scale but, like any programme, there is potential for further improvement.

Overall, the programme has been a very good success and has come close to the 80% success rate set by Cohort One. This cohort however have undertaken very different projects that have a much longer time to embed and longer pay back to the employing organisation. The projects have improved efficiency but more importantly challenged the effectiveness of existing care and service models.

- One project has demonstrated how paramedics can work with general practitioners in local surgeries so that response times can be collapsed and effective care delivered at the point at which it is needed.
- Another has multiskilled staff to absorb a greater variety of demand from different patient types and therefore enabled staff to be trained and time-compressed in seeing and treating patients.
- An Artificial Intelligence project has applied state-of-the art thinking to patient care.
- An Exemplar has combined organisational development (soft skills) with service improvement methods (hard skills); testing a model of innovation to generate improvement and learning.
- Another project has generated a UK-wide community of practice for youth workers, led by a charismatic and passionate youth worker in Wales who now has a national repository of tools to allow competent staff to access materials that did not exist before this project. Even more impressive is the direct impact – associated with the project lead – on the longevity of renal transplants of the young adult transplant recipients.
- Engaging parents has been a key theme with both helping children to read and bond as well as routines to improve dental hygiene and getting children enthused to brush.
- Projects in mental health services, sexual health services, women and children's care and PTSD have radically changed the current model of care and made it more effective and easier to manage with great results for patient safety and staff support.
- The Welsh Blood Service and projects to develop blood group archetypes have been supported.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I am pleased to end my review with a positive message again. The priorities of the Welsh NHS and health systems further afield demand improvement and innovation methods that work and are sustainable. Previous poor experience of 'borrowing' theoretical best practices from other countries has proven less effective than solving local problems with care provision, using local talent, know-how and skills, engaged teams who will sustain this change and potentially many others and a more sustainable 'figuring it out for ourselves' approach.

The Bevan Exemplar programme has proven to be an effective change process for individuals. Participants get to understand and remove root cause problems or explore the impact of new technologies on existing organisational and inter-organisational processes. My audit and evaluation has confirmed that the evaluation of issues as well as the quality of solutions is particularly good for the Exemplars of this cohort. The quality of learning, leadership skills and annuities which come from equipping staff with the skills to make innovative and transformational changes is very high and fits well within organisations that will need to continuously change and adapt. I continue to believe the programme is "**good for Wales**", good for patients and staff and I commend the programme as a success.

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