STATE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

From Collaboration to Capability

What distinguishes the UK's most effective NHS-industry partnerships?

Since 2019, Visions4Health has been exploring what makes these partnerships successful, what barriers stand in the way of effective collaboration, and how organisations can build the capability needed to deliver meaningful and sustainable change.

THE SHIFT

THEN Should we partner?

NOW How do we partner effectively?

NEXT How do we build partnership capability?

The healthcare system increasingly relies on organisations working across traditional boundaries to deliver prevention, diagnosis, digital transformation, productivity, workforce resilience and improved access. The question is no longer whether NHS-Industry partnership working is desirable. The challenge is whether organisations have the capability to make it effective, sustainable and scalable.

THE RESEARCH

16 Examples of recognised partnership excellence analysed

9 Partnership mechanisms assessed

6 Recurring success themes identified

4 Stages of partnership maturity

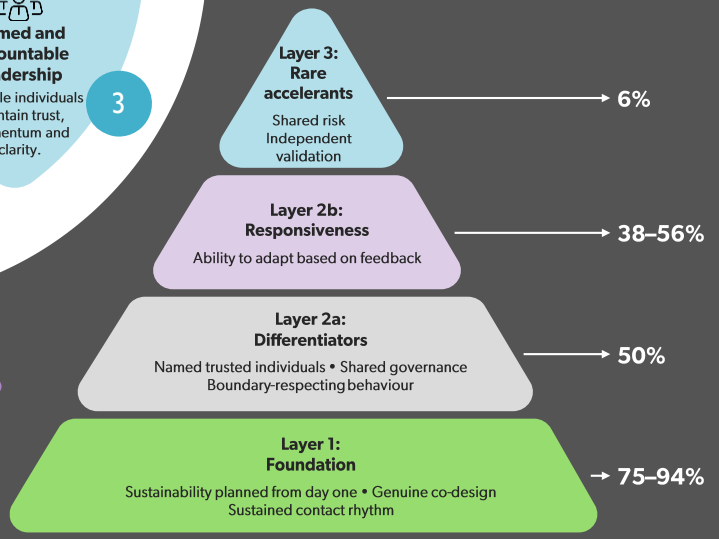
1 Central conclusion

Partnership working should be treated as an organisational capability that can be assessed, developed and strengthened.

SIX CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS



THE ANATOMY OF HIGH-PERFORMING PARTNERSHIPS



Note: Percentages describe prevalence within this specific 16-case sample and should not be interpreted as sector-wide statistics.

PARTNERSHIP MATURITY MODEL

Maturity Stage	Relationship Status	Relationship Overview
1	Transactional	The relationship exists because a project requires it and is largely driven by immediate need or one-way funding.
2	Cooperative	Basic structure exists, but the relationship remains fragile and dependent on goodwill or individuals.
3	Collaborative	Ownership and governance are genuinely shared, with ways of working that can survive personnel change.
4	Transformational	The relationship is a proven, replicable system asset that builds wider trust, learning and capability.

FROM EVIDENCE TO ACTION

The relationship exists because a project requires it and is largely driven by immediate need or one-way funding.

For NHS & system leaders

- Define shared problems before solutions
- Make decision routes and ownership visible
- Design around real capacity constraints

For industry & healthtech

- Build cross-functional partnership capability
- Strengthen continuity beyond one sponsor
- Plan evidence, sustainability and exit early

For partners together

- Use a common maturity language
- Review progress and adapt together
- Build methods that can travel and scale

THE OPPORTUNITY

Research → Assessment → Capability Development

Introducing the Visions4Health Partnership Maturity Model

A practical diagnostic framework that can help organisations

- Assess partnership capability
- Identify strengths and vulnerabilities
- Prioritise development
- Improve partnership effectiveness
- Build more resilient and scalable collaborations

The next phase of NHS-industry collaboration is not simply more partnership.

It is more mature partnership.

Download the full report at **visions4health.com**

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