

Heidi Health welcomes the NHS 10-Year Plan

Now let's get to work.

By Dr Thomas Kelly, CEO & Co-Founder of Heidi

When I first read the new NHS 10-Year Plan, I felt a mix of hope and relief. For years, I've seen brilliant, compassionate colleagues weighed down by endless admin, as if the system itself was working against them. And as a vascular surgical registrar, I experienced it firsthand. Finishing the last appointment of the day but facing hours of documentation and paperwork that kept me from the very reason I entered this profession: to provide quality care for patients.

That's why, at Heidi, we're cheering this Plan on from the front row. The bold ambition to make the NHS the world's most AI-enabled health system by 2035 feels like the kind of vision we've been waiting for. We're particularly encouraged by the clear commitment to scaling ambient AI tools, making AI scribes "every nurse's and doctor's trusted assistant."

We know that these technologies are already relieving pressure on clinicians and improving patient care across the health system. Heidi supports over 1.5 million NHS appointments every month and is used by 1 in 2 GPs across the UK and in 15 NHS trusts. In our latest trial with Modality Partnership – the NHS's largest GP super-partnership – clinicians told us that the paperwork burden dropped by more than half, and, most importantly, they felt they could truly listen to their patients again.

The need for this change couldn't be more pressing. The NHS is at a critical juncture, with millions stuck on waiting lists, healthcare workers becoming overwhelmed and exhausted, and the ever-increasing administrative burden stifling productivity across the system. With 42% of UK GPs considering leaving the

profession in the next five years, we're facing a crisis of capacity and morale. It's encouraging to see the Plan recognise this pressure point. The long-term ambition is clear: a system where technology reduces admin, supports clinicians and improves patient care. In many respects, it's the same vision that led me to start Heidi in the first place, and remains at the heart of everything we build today.

But turning this vision into reality will require substantial shifts in the status quo. Over the next decade, accelerated investment in AI capacity and skills will be essential. Crucially, we need a coherent approach that sets clear guardrails and encourages system-wide progress, without stifling the innovation that's already making a difference. Some of the most successful AI adoption stories – like Heidi – have emerged because clinicians have chosen the tools that genuinely meet their needs and support patient care. We should centre that frontline insight in procurement decisions, empowering clinicians to lead the way while ensuring the system learns and scales what works.

The momentum is already building. Across every Heidi trial to date, clinicians consistently report a reduction in paperwork and a renewed ability to focus on patient care. Patients, in turn, say their appointments feel more personal and effective when supported by AI – reporting that they feel better heard and cared for. When clinicians are asking for these tools, patients are benefiting, and the system itself stands to gain, inaction becomes difficult to justify. Now is the time to accelerate this change.

Transformation won't happen overnight, but real progress can – and must – be made today. By taking decisive action now, the UK government can rapidly scale ambient AI tools, delivering tangible relief for healthcare workers and immediate benefits for patients.

Here are three priorities the UK government can act on now to accelerate progress



1. Streamline integration pathways and address backlogs

To unlock the full potential of ambient AI tools, we must make it easier and faster for proven technologies to reach the frontlines of care.

The UK Government should work with NHS England and DHSC to streamline and expedite integration pathways for ambient AI. This includes publishing clear, accessible timelines and criteria for integration, so that practices, clinicians and vendors can plan adoption effectively and with confidence.

In recognition of the current backlog in the access scheme, the Government should also introduce a temporary 'innovation access period'. During this time, technologies actively pursuing formal integration via approved NHS access pathways may be used within defined parameters. This would provide immediate relief to clinicians while preserving regulatory integrity and incentivising responsible innovation.



2. Fast-track the Innovator Passport

The Plan includes a promising proposal: Innovator Passports, which will enable technologies proven in one part of the NHS to be adopted more rapidly across the entire system. This means that once a healthcare tool has been rigorously assessed by one NHS organisation, others can confidently use that evaluation to inform their own decisions. By reducing duplication, cutting unnecessary costs, and speeding up access to effective technologies, this approach will ensure patients benefit from proven innovation more quickly.

The UK Government should proactively prioritise the development and delivery of Innovator Passports, working closely with industry stakeholders and trusts with first-hand experience navigating the current fragmented and inefficient system.



3. Co-design guidance

At Heidi, we firmly believe that safety and transparency must underpin transformation. It's why we've invested in building tools clinicians can trust, why we advocate for thoughtful implementation across the NHS, and why we actively collaborate with regulators around the world to ensure clinicians are using Heidi safely.

The UK Government should ensure that any future NHS England guidance on the safe and effective use of AI scribes is co-designed with clinicians, Trusts, and industry – and focused on creating a coordinated approach to accelerating safe adoption.

Co-designed, sector-wide guidance will help ensure clarity, build trust, and support confident, consistent uptake of ambient AI tools. By involving those who understand the complexity of real-world clinical environments, we can set a gold standard for safe, effective AI use across the health system.

Heidi is ready to help deliver the future of UK healthcare

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We see a world where healthcare is abundant, and the scarce resource of our clinicians' time is expanded as they delegate anything that's non-clinical or burdensome to Heidi.



The NHS 10-Year Plan recognises the critical role that AI will play in building capacity, tackling inequalities, and improving the patient experience. But its ambition will only be realised if we move swiftly from ideas to implementation, without losing momentum.

The Fit for the Future Plan offers a bold and necessary vision: an NHS where clinicians are backed by intelligent systems that take care of the admin, patients feel heard and supported, and public resources go further. The Plan sets the right ambition. Now it's up to all of us – innovators, clinicians, system leaders – to work together to make that ambition a reality.

Dr. Thomas Kelly
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