

News story: Second wave of NHS England test beds launched

NHS England and the Office for Life Sciences have launched a new competition to identify a second wave of 'test beds'.

The test bed programme is a joint programme between NHS England and government. It involves the NHS working with innovators using technology to address complex issues facing patients and the health service.

The new competition will allow businesses and NHS organisations to apply for a share of up to £4.5 million. This funding can be used to evaluate different combinations of innovations from small and large organisations to address a locally identified clinical challenge.

The competition will be run in collaboration with Innovate UK.

The first wave of the test beds programme saw first-of-a-kind collaborations. Over 4,000 patients were recruited in 7 test bed sites across England and 51 digital innovations were trialled in partnership with 40 innovators. An evaluation report will be published in summer 2018.

Lord O'Shaughnessy, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health said:

The test beds programme has enabled ground-breaking digital innovations to transform the lives of patients with dementia, diabetes and mental illness.

Phase two of this pioneering research will allow us to learn even more from emerging technologies so that NHS clinical practice can adapt to the big health challenges we face.

Jonathan Burr, founder & CEO Howz, which was took part in the first wave of the test beds, said:

There have been many advantages to being part of the Technology Integrated Health Management test bed. We have been able to benchmark ourselves against others, had access to a world-class university and the project has created visibility. Most importantly, being part of TIHM means that Howz is now part of a clinical pathway – without the test bed this would have taken us years to achieve.

The projects will be evaluated rigorously, providing the evidence which will give more areas the confidence to adopt the innovations over the coming years.