



## Policy Brief

# Ecosystem mapping tool to help healthcare systems remobilise for the new normal

Professor Tom Inns, University of Strathclyde

### KEY INFO

**Research question:** How can a mapping tool support the co-design of healthcare services that accommodate the changes catalysed by COVID?

**Policy area or themes:** Healthcare

**Methods:** Practice-based research, involving the mapping of 6 healthcare services

**Geographical area:** Scotland

**Research stage:** Research still in progress, findings now emerging

## Summary of the research

COVID brings many new challenges to healthcare teams. Patient pathways have had to be reconfigured, staff have had to undertake new roles and adopt new modes of online working, training has been disrupted, systems have had to rapidly respond to new policy and guidance.

A quality improvement tool has been developed to help healthcare teams to map out their healthcare system in real-time in a holistic way and understand these drivers of change and the opportunities for improvement. The tool has been used to understand the rapidly changing needs associated with COVID, but has also proved highly effective at dealing with generic challenges confronting an area of healthcare.

The tool which takes the form of an ecosystem mapping template has been prototyped with 6 specialist service areas within NHS Tayside: Pharmacy Services, ENT, Emergency Medicine, Oncology, healthcare within care homes and unscheduled care. There are plans to run trials of the methodology with the West of Scotland Trauma Network. These initial trials are now informing the design of a refined tool and supporting information that will be made available through a web-based resource.

## Policy recommendations

- Healthcare services are highly complex, a change to one part of a service may have significant repercussions for delivery of care elsewhere. COVID has brought many changes to healthcare service delivery, often enacted at short notice, healthcare teams need tools to help them map and understand the impact of changes on their ecosystems of healthcare.
- Mapping tools can empower healthcare teams to work across boundaries and co-design solutions to existing and future challenges. These are the core skills that will be needed by all teams as they deal with the ongoing and often unexpected challenges of COVID.



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- To be effective tools need to be developed with users and packaged in a way that makes them easy to understand and use in the new online working environments being used within all areas of healthcare.

## Key findings

A prototype version of the mapping tool has been used with six areas of specialist healthcare within NHS Tayside. The tool has added value by:

- Allowing healthcare teams to build a collective, shared visual understanding of the healthcare ecosystem within which they work.
- Enabling teams to systematically explore their healthcare ecosystem from different perspectives, including, risks, drivers of change, challenges and opportunities.
- Providing a methodology that can be deployed when working on a Teams or Zoom platform.
- Creating a visual overview of their healthcare ecosystem that can be communicated to other key stakeholders.
- Giving teams a tool that can be used to plan short and long term changes to their healthcare system.

## Further information

Web-based resources describing the mapping tool will be available at the end of March 2022. Papers describing the development of the methodology are currently under development. A pdf of the healthcare ecosystem mapping template is attached.

## Contact details

Professor Tom Inns, DMEM, University of Strathclyde, [tom.inns@strath.ac.uk](mailto:tom.inns@strath.ac.uk)

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# Healthcare Ecosystem Mapping Canvas

## Patient Geography

Collective high-level understanding of patient services and their location.

## Service Interactions

Collective understanding of how the service interacts & works with other specialist teams.

## Government Priorities

Collective understanding of Government Priorities / Policy

## Local Priorities

Collective understanding of local/regional Priorities / Policy

## Patient Pathways

Collective high-level understanding of current patient pathways

## Services & Facilities

Collective understanding of specialist services and facilities provided by service team.

## Peer Networks

Collective understanding & engagement with wider sector networks to inform innovation.

## Patients

Collective understanding of patients, their needs, how they cluster into groups, how patient communication & engagement works.

## Service Team

Collective understanding of the service team & how they are organised.

## Education & Training

Collective understanding of UG & PG education & skills development