

Introducing the Yorkshire & Humber



A Partnership between



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Yorkshire & Humber Innovation Champion Network

The Yorkshire and Humber Academic Health Science Network (Yorkshire & Humber AHSN) and Medipex have established a network of Innovation Champions throughout the region. The Innovation Champion Network aims to:

- Empower individuals to promote and support innovative activities within their NHS Organisations;
- Encourage colleagues to come forward with their new and innovative ideas and inventions; and,
- Promote the spread and adoption of new best practice and new technologies between NHS organisations

The Network is supported by formal, case study-led training; workshops; a secure interactive web-portal and the experienced Medipex and Yorkshire & Humber AHSN staff. The network was launched in early 2014 and has grown to around 60 active Innovation Champions across a range of NHS organisations including Acute, Mental Health, Community and CCGs.

Success to date has been demonstrated through increased numbers of innovation disclosures, a greater awareness of innovation and intellectual property (IP) issues amongst NHS staff and the personal development and satisfaction of the Innovation Champions.

There is no charge to join the Innovation Champion Network for any NHS organisation that is a member of the Yorkshire & Humber AHSN and/or Medipex.



“I want to find innovative solutions to problems and tap into the network to find solutions”

Why does the NHS need Innovation Champions?

Thousands of novel, good ideas are generated by NHS employees every day across the UK which have the potential to improve patient care and/or run services more efficiently. New inventions and services that contain IP have the potential to result in cost savings and/or revenue generation. This could be extremely beneficial at a time when the NHS is facing unprecedented financial and operational pressures. These ideas need to be carefully managed: to reduce independent duplication of effort, and to receive the appropriate guidance the development pathway, which often requires outside help.

As a first port of call, Medipex can provide hands-on assistance with such activities. However, we need innovative people to tell us about their ideas first! Innovation Champions can:

- Promote the awareness of the importance and benefits of protecting/developing innovative new ideas created by staff;
- Act as a focal point of contact within the NHS organisation for colleagues who have come up with a new idea;
- Work with senior management, Medipex and the YORKSHIRE & HUMBER AHSN to develop a strategy to promote a culture of innovation; and
- Where relevant, work alongside the inventors and Medipex towards commercialisation of innovations if this is appropriate.

“It’s a development opportunity for me –
I’m interested in tangible things to improve
patient benefit and pathways”

Who are Medipex?

Medipex is a not for profit company limited by guarantee which means that we are totally independent and can therefore offer impartial advice. Initially, we were established by six of the hospitals in the Yorkshire and Humber Region to deliver intellectual property (IP) management and commercialisation services in 2002. However, since then our service offering has grown considerably. We work with healthcare providers, academia, commissioners and industry to develop and implement innovations that provide better patient care, improved services and cost savings, providing a complete service from the ‘light bulb’ moment when an idea is formed right through the development, to trialling and launch of new products and services.

In all of our activities Medipex works closely with the inventors and NHS organisation that generate the invention. After successful completion of negotiations Medipex continues to monitor the licence agreement to ensure compliance with the terms and collects the royalties on behalf of the NHS organisation and the inventor(s).

Medipex Services to the NHS

- Assistance with developing an IP Policy and IP Strategy
- Innovation identification and evaluation
- Advice on intellectual property protection
- Sourcing funding for innovation development
- Identification of prototyping, manufacturing and commercial partners
- Evidence base and business case development
- Management of collaborations between the NHS, industry and universities
- Advice on IP arrangements for NIHR grants
- Advice on the commercialisation of NHS Services
- Sell materials originating from NHS via www.ennovations.co.uk

Who are the YORKSHIRE & HUMBER AHSN?

Academic Health Science Networks were given a 5-year licence to operate by NHS England in May 2013. The Yorkshire and Humber AHSN is one of 15 innovative health networks set up to create and harness a strong, purposeful partnership between patients, health services, industry, and academia.

The Yorkshire & Humber AHSN supports NHS organisations across Yorkshire & Humber to trial, evaluate and adopt innovative new products and services, and support these organisations to share their learning and emerging best practice ways of working throughout the region. To achieve this, the Yorkshire & Humber AHSN team work with NHS organisations to explore and understand their priorities and needs and how the use of new technology and/or service redesign could create solutions to these needs – accessing national funding to facilitate the cost of developing these new technologies. Innovation Champions can help here by getting involved in these work themes that are relevant or interesting to them. Having Innovation Champions within the regional network also allows organisations to adopt already tried and tested new best practice and ideas without going through the time and cost of developing them themselves.

Key Questions

Does your Trust have an up to date IP policy? Have you read it?

Each NHS organisation should have a policy on how intellectual property is managed, which includes details of any 'reward to inventors' scheme.

Innovation Champions should ensure they are fully aware of the content of this policy and are able to discuss it with Inventors. Sometimes, inventors are reticent to fully utilise the support available from their NHS organisation & Medipex under the belief they could make more money by developing their idea alone. As a general rule, this is untrue, possibly illegal and Innovation Champions can present the following information:

- IP generated by NHS employees almost always belongs to the NHS Trust, not the employees themselves. Thus, any legal agreements entered into by the individual employee are highly likely to be invalid and possibly have personal liabilities attached;
- Bringing a new technology to market is often expensive and requires a wide range of expertise (eg market analysis, regulatory affairs);
- The NHS is very forward-thinking in the way it rewards the individuals who initially invent and develop their innovative ideas, in contrast to industry where all IP and financial reward is almost always retained entirely by the Company;
- Medipex support can be accessed at no cost to the Inventor and is provided long-term over the whole project lifetime. For example, even when a commercial deal is complete, Medipex will continue to monitor it and ensure that the correct royalties are paid to the organisation and Inventor.

If your NHS organisation does not have an up to date policy, this is something as an Innovation Champion you can be involved in putting in place and help is available from Medipex.

Benefits of the Innovation Champion Network for Individuals and Organisations?

There are numerous benefits to having trained Innovation Champions embedded within NHS organisations. The more clinical areas that have an Innovation Champion, the more chances that the next great new medical breakthrough could be uncovered. From a commissioner perspective, having Innovation Champions with an understanding of IP, the innovation development line and tapped into the network can allow identification of potentially new solutions to care pathways or put out calls for development.

The Innovation Line



Why become an Innovation Champion?

Innovation Champions are people who have an interest and passion for developing or implementing new ideas to improve services for patient benefit (and indeed anything new and innovative that allows staff to provide more efficient and safer patient care). They are drawn from a variety of disciplines and areas of expertise (for example nurses, executive directors, clinicians, R&D, business development managers). All have the support of their management to support them in their innovation activities. Requirements for an effective Innovation Champion include:

- An interest in and passion for innovation related to all aspects of improving health care;
- An appreciation of the value of opportunities to network with their peers in other organisations; and
- Strong ability to build relationships with people at all levels, resilience and flexibility

“I want to learn how to be a more innovative organisation and hear what’s going on”

Individuals will need to spend some time (approx. 6-10 days/year) on their Innovation Champion role alongside their normal duties, so support of line management is essential. We recommend that organisations opt to have more than one Innovation Champion to work together and share the responsibilities.

Medipex and the Yorkshire & Humber AHSN provide foundation training in IP and the essentials of effective innovation management to empower Innovation Champions to speak with confidence on IP matters, promote innovation around their organisation and be a recognised point of contact for the initial discussion of innovative ideas and rapid access to further support & expertise. Additionally, becoming an Innovation Champion provides:

- Opportunity for personal development;
- Access to a range of networking events and workshops;
- Access to a secure web portal for opportunities, resources, forums etc.;
- Access to national Innovation Scout/Champion Networks to share learning and experiences and make new connections;
- Rapid access to Medipex support for IP advice, development of innovation strategies and project management for new ideas; and
- Access to a wealth of learning and opportunities via the AHSN regional and national network

"I want to make a difference. Develop new innovations as well as bringing in other innovations"

Case Study 1: The “Sheffield Clip”

Novel suction holder clip for use in endolaryngeal laser surgery

The problem

It is widely accepted that the continuous removal of smoke during endolaryngeal surgery improves the view of the surgical field. Thus, microlaryngoscopes have been adapted for laser use by the addition of smoke evacuation suction channels on the side of the scope. However, these traditional suction devices are reusable and fixed to the scope with an expensive screw mechanism; they are very difficult to clean which makes them undesirable for use in surgery. Hospitals are now recommended to use single use suction devices in order to reduce the risk of surgical infection.

The innovative solution

The ENT surgical team at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, in collaboration with Single Use Surgical Ltd, developed a clip to quickly fix a disposable suction to the laryngoscope. This is the innovation known as a “Sheffield Clip” and the benefits include:

- Reduced risk of cross-infection during laser endolaryngeal surgery, to both patient and operating room personnel
- Simple and easy to use: easy install the suction device onto the side of the laryngoscope and also easily removed for topical use on patient bleeding
- Surgical time is reduced



Development

The clip has been used in Sheffield for several years and is now available for purchase from Single Use Surgical Ltd. Medipex structured a collaborative agreement and negotiated licence terms which see Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust receiving royalties from Single Use Surgical Ltd.

This innovation was also a finalist in the Medipex NHS Innovation awards 2012 (medical devices and diagnostics division); raising awareness of the innovation with other NHS trusts.

Case Study 2: Medication Resources

A series of training resources to promote the safe management of medicines in care homes and domiciliary settings

The problem

Errors in administration of medication are a serious problem in long term residential care. Care homes are not generally considered a priority, but they account for a large amount of NHS and social care costs and time. A study highlighted that on average each resident experiences 6.6 potential medication errors. The most common medication error was attempting to give medication at the wrong time. One in 15 hospital admissions is due to medication errors and the resultant cost of hospital stays to the NHS is £1 billion per year.

The innovative solution

Pharmacists in a Yorkshire based NHS Trust developed a series of training resources to be used in care homes, covering topics including:

- Use of medication administration record (MAR) charts
- Safe management of controlled drugs (plus audit tools)
- Finding information about medicines
- Medication for pain management
- Medication for Parkinson's disease
- Use of warfarin and antibiotics



Development

Medipex assisted with protecting the NHS intellectual property containing within these resources via ensuring correct copyright procedures were followed. Professional printing was arranged and the resources are now available for sale on the Medipex website www.ennovations.co.uk
Sales revenue from these resources is approximately £3,000 per year

Case Study 3: Zilico Ltd

Non-invasive diagnosis of cervical cancers

The problem

Cervical cancer diagnosis is a multi-step process based on expert assessment of cervical smears (histopathology laboratory screening) and the cervix itself (by a colposcopist upon referral). For a positive diagnosis of pre-cancerous or cancerous lesions, a biopsy is required. Problems with this clinical pathway include the high level of subjectivity used in assessment, prevalence of false results, time delay in getting results to patients and significant financial cost.

The innovative solution

A team from the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust pioneered the use of electrical impedance technology (EIS) to differentiate between normal, pre-cancerous and cancerous cells. EIS provides a real time diagnosis that removes subjectivity and potentially removes the need for a biopsy.

EIS technology may also have applications in other cancers.



Development

Medipex assessed the opportunity, put in place a commercialisation plan and secured initial investment. A new spin-out Company, Zilico Ltd, was founded to commercialise the technology. Medipex developed the business plan, put in place an interim management team and supported the Company at Board level for the first few years.

Zilico Ltd has developed the next generation of cancer diagnostics with an initial product line that provides real-time diagnosis for cervical cancer.

www.zilico.co.uk

Further information on the Yorkshire & Humber Innovation Champion Network can be obtained from:

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