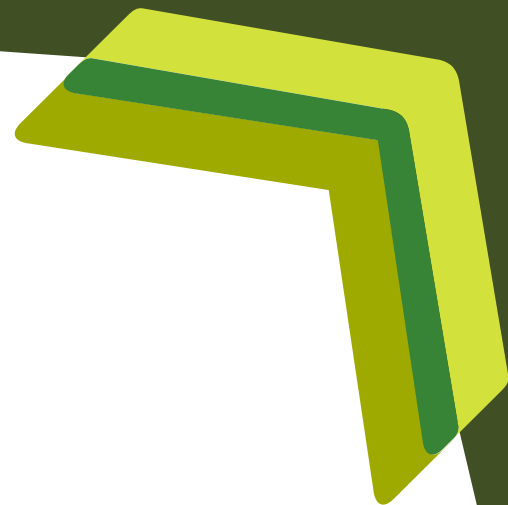


Implementing a long-term plan for health: what can we learn from international examples?

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Context

- The government is developing a 10-year plan for health in England, which seeks to transform the health service and improve the health of the nation.
- While the development of the plan itself is a huge undertaking, the strategy for implementing the plan deserves equal – arguably more – attention.
- To understand how to effectively implement health plans, The King's Fund looked back at previous work and explored three international case studies:
 - *Portugal: the national health plan (2012-2016 and extended to 2020)*
 - *Spain (the Basque Country): the strategy for tackling chronic illness in the Basque country (2010) and Health: the Peoples' Right, Everyone's' Responsibility (2013-2020)*
 - *Denmark: four consecutive national cancer plans (2000, 2005, 2010, 2016)*

Six priorities for implementing a long-term health plan:

1

Embed a clear vision and stick to it

2

Think beyond healthcare

3

Engage people in implementation and development of the plan

4

Ensure implementation is a key focus from the outset

5

Allow plans to be adapted locally

6

Measure implementation and evaluate the plan's success

1 Embed a clear vision and stick to it

What would good look like?

- An overarching vision that encourages stakeholder support for the plan.
- A vision that aligns work, providing an overarching framework for other plans and policies.
- Continuity of purpose for delivering long-term change, allowing for adaption to changing circumstances without losing sight of the long-term goal.

1 Embed a clear vision and stick to it

How to do it?

- Engage with patients, communities and staff to develop a shared vision.
- Ground the vision in evidence to ensure broad based support.
 - Learn how Denmark's first Cancer Plan was shaped by evidence.
- Clearly communicate the vision to generate buy-in.
 - Learn how the vision was communicated in the Basque Country using succinct slogans to create a collective narrative.

2 Think beyond healthcare

What would good look like?

- A plan that recognises that health is influenced by a wide range of factors as well as clinical care. A cross-sector approach to health will help ensure that health plans are supported by a broader policy environment.
- The King's Fund's vision for improving population health is based on action across four interconnecting pillars:
 - the wider determinants of health;
 - our health behaviours and lifestyles;
 - an integrated health and care system;
 - the places and communities we live in, and with.
- The 10-year health plan needs to be connected to Labour's health mission, which brings a focus to prevention and the wider determinants of health.

2 Think beyond healthcare

How to do it?

- Have a consistent and coherent focus on population health.
 - Learn how Portugal's current health plan is focused on reducing health inequalities and is being implemented through a national 'social pact' and multistakeholder commitments.
- Develop a culture of collaboration across government departments.
 - Read about the Basque Country's intersectoral approach to health and prioritisation of health across sectors and public policies.

3

Engage people in implementation as well as the development of the plan

What would good look like?

- Meaningful engagement of people throughout the development of the 10-year plan to ensure it reflects what patients, communities and healthcare professionals need.
- Engagement should also be sustained throughout implementation, becoming 'business as usual' rather than a one-off activity.

3

Engage people in implementation as well as the development of the plan

How to do it?

- Use a range of approaches, such as focus groups or working groups, deliberative events, or surveys.
 - Learn how Portugal utilised different communication channels to engage people and set up stakeholder support networks.
- Engage a range of people throughout.
 - Learn how Denmark engaged a wide range of stakeholders and citizens over time, supported by a large civil society organisation.

4

Ensure implementation is a key focus from the outset

What would good look like?

- Implementation should be considered from the outset of plan development, with strategic aims translated into actionable steps that can be executed at national, regional, and local levels.
- Implementation plans should outline:
 - Responsibilities and accountability
 - Resource allocation
 - Communication strategies
 - The balance between central and local control
 - Progress targets

4

Ensure implementation is a key focus from the outset

How to do it?

- Define and engage those responsible for implementation
- Clarify priorities within the plan
- Identify policy levers that will support delivery
- Ensure strong central management support for implementation
- Establish stakeholder networks for wider support
- Support local implementation

5 Allow plans to be adapted locally

What would good look like?

- National mandates can help to facilitate change, but regional and/or local variation must also be considered (both in population demographics and resources availability).
- Top-down approaches to implementation should be balanced with space for systems to be responsive to local needs.

5

Allow plans to be adapted locally

How to do it?

- Build flexibility for local innovations and adaptations into the plan.
 - Read how the Basque Country created the conditions in which bottom-up approaches could be developed.
- Avoid overwhelming local areas with national asks and be clear about which actions need to be prioritised.
- Provide support to systems and places to translate plans into action.
 - Learn how guidance and support for local implementation was provided in Portugal.

6

Measure implementation and evaluate the plan's success

What would good look like?

- Monitoring and evaluation to show how implementation is (or isn't) progressing, help guide resource allocation and strengthen accountability.
- Plans for monitoring and evaluation should be incorporated into the 10-year plan, covering: the methods, the resources and budget needed, and who will be responsible.

6

Measure implementation and evaluate the plan's success

How to do it?

- Define who is responsible for monitoring and evaluation. Ideally, they will be independent from those who have developed or implemented the plan.
 - Learn how Portugal made a national health institute called INSA legally responsible for the plan's evaluation.
- Develop targets and success indicators that are suitable for all places and local areas.
 - Determining indicators with health professionals and key stakeholders in local areas as the plan develops can enhance target appropriateness, buy-in and compliance with monitoring efforts.

Thank you and get in touch with any questions or for further conversations

Read the full long read here: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/10-year-health-plan-learnings-international-examples>

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