Funding for game-changing tech which could destroy cancers and predict disease

Organisation: Department of Health and Social Care

Type: Press Release

Date: 14 February 2024

Millions invested in eight innovative companies behind lifesaving new medical technology which could destroy liver cancer tumours, detect Alzheimer's and quickly spot those at risk of stroke
Countless lives could be saved thanks to a multi-million-pound government investment in potential breakthrough medical devices.

As part of a £10 million funding package for boosting access to medical technology, eight innovative tech companies will be supported to bring their devices to market. It could help transform the way we treat some of the biggest causes of death and disability in the UK.
One device, by HistoSonics, aims to identify and destroy liver cancer tumours using focused ultrasound waves. These waves break down tumours without damaging healthy tissue, offering a safer alternative to radiotherapy and other high intensity treatments. It could improve quality of life for many patients going through treatment – reducing hospital visits, post procedure complications, and making pain management easier.
Today's announcement is part of the government's long-term plan to ensure the NHS and its patients can get quicker access to new groundbreaking technologies. It follows the unveiling of our groundbreaking blueprint for boosting NHS medtech and turning innovation into real benefits for society last year.

Health Minister Andrew Stephenson said:
NHS staff need access to the latest technology to deliver the highest quality care for patients and cut waiting lists – one of our top five priorities.
These cutting-edge technologies could help thousands of patients with a range of conditions, including cancer, stroke, and Alzheimer's, while easing pressure on our hospitals and reducing healthcare inequalities.
Our investment in these pioneering companies is part of our long-term plan for a faster, simpler and fairer health care system, and demonstrates our clear commitment to ensuring the UK is the most innovative economy in the world.

One company is developing a blood test for Alzheimer's Disease which means patients could be identified and treated earlier. Roche Diagnostics Ltd has developed the Amyloid Plasma Panel – a blood test which could help clinicians decide if patients with cognitive impairment should undergo tests or imaging to confirm Alzheimer's Disease.
A portable blood test, from Upfront Diagnostics, could help paramedics identify stroke patients more quickly. Currently, ambulance workers can't recognise a patient with a blood clot blocking the flow of blood and oxygen to their brain, who would require urgent treatment at stroke centres rather than local hospitals.
The blood test could help them recognise these cases on the spot – so patients could be taken to a comprehensive stroke centre for immediate, vital treatment. It could mean thousands are spared

long-term disability and the associated care costs, while reducing pressure on A&E departments nationwide.

Dr Marc Bailey, Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency Chief Science and Innovation Officer, said:

We are very excited to announce the final eight selected technologies in the new IDAP pilot scheme. This is designed to explore how support from the regulator, UK health technology organisations and NHS bodies can accelerate the development of transformative medical devices from their initial proof of concept through to uptake in the NHS.

The pilot criteria prioritises patient need in all aspects of decision-making and, by supporting innovative medical technologies, will ease pressure on the healthcare system. Most important, it's an initiative which could be life-changing for many patients.

We are committed to being a regulator that establishes the UK as a centre of medical innovation and look forward to working with the wider healthcare system to achieve this.

The funding is part of a radical new programme called The Innovative Devices Access Pathway (IDAP), which aims to bring state-of-the-art technologies and solutions to the forefront of the NHS. Currently in the pilot stage, the funding will be used to test the new technologies for use on a large scale as quickly as possible.

The government is investing £10 million in the pilot as part of a wider programme of work to accelerate access to medical technology. The programme is run by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), NHS England, Health Technology Wales, and Scottish Health Technology Group. They will be providing tailored, intensive advice on regulatory approval, health tech assessments and access to the NHS.

Jeanette Kusel, Director of NICE Advice (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) said:

This is an important milestone in our work to ensure the NHS continues to get the best new technologies and treatments to patients faster, having already rolled out more than 100 new treatments through the cancer drug fund and setting up a dedicated programme to prepare for new Alzheimer's treatments once they are approved.

We will be working closely with our partners to support those companies selected for the pilot so that more game-changing, life-saving technologies are introduced quickly and safely on the NHS. Other technologies set to benefit from a share of the funding include:

- **Multiple Sclerosis fatigue app**: Avegen Ltd. has developed a new smartphone app that delivers exercises, cognitive behaviour therapy and targeted physical activity in a personally customisable format to help patients manage Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

- **Self-test for neutropenia**: 52 North Health. has developed a new device to allow chemotherapy patients to self-test at home – using a finger-prick blood test – for neutropenic sepsis. This is a life-threatening condition in patients whose immune system is suppressed.

- **Algorithm infection predictor**: Systemic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (SIRS) is a life-threatening medical condition caused by the body's overwhelming response to infection or inflammation. Presymptom Health Ltd. has developed a new test and algorithm with the potential to predict infection status up to three days before conventional diagnosis is possible.

  Dr Susan Myles, Director of Health Technology Wales, said:
  Health Technology Wales is proud to have played a role in the selection of eight pilot IDAP technologies which have the potential to support clinicians and improve the lives of patients across the UK.

  We look forward to continuing to support the adoption of innovative health technologies by the NHS.

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