Local public service reform

Supporting learning to integrate services and improve outcomes

Sophie Wilson, Nehal Davison and Jo Casebourne

About the project

Last year, the Institute for Government began a major research project on public service delivery at a local level in England. This is a vast, complex terrain and there are many important areas that require urgent attention – whether it is how to drive efficiency savings, deliver digital transformation or make effective use of all providers in a local area, including voluntary and private sector organisations. We decided to focus on one aspect that is critical to achieving better public service outcomes for citizens: joining up and integrating public services around local, citizen needs.

Our briefing paper, *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs*, identified five perennial barriers that repeatedly hinder integration at a local level, as well as several insights into how to tackle them. Limited sharing of what works (and doesn't work) emerged as a critical barrier that needs urgent attention. Although variation is crucial in ensuring that public services meet local needs, not learning from what has been tried before, or elsewhere, is costly, time intensive and risks duplicating the progress made in other parts of the country. At a time when capacity within local government is declining, and less money is available for service delivery, we cannot afford to keep reinventing the wheel.

This paper provides much-needed clarity on what would help people involved in integrating public services locally to share experiences and learn from one another to improve outcomes on the ground. An accompanying set of eight case studies provides more detail about the methods and impact of different approaches designed to support learning around local public service reform more generally.

For more information about the project, visit
www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/local-service-delivery

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About the authors

Sophie Wilson is a Researcher at the Institute for Government. Since joining the Institute in 2015, she has been involved in its ministerial development programme and work on public service delivery. Prior to this, Sophie was a researcher at the Office for Public Management, working on a range of engagement and evaluation projects across UK public services. She holds an MPhil in International Relations from the University of Cambridge and a BA from King's College London.

Nehal Davison is a Research Manager at the Institute for Government. She currently leads the Institute's work on local delivery of public services. She also managed the Institute's 'Leadership for Government' programme for ministers and shadow ministers in the run-up to the 2015 General Election, as well as research projects on civil service reform and public service markets. Between 2015 and 2016, Nehal spent three months in New Zealand where she worked at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) and the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA). Prior to joining the Institute, she worked in PricewaterhouseCoopers, Demos and the British Council. She holds an MPhil in International Relations from the University of Oxford and a BA in History from University College London.

Dr Jo Casebourne is a Programme Director at the Institute for Government. She leads the Institute's work on public services. This currently includes projects on the local delivery of public services, public service markets and decentralisation in England. Jo has spent the last 15 years conducting research on public services, welfare-to-work, employment and skills, and disadvantaged groups in the labour market. Prior to joining the Institute in 2015, Jo was a Director at Nesta for three-and-a-half years, leading the organisation's research on public services and innovation for social outcomes. Before joining Nesta, Jo was Director of Research at the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion for five years.

Acknowledgements

Executive summary

Why does learning in local areas matter for the integration of public services?

Public services in England are changing. Pressures on public spending, increasing demand and a drive for greater local autonomy are encouraging local areas to experiment, do things differently and transform the way they interact with citizens. Central government is also pushing for public service reform locally, with growing momentum behind the need to integrate key services. However, countless attempts to integrate[1] have not translated into significant improvements on the ground and we are still grappling with the same issues today.

Our November 2015 briefing paper, *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs,*[2] identified five barriers that repeatedly hinder integration at a local level and this paper focuses on one of them: limited sharing of 'what works' (and doesn't). Although variation is crucial in ensuring that public services meet local needs, not learning from what has been tried before, or elsewhere, is costly, time intensive and risks duplicating the progress made in other parts of the country. At a time when capacity within local government is declining, and less money is available for service delivery, we cannot afford to keep reinventing the wheel.

What support already exists and how useful is it?

Our review of organisations and programmes designed to support learning in local areas found over 100 examples – of which 90 are in use today – with great variety in what they do and who funds, leads and delivers them. Despite the broad range of support on offer, the majority of initiatives focus on learning in specific sectors such as education, health or crime and therefore reinforce silos rather than support collaboration. We found fewer than 10 programmes designed specifically to support learning around integrating public services, such as between health and social care. Given the policy drive for better integration and collaboration across local public services, this is a major gap that urgently needs addressing.

In practice, people involved in integrating public services locally often learn through informal approaches, such as personal networks or existing partnerships. These interactions are an important and valuable way of finding out about what is happening in other areas. However, local public service integration cannot rely solely on these chance encounters, which can easily be squeezed from the day job.

What do people involved in integrating local public services need?

We spoke to those working in central government, local government, representative and professional bodies, national arm's-length bodies and the wider policy community to understand what would help people involved in integrating public services locally to share experiences and learn from one another to improve outcomes on the ground. We found:

People need more real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks. Time and again, the criticism we heard is that online case studies, large conferences and national guidance based on 'best practice' are all about showcasing success and promoting particular places, programmes or individuals. They do not provide the space to have frank discussions about what didn't work, including the mistakes, pitfalls and difficulties that people faced along the way.

People need opportunities to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation as much as what programmes involved and why they were introduced. People have had enough of general and descriptive examples that focus too much on the merits of a particular model – for example, key workers or co-located teams – without insights into how this was practically achieved and the journey that organisations have been on to get there.

The best way to do this is through face-to-face conversations that allow people to break out of organisational and professional silos. Connecting people virtually, or uploading case studies online, does not provide opportunities to get into the detail of a programme, reflect on what is working and not working, and build the relationships that are needed to make cross-sector and organisational collaboration a reality.

Sector- and peer-led approaches help build the necessary trust and credibility to make learning relevant to local priorities. In contrast, initiatives led by Whitehall departments or arm's-length bodies, no matter how well intentioned, can be perceived as performance management in disguise, preventing honest and purposeful conversations from taking place.

What needs to change?

However obvious the above four insights may sound, this is not yet a reality on the ground and there is still a gap between what exists and what people need. So, what has to change to make this a reality? We recommend that:

Whitehall departments, regulators and national arm's-length bodies should:

- **Encourage sector- and peer-led models for learning from local public service integration.** Where Whitehall departments and national organisations already fund programmes, they need to spend their money wisely on initiatives that focus on real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks and provide opportunities for people to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation.

- **Maintain strong links with what is happening on the ground, actively listening to local areas about what is working (and not working**). Whitehall departments should then use these insights to make changes to national policy, regulatory, legislative and funding frameworks that currently hinder local public service integration. The recent push for devolution and place-based reform provides an opportunity to reset the relationship between Whitehall and local government – one where Whitehall listens more to the lessons that are emerging from different approaches to local public service integration, including the freedoms local areas need to deliver better outcomes.

- **Develop strong and consistent feedback loops between national policymakers and those on the frontline by drawing on credible intermediaries in the sector.** In the case of local public service integration, Whitehall departments and national bodies should listen to credible and respected organisations in the sector that can collate, analyse and share learning in anonymised and aggregate form.

Local leaders across public services should:

- **Create open, outward-looking organisational cultures where staff at all levels are encouraged to share concerns and learn on the go with their peers** – especially those they are working with to integrate local services. This is not a 'nice to have' that can be dropped when staff resources are scarce; it is critical to integrating local public services. Bringing those who have to work together to learn together can significantly help to build the relationships and understanding needed to make integration work.

- **Encourage staff to take part in cross-sector secondments, mentoring schemes or events that encourage cross-fertilisation between local organisations** – for example, between local authorities, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), general practitioners (GPs), employment services, care homes, the police and other local services in an area.

- **Incentivise cross-sector learning by setting an expectation that working across different local organisations and maintaining a diverse professional network is essential to career progression.**

Local representative organisations and professional bodies should:

- **Ensure that face-to-face, peer-to-peer learning across sectors is a key part of what it means to be a 'professional'**. This could be supported by making ongoing professional accreditation and career progression dependent on experience of working across professional boundaries (for example, through cross-sector secondments).

- **Co-convene events, bringing professionals from different sectors together to share experiences and learn from one another**. For example, in the case of employment and health integration, this could involve bringing together nurses, social workers, GPs, employment providers and Jobcentre Plus staff.

- **Trial a peer challenge model for place-based integration**. The emphasis should be on creating environments where people feel comfortable in honestly reflecting on challenges, difficulties and pitfalls, rather than only showcasing success, and then sharing this more widely across local and central government.

We are keen to work with local leaders across public services, representative organisations, professional bodies, central government and national arm's-length bodies to discuss how to take forward these recommendations to support learning in local areas and improve outcomes for citizens.

1. Why does learning in local areas matter for the integration of public services?

Public services in England are changing. Pressures on public spending, increasing demand and a drive for greater local autonomy are encouraging local areas to do things differently and transform the way they interact with citizens. Local areas are experimenting with new ways of working, for example using different partnership and governance arrangements, bringing professionals together in multi-agency partnerships, and empowering communities to co-produce solutions.[3] Places are fundamentally rethinking how to support their residents, shifting away from a complex public service landscape[4] focused on organisations, towards one that is centred on individuals and communities. It is clearly a time of flux, with significant potential for efficiency savings and improved outcomes for citizens.

Central government is also pushing for service reform locally, with growing momentum behind the need to integrate key public services: the 2015 Spending Review announced a commitment to health and social care integration by 2020, a new Work and Health Programme, and increasing co-location of Jobcentres with local authorities.[5] At the same time, NHS England is pressing forward with large-scale reforms through the development of 'new models of care' in 50 Vanguard sites and requiring local areas to produce Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) for the health and care needs of whole populations.[6]

What do we mean by service integration?

There is an extensive literature on service integration, but few studies define what it means in practice, often using the terms 'joining up', 'collaboration', 'partnership working' and 'service integration' interchangeably.[7]

In its broadest sense, service integration is used to describe co-ordination between multiple actors within a system to achieve a shared goal or outcome. This can centre around a particular client group such as homeless people ('horizontal integration') or throughout a delivery chain such as joining up primary and secondary healthcare ('vertical integration'). Moreover, it can take place in various forms and levels within a system. The actors involved can come from different sectors, or from different organisations within the same sector, and can include government, businesses, charities, communities and the public. Likewise, integration can take place locally, centrally or at both levels.

The extent and type of service integration can also vary significantly, encompassing anything from fully integrated teams (with joint budgets, management structures and resources) to co-location and informal information sharing between practitioners. A number of different approaches to integration are highlighted in our briefing paper, *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs*.[8]

The Institute for Government's timeline[9] of central government reforms to integrate local public services shows that this has been tried many times before. Yet, we are still grappling with the same issues today.[10] Our November 2015 briefing paper, *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs,*[11] identified the five perennial barriers that repeatedly hinder integration at a local level:

- Short-term policy and funding cycles can restrict the ability of local actors to invest in the long-term partnerships needed to meet local, citizen needs.

- Misaligned geographies and the patchwork of commissioning, funding and regulatory processes can make it difficult for local actors to design services around a 'whole person'.

- Cultural differences between professions and organisations can discourage collaboration on the ground.

- Barriers to data sharing can make joint working between distinct teams or organisations practically difficult.

- Limited sharing of 'what works' in different circumstances can mean that lessons from effective models and practices are rarely built on.

This paper focuses on how to overcome the final barrier: a limited sharing of 'what works' (and doesn't).[12] It is often taken for granted that integrating services will deliver better outcomes for citizens, but we still know little about whether, or how, it actually does this. Creating the space for areas to learn and share experiences is therefore critical. Starting from scratch is costly, time intensive and risks duplicating the progress made in other parts of the country. At a time when capacity within local government is declining, and less money is available for service delivery, we cannot afford to keep reinventing the wheel.

This is not about replicating the same model again and again across the country – variation is crucial in ensuring that public services meet local needs. But not learning from what has been tried before, and tried elsewhere, wastes scare resources and can ultimately reinforce ineffective models and practices that do little to improve citizens' experiences. In the worst cases, this can lead to service failure. As the Institute for Government's report *Failing well* argues, failing organisations across the public sector tend to be characterised by an inward-looking, insular culture.[13] Encouraging areas to share experiences and learn from each other is one important way to avoid insularity and minimise the risk of failure.[14] This is particularly important now as many public sector organisations transition to new ways of working in the context of declining resources and, in some cases, impending financial collapse. This requires a step change in people's ability to transform and integrate services with significantly less capacity.

What do we mean by sharing learning and experiences in local areas?

A number of factors can provide the impetus to learn from others – for example, responding to a new policy initiative or changes in funding, taking on a new role, or trying to turn around a failing service.

In this paper, we define sharing learning and experiences as a process that involves finding information, seeking out ideas, developing and sharing knowledge, and then tailoring this to a new place or problem.[15] Knowledge can be explicit, in the sense that it can be expressed formally by writing it down (for example, a recipe book), or tacit, where it cannot be easily articulated and exists 'beneath the surface' in people's minds and interactions (for example, how to ride a bike).[16]

Different types of knowledge can be useful for different types of situation which may involve a mix of technical and adaptive challenges. Generally, explicit knowledge is appropriate for technical challenges (such as performing an operation), while tacit knowledge is more relevant for adaptive challenges, which involve negotiating a way through ambiguity with other people (such as involving citizens in designing a new service that takes account of local needs).[17]

This paper seeks to provide clarity on the most effective methods for supporting learning in local areas to integrate services and improve outcomes. It is based on:

- a wide-ranging desk review of the literatures on the diffusion of innovations, evidence take-up in policymaking and organisational improvement[18]

- a rapid review of programmes and organisations established to support people in local areas to share experiences and learn from one another around public service reform

- an in-depth analysis of eight different programmes with a remit to share knowledge and learning around public service reform in general. These reflect a spread in focus, approaches and methods, including current and past examples, from the UK and internationally

- 62 interviews with people working in local government (in both policy and operational teams), central government, national organisations and the wider policy community, to ask how learning happens, and needs to happen, in local public services

- two workshops: one with 16 representatives of professional bodies to explore the role they play in supporting their members to integrate local public services; and one with 25 local authority chief executives to understand where they go for new ideas and the role of evidence in this.

This paper is not intended to be an evaluation of how successful different integration programmes have been so far in delivering better outcomes for citizens. Nor is it intended to be an in-depth analysis of how to scale and spread evidence-based approaches to integration (as the evidence base does not yet exist). Instead, this paper focuses on how to support active, ongoing learning and reflection in local areas now to deliver better, joined-up services for citizens.

2. What support already exists and how useful is it?

There is already a wide range of support for people in local areas to share learning and experiences with one another. However, much of this is confined to specific sectors – such as education, health and crime – and there are limited opportunities to learn from different approaches to integrating public services locally. Instead, people rely on informal methods such as personal and professional networks, which are important and valuable. However, local public service integration cannot rely solely on these chance encounters, which can easily be squeezed from the day job.

A number of programmes have been established to support learning between local areas, but few focus on attempts to integrate public services

Many organisations and improvement programmes already exist to support local areas to learn from one another; we found over 100 examples (see Annex 1), of which 90 are in use today.[19] There is huge diversity in what they do:

- **Some provide forums for local areas to share and learn from one another's experiences**, such as the former Beacon Councils Scheme[20] events, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum's previous Good Practice Scheme,[21] and the Knowledge Hub's online portal.[22]

- **Some disseminate best practice or academic research to encourage greater use of evidence**, such as the now-closed Audit Commission[23] and the Local Government Knowledge Navigator.[24]

- **Some support the development of new skills and ways of working through training programmes, technical assistance or online toolkits**, such as What Works Cities[25] in the United States and the Early Intervention Foundation's work with pioneering places.[26]

- **Some have an explicit challenge function built in to encourage reflection on areas for improvement**, such as the Local Government Association's (LGA's) corporate peer challenges.[27]

More detail about the methods and impact of these different approaches is provided in the eight case studies that accompany this paper. An at-a-glance version is also provided in Annex 2.

There is diversity not only in what these programmes do, but also in who delivers them. A range of organisations are involved, including government departments, national arm's-length bodies, private sector organisations, universities and charities. However, in recent years, the role of central government and other national bodies in delivering programmes has declined and some of the previous support infrastructure is no longer there. The Beacon Councils Scheme, the Audit Commission and the Public Service Transformation Network have all been closed down. In some cases, specific programmes have spun out of national organisations. For example, the LGA, a membership organisation, now delivers much of the support provided by the former Improvement and Development Agency. The exception to this trend is NHS England, which still runs a range of programmes to encourage local areas to share learning around new models of care in health services.

Central government departments and national organisations do nonetheless continue to fund several programmes and organisations with a remit to share learning even if they are not directly delivering support. For example, a government grant contributes to the LGA; various government departments, alongside research councils and charities, fund the seven independent What Works Centres which are also supported by a central team in the Cabinet Office;[28] and the Department for Education's Children's Social Care Innovation Programme[29] is led by a consortium that works with 53 projects run by local authorities and other public sector partners, to test and spread effective ways of working with vulnerable children.

At the same time, there are a growing number of peer-led and sector-led approaches. For example, 50 senior leaders across Greater Essex have come together to develop the Leadership Collaborative – a year-long programme of events and development opportunities – to create a shared vision for how to deliver better outcomes for residents.[30] Meanwhile, the Royal College of Anaesthetists offers a voluntary accreditation programme for NHS and independent sector organisations based on a peer review approach to national benchmarking and improvement.[31] The role of the private sector, consultancies, think tanks, universities and charities has also increased in recent years. Knowledge Hub, run by a private company, and the Local Government Knowledge Navigator, an academic-led initiative, are two examples we have explored in our case studies.

> ❝ The national improvement architecture sits within different departments and almost perpetuates silos rather than supports collaboration. ❞
>
> Director of service, local government[33]

Despite the broad range of programmes on offer, there is remarkably little support available for areas to learn from attempts to integrate local public services; in fact, we found fewer than 10 programmes offering this. Of these, most are based in the health sector, such as the integrated care learning network run by The King's Fund,[32] and many are led by NHS England. For example, initiatives such as the Better Care Exchange, Integrated Care Pioneers and the New Models of Care – Vanguard programme all aim to share and spread effective ways of working around health and social care integration. Beyond this, the majority of existing programmes focus on specific sectors and reinforce silos rather than support collaboration and learning across professional boundaries. Given the policy drive for better integration of public services at a local level, this is a major gap that urgently needs addressing.

In practice, informal approaches to learning from local integration of public services are common and valuable, but are not part of the day job

Learning from local public service integration often happens informally, rather than through established programmes. People tend to use professional, political and personal networks, move roles within or between organisations, or bring in new, seconded or agency staff, to learn about what others are doing. For example, a policy officer developing a new health and employment programme in Islington explained how there are currently few places to go to for advice on meaningful citizen engagement. In the end, advice from colleagues in adult social care with longstanding experience of working with service users was invaluable in helping him to build citizen participation into the programme.[34] As such, conversations 'around the water cooler' can be an effective way to find relevant information without having to attend formal programmes or wade through a lot of material online.

Existing partnerships also provide an opportunity for informal learning and can help to facilitate the spread of knowledge more easily. Getting people together regularly, in the same room, helps to build relationships and creates opportunities to share experiences and advice, even if learning from each other is not the primary purpose of the meeting. In London, several local authority boroughs have been involved in commissioning the Working Capital programme through Central London Forward, which additionally provides a forum to share experiences of working with partners such as Jobcentre Plus.[35]

The devolution deals process has also brought councils together around the specific purpose of negotiating greater freedoms from Whitehall, while simultaneously providing the space to learn about what is happening in neighbouring places. This has been enabled partly by the creation of new institutions – such as combined authorities – which strengthen and pool local capacity to invest in sharing knowledge, evaluation and analysis. For example, in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) region, Wigan Borough Council established a pilot integrating health, employment and skills for long-term unemployed people, which has now been rolled

out across all 10 local authorities as part of the Working Well programme. As one interviewee put it, "devolution has opened up more internal discussions where bits of best practice that may have been left on their own in one particular borough are now being put on the table".[36]

However, incentives in the wider system can actively discourage organisations and individuals from making the most of these informal opportunities. National regulation frameworks drive organisations to focus on delivering specific statutory duties, in a particular way, inhibiting a more open, experimental culture that is willing to learn from others. Moreover, individuals are rarely rewarded for looking beyond organisational boundaries, building networks with peers or participating in learning opportunities. Local politics can also disincentivise people from actively seeking out learning from places with a different political make-up, even if the local context is broadly similar. This inward-looking mentality has only been strengthened in recent months, as competition for funding and resources between local areas through devolution deals and STPs has discouraged some places from sharing experiences with those less far along in the process (although, as we argued earlier in this section, informal learning *within* these partnerships does happen and is important).[37]

Even when people are willing to share experiences and learn from others, it can often be difficult to find the time. The pace of change in local public services means that people are constantly responding to new policies and thus have little time or capacity to find out what is going on in other areas. The real challenge lies in "knowing where to go" and who to go to.[38] Cuts in local government mean that there is now less internal capacity to help people navigate the information that is already available. Furthermore, the sheer amount can be overwhelming; one local authority chief executive described how he receives at least 100 pieces of evidence in his inbox every week.[39] It takes time to wade through all of this to work out what is relevant and who to speak to; something many local authorities no longer have the capacity for. One interviewee explained: "With not having a lot of money, we don't have a lot of people hanging around to do that [research and analysis] or to do that in any sort of consistent way on a regular basis."[40]

> **"When you're trying to do the stuff on the ground level you haven't got the time or the availability to access all the [information] regularly."**
>
> Local government manager[41]

As such, sharing experiences in local areas tends to depend too heavily on personal willingness, networks and connections that can easily be squeezed from the demands of the day job. Finding out about another area trying a similar or different approach can come down to luck – meeting the right person or noticing something on Twitter. As one director of operations in local government put it, "you either see it or you don't".[42] Making the most of informal connections, including existing partnerships, is an important way of learning from others, but it can easily be crowded out by other priorities. Public service integration cannot rely solely on these chance encounters.

3. What do people involved in integrating local public services need?

Currently, we do not know what approaches to sharing learning work best, for which groups, or when. There have been some attempts to address this gap, including a recent systematic review of the existing evidence on how to encourage policymakers to use research,[43] and an ongoing trial testing various methods of diffusion and research uptake in education.[44] Further investigation is required to understand the most effective ways to share learning in the context of local public service integration, and we hope this report can act as a first step towards this.

We spoke to those working in local government, central government, representative organisations, professional bodies, national arm's-length bodies and the wider policy community to understand what would help people to share experiences and learn from one another to meet the challenges of integrating public services locally and improve outcomes on the ground. We found:

- people need more real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks

- people need opportunities to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation

- the best way to do this is through face-to-face conversations that allow people to break out of organisational and professional silos

- sector- and peer-led approaches help build the necessary trust and credibility to make learning relevant to local priorities.

This is not about creating a new programme or formalising all interactions, but about making the most of existing support – both formal and informal – and making sure that it is a part of people's day jobs. The insights that follow are based on interviews with people involved in integrating local public services, but many equally apply to the sharing of learning and practice in relation to other public service reform agendas. Future research could rigorously test these insights to better understand the most effective ways to share learning around local public service integration.

People need more real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks

There is no shortage of information on 'best practice' in local public services. Indeed, our analysis found more than 70 live websites containing case studies of best practice examples. As highlighted in Section 2, there is also a vast range of organisations offering information and guidance offline through conferences, events and training programmes. Searching for information about integration is no different. There are plenty of case studies available on joining up across sectors, although they tend to be general and descriptive, with limited evidence on which approaches are more effective than others in driving improvements for citizens.

Time and again, the criticism we heard is that online case studies, large conferences and national guidance based on 'best practice' are all about showcasing success. They do not provide the space to have frank discussions about what didn't work and the challenges people faced along the way. As one local interviewee put it: "They'd put on a seminar and tell everyone how great you are and gloss over the fact that some of it didn't work."[45] People need a better sense of the risks and pitfalls to avoid – aspects rarely captured in the polished version of a case study or talk, which is often more about promoting an individual or a place rather than honest reflection and evaluation. For example, our case study on the Beacon Councils Scheme highlighted that people often attended 'best practice' events to raise their local authority's profile.[46] Political dynamics can encourage this as elected members are naturally keen to circulate 'good news stories' about their local area. It is therefore unsurprising that some people

in local government are highly sceptical about 'best practice' examples, which are often presented as a 'success' by those involved, without independent evaluations to support this.[47]

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What is wrong with 'best practice'?

There are no end of examples and case studies claiming 'best practice' status. These can be incredibly useful if they outline the solution to a technical challenge or process. For example, most would agree that best practice guidelines for surgical operations, or hand hygiene in hospitals, are an important way of maintaining standards around specific medical processes that we know protect patients.

However, for more complex challenges, such as how to encourage joint working between doctors and social workers, there is unlikely to be a single, straightforward solution that can be adopted off the shelf. There is little consensus on how to bring different professional teams together, and a successful approach in one place may not deliver similar results elsewhere. Often, solutions are context specific, and 'best practice' examples rarely set out the specific elements of the wider environment that contributed to success, providing limited insight into whether an approach is likely to work in another place. What people really want to learn about are 'best fit' — not 'best practice' — programmes that can be implemented flexibly and adapted to local circumstances.[48] This can make the language of 'best practice' off-putting for those trying to tackle complex challenges.

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> ❝ The conversation you should always have is: what are the bits we would have done differently, what are the bits we messed up and this is what we learnt from it. ❞
>
> Senior policy adviser in local government[49]

Indeed, given that local areas are under pressure to deliver reforms quickly and effectively, **places need more real-time sharing of progress, challenges and setbacks**. This requires people to be more forthcoming with work in progress and share the whole story — what went well and what didn't — instead of holding back until a programme has been deemed a 'success'. For example, we heard how some local areas are eager to learn from the NHS England Vanguard sites as they develop new models of care, yet the programme is understandably reluctant to disseminate findings before there is clarity on which approaches are most effective.[50] But learning in real time is particularly important in the context of integrating services locally as we still do not know which approaches improve outcomes, and places do not have the time to wait until a programme has been fully evaluated before kick-starting reforms. This can be exacerbated by demands from elected members who are keen for decisions to be made at the right point in a political cycle.[51] As one interviewee in Greater Manchester put it: "If you want to keep things moving, you've got to make decisions, you've got to make judgements as opposed to waiting for the Nth degree of evidence and evaluation."[52] This involves giving people the permission to talk about issues early and regularly, rather than always filtering experiences through reports produced long after the event.

Some administrative and political leaders are proactively building more open, honest and outward-looking organisational cultures to encourage this kind of real-time learning. For example, in East Sussex County Council, the management team recognise they are operating in a new and challenging environment and therefore sent a clear message to all staff that "it is fine to not have all the answers and to work solutions out with others".[53] Meanwhile, in Greater Manchester, a senior policy analyst explained: "We've got a system that's open enough to say actually we need to know when we're bad and we need to know who amongst our neighbours is good".[54] Past research has also shown that developing an open, no-blame culture is crucial to minimising the risk of failing services, and that involving front-line staff in reflecting on what is not working is essential for innovation.[55]

However, this does not remove the need for ongoing, rigorous and systematic evaluation to build the evidence base around whether and how integrating services improves outcomes for citizens. Gathering regular feedback from the perspectives of citizens and front-line staff as well as outcomes data would help to advance our understanding of what is working and not working, along with the types of integration that work best.[56] But in order to deliver better services for citizens now, real-time learning on the ground needs to take place alongside independent evaluation.

People need opportunities to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation

Online case studies, conferences, events and other formal programmes described in Section 2 can be a useful 'way in' for places to get a flavour of what others are doing, particularly if they include examples of failure as well as success. As one director of strategy in local government put it: "The initial way in has to be something easily available, a quick paragraph, a summary of what's new in a particular area."[58] However, national guidance based on a 'one size fits all' approach or 'best practice' case studies often focus too much on the specific model adopted – whether it is key workers, mixed teams or multi-community speciality providers – rather than how different organisations have reached the stage of being able to make these fundamental transformations. These often fail to take account of different starting points and circumstances, which can make the information available unworkable in the specific context and politics of a place. For example, we heard how guidance targeted at unitary authorities does not easily apply to two-tier authorities where responsibilities for services are split between county and district councils.[59]

> " There is lots of information, but not enough insight. "
>
> Director of operations in local government[57]

There is real demand for opportunities to 'dig deeper' into how programmes have been implemented as much as what they are and why they were introduced. This means learning from implementation as much as the policy detail, an area the Institute for Government has previously explored.[60] As two interviewees put it:

> [We] often fixate on details such as: How much money has it saved? How has it reduced admissions to hospitals? But you then have to do this whole other translation of where did you start from – is it the same place we started from? What are the issues impacting on you – are they the same ones impacting on us?
> Head of services, local government[61]

> [T]he bit where [formal networks] always feel like it falls down for me … is when you try and organise it just on a website or make a case study, you don't get underneath the detail of the messiness of how all of it was done.
> Senior policy adviser, local government[62]

People clearly want to understand where an initiative came from, how it developed and the ways of working that can be applied elsewhere; something particularly relevant to integrating public services locally where several pathways may lead to similar end points. This includes how to build relationships across professional boundaries, how to engage citizens beyond consultation or how to negotiate with Whitehall, even if the practical steps and local outcomes are distinct. For example, areas involved in the Troubled Families programme have hosted several conference days where other places delivering similar programmes can find out how a particular implementation problem or theme has been tackled, such as sharing supervision arrangements for Troubled Families employment advisers.[63] Likewise, the Education Endowment Foundation's online toolkit contains a 'What should I consider?' section for each piece of evidence on the website.[64] This includes a set of prompts to encourage those responsible for delivering a programme to think about how a strategy should be implemented. Beyond this, there are currently few forums to discuss tricky implementation issues in relation to integrating public services and little support exists for those attempting to translate and apply experiences to their own local context. Areas often rely on external researchers and consultants to help navigate this complexity. We heard how this is leading to duplication and waste, with already stretched resources being used for "reinventing things and having the same conversations".[65]

The best way to do this is through face-to-face conversations that allow people to break out of organisational and professional silos

> **It's much more powerful actually having the conversations than to read a paper about it.**
>
> Director of operations in local government[66]

It is difficult to translate details about the 'how' of implementation to the realities of actually trying things out on the ground.[66] **People need the opportunity to ask questions face-to-face and delve deeper into what can and cannot be applied to a particular context**. Therefore, despite growing interest in the potential of digital and virtual forms of connecting, which can be accessed at people's own convenience irrespective of geography, we found people actually prefer one-to-one conversations that get under the detail of raw experiences and "mak[e] some of these … ideas come alive".[68] Face-to-face connections also help to build ongoing relationships, which results in better engagement and long-term involvement in sharing and learning initiatives.[69]

There are a variety of person-to-person approaches that sit on a spectrum of resource and time implications; several options are described in Table 1. The examples range from informal chats and exchanges, to programmes with an explicit challenge function built in, which naturally require both greater resources and greater buy-in from participants and, therefore, must be matched to the perceived benefits of participating. They are not mutually exclusive, but can be pursued in parallel or follow on from one another.

It is widely accepted that these face-to-face interactions need to be purposeful and help people tackle real issues or risk turning into a talking shop that is squeezed from the day job.[70] For example, we were told that three councils have decoupled from a larger network focusing on health and social care to have more frank and purposeful discussions on a twice-yearly basis, co-ordinated by The King's Fund. They are at similar points in the integration journey, and as one interviewee explained: "We had to come out of the national process and re-scope and re-specify where the useful relationship was."[71]

> **I want to know who has the same problem as me.**
>
> Research manager in local government[72]

This highlights **the need to base interactions around a problem or a specific, live issue that everyone is grappling with so that it is not seen as a distraction**. In the case of integrating public services locally, a key way to achieve this is to bring together the people or teams who need to collaborate. This can help to overcome the cultural and professional differences that often stall successful integration of services.[73] For example, five multi-disciplinary teams across West Essex worked with Nesta on a 100-day challenge, which provided an opportunity for front-line staff from health and social care to learn together, build relationships and "walk in each other's shoes".[74] Getting people who work together, to learn together, by doing something practical is an effective way of creating opportunities for staff at all levels to share experiences that are relevant and immediately applicable to the day job.

However, it goes without saying that the cultural differences which often block joint working can also block a willingness to learn together. For example, one interviewee told us how colleagues in social care are often reluctant to participate in, or find it difficult to engage with, health-sector events as the language and phrases do not apply to their work nor 'speak to them' – such as using the word 'patient', which is not used in social care.[75] Even if the topic itself is relevant, professionals in a different sector may not recognise this if they use a different term or phrase to describe the same thing. As such, framing events and material around the problem that people are trying to solve can help to focus attention and make the support on offer purposeful and relevant to the day job.

Table 1: Person-to-person approaches for sharing learning

Approach	Things to consider
Ad-hoc or one-off events and meetings bringing people together to discuss a particular topic or challenge on a specified day. *Example:* The Essex Partnership planned a two-day event to kick-start a development programme – the Leadership Collaborative – bringing together 50 senior leaders to discuss how to operate as a joined-up system, share experiences and deliver better outcomes for residents in Greater Essex.[76]	• These one-off sessions need to build trust within a short space of time. This may mean bringing together people from existing partnerships, who already know each other in some capacity, or providing opportunities for small group discussions that people can select based on their own interests. • Designing and facilitating a 'safe space' session where participants feel comfortable sharing progress and challenges requires time, expertise and resources.
Regular network meetings, communities of practice or training courses bringing together the same set of people around a theme on an ongoing, scheduled basis. *Example:* The King's Fund runs learning networks for local areas interested in health and social care integration. These bring together groups of professionals from several places to share experiences and reflect on progress and challenges as a place. Each meeting also usually includes a speaker on a shared interest or theme.[77]	• Recognising existing priorities and flexing meetings around crunch-points can ensure commitment and communicate an understanding of the working patterns of the group. • Agreeing a feasible time commitment with participants, piggy-backing onto existing meeting times or inviting teams rather than individuals to a network can help to limit turnover and make interactions and learning more routine. • Using a first meeting to co-design later sessions around the needs and interests of a group can help to build engagement and buy-in.
Exchanges through secondments, buddying or mentoring schemes, volunteering or shared working arrangements. *Example:* The head of transformation and strategy in Haringey has visited Rotherham on several occasions to share learning and provide an independent review of their programme management.[78]	• Secondments and exchanges can have a significant multiplier effect as the skills and expertise that an individual brings benefits not only the host team, but also the host organisation more widely (and vice versa when they return). • However, those involved need to clarify and agree on the purpose of the sharing arrangement as well as the level of commitment and resourcing required, to avoid misunderstandings at a later date. • Because of the resource implications, it can be difficult to involve senior staff or those with specialist expertise who are likely to have greater demands on their time. But these may be the most valuable people to learn from. • Getting the incentives right is essential to encouraging participation. For example, experience in different organisations or sectors and wide networks can be rewarded through career progression.
Peer review processes, which use a pre-selected team of peers to provide support and challenge to another organisation based on their own understanding and experiences. *Example:* The LGA runs a range of peer challenges for local authorities, which bring together local authority chief executives and officers, council leaders, academics and service providers. The challenge team visits the host for three to four days and subsequently provides feedback and guidance through a written report.[79]	• Peer reviews require a large resource commitment from senior leaders in both the participating council and the review team. It is therefore essential that the investment matches the perceived benefits for both sides, including opportunities for two-way learning and exchange of ideas. • It is vital that this process is facilitated by a trusted convenor and is locally led to ensure the necessary buy-in. For example, organisations that play an assurance or inspection role may not be best placed to run a peer review.

Sector- and peer-led approaches help build the necessary trust and credibility to make learning relevant to local priorities

> 66 There is a risk that you won't always get quite such a frank assessment as to what went well and crucially what didn't go well if the sharing of information is brokered by a government department that holds the purse strings for that piece of work. 99
>
> Senior policy adviser in local government[80]

Although there is clearly a preference for face-to-face interactions, it is not enough to just bring people together in the same room. Who leads these initiatives has a major influence on how people engage and their ultimate effectiveness in encouraging learning between local areas. **A legitimate and credible convenor is essential to having honest conversations** about what is working well – and less well.

Local interviewees explained that they can be reluctant to share progress, challenges and frustrations in forums convened by central government, regulators or national arm's-length bodies, because of concerns that the information could be used to assess and sanction performance.[81] This is particularly the case when it is unclear whether a national or central government team is playing an assurance or support function. For example, we heard that one particular national scheme had low take-up because local areas were anxious that any information shared could be used to criticise performance, even though reassurance that this would not occur was provided at the outset.[82]

Sector-led approaches can help to overcome these concerns around trust and legitimacy. The most well-known case is the LGA's peer challenges, which are sector-led, voluntary visits from a team of peers, designed to help local authorities assess their performance across a range of areas, and provide feedback and recommendations for further improvement.[83] Over 400 peer challenges have been delivered since 2011, involving over two-thirds of the sector.[84] An independent evaluation found that the ability to tailor each peer challenge to a council's needs was regarded as one of the great strengths of the offer; indeed, 94% of respondents to an LGA survey reported that the process had been well tailored to the specific needs and focus of their council.[85] Being part of a challenge team can also provide significant opportunities to learn from other places. As the deputy leader of Nottingham City Council put it: "Inevitably the depth of knowledge you come away with about a particular service is greater than the knowledge you carried in with you."[86]

The LGA is a key player in the support landscape; however, other representative bodies also command credibility and legitimacy. In particular, **professional bodies play an important role in supporting their members to adapt to new ways of working**, as well as providing essential support for training and development in technical skills. However, the risk is that professional bodies end up reinforcing silos by focusing on particular sectors or practitioner groups, rather than encouraging learning across these sectors.[87] This is beginning to change; at a joint Institute for Government/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace) roundtable bringing together 16 professional bodies, there was growing appetite for more joint working to collectively support their members from different sectors to deliver integrated public services and learn from each other's experiences.[88] Indeed, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has developed a buddying programme to share practice on transforming care and integration, which is seen to encourage "open and transparent conversations with each other about what's going right or wrong and how shiny things really are".[89]

Independent organisations – including academics, charities, think tanks and mixed consortiums – which have a wide reach in terms of information, expertise and contacts, can also act as credible convenors in this space, while sharing their own knowledge and experience. For example, the Anglia Ruskin Health Partnership runs forums bringing together commissioners from across health and social care in Essex to discuss specific topics such as falls and assistive technology, and integration in acute hospitals.[90] Independent organisations can crucially

> ❝ Relationships and trust [are] probably the most important thing[s]. ❞
>
> Head of commissioning in local government[92]

act as intermediaries between central government and local areas, collating and feeding back real stories about implementation on the ground, as well as hard data, to inform decisions about what needs to change at a national level. For example, the former London Challenge team recruited respected former head teachers who had high levels of credibility with schools. They acted as advisers for underperforming schools, working between the Department for Education and the frontline to share views on what needed to change to deliver improvements.[91]

Finally, **peer-to-peer models are an effective way to share experiences and often allow for a greater degree of challenge and thus improvement**. As the Institute for Government recently argued, peer-to-peer interventions 'demand collaboration and dialogue between peers as equals rather than a lecture from one to another' and provide a more effective basis for knowledge exchange and learning.[93] This is because those with closer links to what is happening on the ground will inevitably have a better sense of what would be most useful and how ideas, experiences and knowledge will be taken forward and built on.

For example, in Devon, a group of 80 residential care providers have come together to develop the 'Devon Care Kite Mark', which also uses a peer review model to drive up standards. The group have developed guidance on various topics, including safeguarding and how to embed evidence into care, allowing members to spread expertise and pool resources.[94] Likewise, the London Borough of Islington has set up an Employability Practitioner's Network, which brings together a range of organisations supporting residents into sustainable employment – including the council, CCGs, private providers, recruitment consultancies and specialist charities. The members are currently developing a quality assessment framework tool to help organisations identify areas of strength as well as challenges so that effective practices in addressing a particular problem can be shared with other members. Crucially, we heard that this exercise is not about scrutinising members – "something to beat them with a stick with" – but voluntary, self-assessment to drive up standards across the area.[95]

As such, peer-led models can create a sense of collective responsibility within a profession, network or partnership where people feel accountable for the performance of others and, more broadly, the reputation of the sector as a whole.

4. What needs to change to make this happen?

This paper highlights that learning around integrating public services tends to occur informally through partnerships and people's own networks, rather than through formal programmes and organisations. It shows that, in meeting the challenges of reforming and integrating public services:

- people need more real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks

- people need opportunities to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation

- the best way to do this is through face-to-face conversations that allow people to break out of organisational and professional silos

- sector- and peer-led approaches help build the necessary trust and credibility to make learning relevant to local priorities.

However obvious these four insights may sound, this is not yet a reality on the ground and there is still a gap between what exists and what people need. Conferences, presentations and online case studies continue to be about showcasing success after the fact, glossing over the inevitable challenges that people faced along the way. Meanwhile, learning networks and meetings can often end up being 'talking shops' that add little value to the major challenges that people are trying to tackle in their day jobs. So, what has to change to make this a reality?

This paper ends with recommendations for:

- Whitehall departments, regulators and national arm's-length bodies

- local leaders across public services (in local authorities, CCGs, the police, Jobcentre Plus and providers)

- local representative organisations and professional bodies.

Recommendations for Whitehall departments, regulators and national arm's-length bodies

As argued in Section 3, who leads learning initiatives has a major influence on how people engage and their ultimate effectiveness in encouraging meaningful learning in local areas. Past experience shows that Whitehall departments, regulators and other national bodies cannot both regulate and support those delivering local public services. National programmes, no matter how well intentioned, can often be seen as 'performance management' in disguise, preventing honest and purposeful conversations from taking place.

Whitehall departments, regulators and national arm's-length bodies such as NHS England should:

- **encourage sector- and peer-led models for learning from local public service integration.** Where Whitehall departments and national organisations already fund programmes, they need to spend their money wisely on initiatives that focus on real-time learning from progress, challenges and setbacks and provide opportunities for people to 'dig deeper' into the messy reality of implementation.

- **maintain strong links with what is happening on the ground, actively listening to local areas about what is working (and not working).** Whitehall departments should then use these insights to make changes to national policy, regulatory, legislative and funding frameworks that currently hinder local public service integration. The recent push for devolution and place-based reform provides an opportunity to reset the relationship between Whitehall and local government – one where Whitehall listens more to the lessons that are emerging from different approaches to local public service integration, including the freedoms local areas need from statutory and regulatory duties to deliver better outcomes on the ground.

- **develop strong and consistent feedback loops between national policymakers and those on the frontline by drawing on credible intermediaries in the sector.** In the case of local public service integration, Whitehall departments and national bodies should listen to credible and respected organisations in the sector that can collate, analyse and share learning in anonymised and aggregate form. Many types of organisations could take on this role:

    - local representative organisations (for example, the LGA, Solace and the County Councils Network)

    - new institutions in devolved areas (for example, metro mayors and combined authorities)

    - professional bodies (for example, in medicine, social work and housing)

    - independent organisations (for example, academic institutions or think tanks with particular expertise).

Recommendations for local leaders across public services (including in local authorities, CCGs, the police, Jobcentre Plus and providers)

Local integration of public services requires new skills and ways of working at all levels of an organisation. Peer-to-peer learning is crucial to making progress on tricky and challenging agendas. However, as we highlighted in Section 1, there are currently few opportunities for staff at all levels – right through from front-line practitioners to chief executives – to break out of professional silos and share experiences with peers in other organisations. Where this does occur, it tends to happen informally and is overly dependent on personal networks.

Local leaders of public services should:

- **create open, outward-looking organisational cultures where staff at all levels are encouraged to share concerns and learn on the go with their peers** – especially those they are working with to integrate local services. This is not a 'nice to have' that can be dropped when staff resources are scarce; it is critical to integrating local public services. Bringing those who have to work together to learn together can significantly help to build the relationships and understanding needed to make integration work.

- **encourage staff to take part in cross-sector secondments, mentoring schemes or events that encourage cross-fertilisation between local organisations** – for example, between local authorities, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), general practitioners (GPs), employment services, care homes, the police and other local services in an area.

- **incentivise cross-sector learning by setting an expectation that working across different local organisations and maintaining a diverse professional network is essential to career progression.**

The creation of new institutions – such as combined authorities – provides an opportunity to act on these recommendations as local leaders proactively make the most of their freedoms to deliver better outcomes.

Recommendations for local representative organisations and professional bodies

As highlighted in Section 3, local representative organisations and professional bodies play a key role in supporting public service professionals to develop new skills and ways of working. Providing support to a specific sector or a specific profession is critical to maintaining standards and delivering change within services. However, as we move to new models of integrated public service delivery, we recommend that:

Local representative organisations and professional bodies should:

- **ensure that face-to-face, peer-to-peer learning across sectors is a key part of what it means to be a 'professional'.** This could be supported by making ongoing professional accreditation and career progression dependent on experience of working across professional boundaries (for example, through cross-sector secondments).

- **co-convene events, bringing professionals from different sectors together to share experiences and learn from one another.** For example, in the case of employment and health integration, this could involve bringing together nurses, social workers, GPs, employment providers and Jobcentre Plus staff.

- **trial a peer challenge model for place-based integration.** The emphasis should be on creating environments where people feel comfortable in honestly reflecting on challenges, difficulties and pitfalls, rather than only showcasing success, and then sharing this more widely across local and central government.

We are keen to work with local leaders across public services, representative organisations, professional bodies, central government and national arm's-length bodies to discuss how to take forward.

Annex 1: List of organisations and programmes that support people in local areas to share experiences and learn from one another

The table contains 115 examples of existing and part initiatives, based in the UK and internationally, in alphabetical order.

Organisations/programmes	
Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs)	College of Policing (CoP)
Alliance for Useful Evidence (A4UE)	Commissioning Academy
Anglia Ruskin Health Partnership (ARHP)	Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)
Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE)	Community Budgets Challenge and Learning Network
Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO)	Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)	Core Cities Network
	County Councils Network (CCN)
Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)	Creative Councils
Association of North East Councils (ANEC)	Devon Care Kite Mark
Audit Commission	Diabetes UK Shared Practice Team
Beacon Councils	District Councils Network (DCN)
Beacon Schools	Early Intervention Foundation (EIF)
Better Care Exchange (BCE)	EdLabs
Better Government for Older People (BGOP) Network	Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)
BIG Assist Beacons for Change	Employment Related Services Association (ERSA)
Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development (BHYD)	Engaging Scottish Local Authorities Programme (ESLA)
British Columbia Centre for Employment Excellence	Essex Leadership Collaborative
Business Services Association (BSA)	Evidence Bank
Center for Management Strategies	Evidence Exchange
Centre for Ageing Better	Fuse: The Centre for Translational Research in Public Health
Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing (CEIS)	
Children's Improvement Board (CIB)	Global Government Forum (GGF)
Children's Social Care Innovation Programme (CSCIP)	Greater Manchester Public Health Network (GMPHN)

Organisations/programmes

Guardian Public Leaders Network	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)
iMPOWER	National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
Improvement and Development Agency (IdEA)	National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)
Improvement Service	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
Information Governance Alliance (IGA)	
Innovation Unit	Nesta's 100-day challenge
Innovations in American Government	New Economy
Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)	NHS Beacon Sites Programme
Institute for Local Governance (ILG)	NHS Improvement
Integrated Care Pioneers	NHS Improving Quality (NHS IQ)
Islington Employability Practitioners Network	NHS Networks
Key Cities Group	NHS Sustainable Improvement (SI) Team
Knowledge Hub	NHS Vanguards
La 27e Région	Open Government Partnership Peer Learning Model
Learning Network on Integrated Housing, Care and Health	Organisation for Economic Co-operation's Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)
Living Well Knowledge Bucket	Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET)
Local Area Research & Intelligence Association (LARIA)	Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN)
Local Authorities Research Council Initiative (LARCI)	Public Policy Institute for Wales (PPIW)
Local Authority Housing Hubs	Public Sector Benchmarking Service (PSBS)
Local Commissioning Academy	Public Service Transformation Academy (PSTA)
Local Government Association (LGA) (including peer challenges)	Public Services Transformation Network (PSTN)
Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)	Realising Ambition
Local Government Knowledge Navigator (LGKN)	Research in Practice (RiP)
Local Partnerships	Resolve ASB
London ADASS	Rockefeller Foundation's Social Innovation Labs (SILs)
London Health and Care Collaborative	Royal College of Anaesthetists
London Leadership Strategy (LLS)	Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)
London Public Health Knowledge and Intelligence Network	Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
	Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC)	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace)

Organisations/programmes

Society of Evidence-Based Policing (SEBP)	Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC)
Society of London Treasurers (SLT)	Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC)
The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)	Welsh Audit Office (WAO) Good Practice Exchange Group
The Edge	What Works Centre for Crime Reduction
The King's Fund	What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth
Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) Partnership	What Works Centre for Wellbeing

Annex 2: Case studies of eight programmes that support learning in local areas

The table contains summary details of eight programmes designed to support learning in local areas. The full case studies are available at www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/local-service-delivery

Programme	Organisation	Date	Methods	Reach	Evidence of impact?
National Value for Money Studies	Audit Commission	1983-2014	Reports, national and regional events and improvement tools for use by local public bodies	11,000 local bodies – including local government, policy and health bodies, and fire and rescue services – which spent more than £180 billion of public money each year	Independent review based on self-reported survey responses
Good Practice Scheme	Commonwealth Local Government Forum	1998-2011	A partnership scheme that matched local authorities across the Commonwealth and organised exchange visits, work shadowing and the piloting of new initiatives	A total of 34 projects, each involving two or three local authorities The dissemination phase reached at least 500 local government stakeholders that participated in country-based workshops	Department for International Development private evaluations Review by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Some local authorities have also published their own descriptions of taking part
Beacon Councils Scheme	Office of the Deputy Prime Minster; Department for Communities and Local Government	1999-2010	Events, peer support and resource materials (online and in hard copy)	By the end of the seventh round of awards, 182 local authorities in England had been awarded Beacon status	Various independent evaluations conducted by Warwick Business School

Programme	Organisation	Date	Methods	Reach	Evidence of impact?
Knowledge Hub	Knowledge Hub	2010-present	Online resources and forums	122,000 members across 1,900 communities as of April 2016	Set of online case studies 2013 LGA evaluation
Corporate Peer Challenges	Local Government Association	2011-present	Peer review	More than 400 peer challenges have been delivered since 2011, involving over two-thirds of the sector	2013 independent evaluation conducted by Cardiff Business School
Local Government Knowledge Navigator	Various	2013-April 2016	Evidence reviews, events and an online searchable register	The Knowledge Navigator website had over 1,290 visitors in the first four months of being operational (having been launched in December 2015)	Final report published by the Knowledge Navigators
Guidebook	Early Intervention Foundation	2013-present	Online database of programmes	71,147 unique visitors to the Early Intervention Foundation website between July 2014 and June 2015, along with 2,940 newsletter recipients 489 people have taken part in the Early Intervention Foundation's events across the country	Independent evaluation by the University of Warwick is under way An interim report was published in 2015
What Works Cities	Bloomberg Philanthropies (United States)	2015-present	Peer and technical support, visits and events	Currently working with 27 cities in 18 states across America, covering nearly 11 million people	There have been no evaluations yet

Notes

To protect confidentiality, some interviewees are identified by an interview number (for example, LD interview 1) or by a numbered location (for example, Place 1, Place 2).

1 Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Attempts to Join Up Public Services: time line,* Institute for Government, London, 2015, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/attempts-join-public-services-timeline

2 Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs,* Institute for Government, London, 2015, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/joining-up-local-services

3 A number of examples can be found in *Ibid*.

4 Institute for Government, *The Landscape of Public Service Delivery at a Local Level,* Institute for Government, London, 2015, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/Messy%20Landscape%2013%20-%20interactive.pdf

5 HM Treasury, *Spending Review and Autumn Statement*, The Stationery Office, London, 2015.

6 NHS England, *Delivering the Forward View: NHS planning guidance 2016/17 – 2020/21*, NHS England, London, 2015, retrieved 9 June 2016, www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/planning-guid-16-17-20-21.pdf; NHS England, *New Care Models: Vanguards – developing a blueprint for the future NHS and care services*, NHS England, London, 2016, retrieved 9 June 2016, www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/new_care_models.pdf

7 Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs,* Institute for Government, London, 2015, p. 9, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/joining-up-local-services

8 *Ibid*.

9 Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Attempts to Join Up Public Services: timeline,* Institute for Government, London, 2015, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/attempts-join-public-services-timeline

10 Mulgan, G., *Collaboration and Collective Impact: How can funders, NGOs and governments achieve more together?*, Nesta, London, 2016, p. 6, retrieved 9 June 2016, www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/collaboration_and_collective_impact_-_geoff_mulgan.pdf

11 Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs*, Institute for Government, London, 2015, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/joining-up-local-services

12 *Ibid*. p. 12

13 Wajzer, C., Ilott, C., Lord, W. and Norris, E., *Failing Well: Insights on dealing with failure and turnaround from four critical areas of public service delivery*, Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/failing-well

14 *Ibid*.

15 This definition is based on the Institute for Government's analysis of a range of publications on the diffusion of innovations, evidence uptake in policymaking and organisational improvement.

16 Hartley, J. and Rashman, L., *Knowledge Transfer: Sharing learning in public service organisations*, Institute of Governance and Public Management, Warwick Business School, Warwick, 2008, p. 8, retrieved 9 June 2016, http://urbanpollinators.co.uk/wp-content/plugins/downloads-manager/upload/knowledge%20transfer.pdf

17 Heifetz, R.A. and Laurie, D.L., 'The work of leadership', *Harvard Business Review*, 1997, pp. 124-34.

18 Key publications include: Albury, D., *Myths and Mechanisms: A brief note on findings from research on scaling and diffusion*, Innovation Unit, London, 2015, retrieved 9 June 2016, www.innovationunit.org/sites/default/files/MYTHS%20AND%20MECHANISMS%20(1).pdf; Barker, R., Stokes, K. and Pigott, R., *Which Doctors Take Up Promising Ideas: New insights from open data*, Nesta, London, 2014, retrieved 9 June 2016, www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/which_doctors_take_up_promising.pdf; Hartley, J., Rashman, L. and Withers, E., 'Organizational learning and knowledge in public service organisations: a systematic review of the literature', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2009, pp. 463-94; Rogers, E., *Diffusion of Innovations*, Free Press, New York, 2003; Shepherd, J., *How to Achieve More Effective Services: The evidence ecosystem*, What Works Network and Cardiff University, Cardiff, 2014, retrieved 9 June 2016, http://orca.cf.ac.uk/69077/1/2014_JPS_What_Works.pdf; Shiell-Davis, K., *Scaling-Up Innovations: Evidence review*, What Works Scotland, Glasgow and Edinburgh, 2015, retrieved 9 June 2016, whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/WWS-EB-evidence-review-Scaling-Up-Innovations-June-2015.pdf

19 As part of our research we conducted a rapid review of all of the organisations and programmes established to support improvement and learning in public services, segmented by sector, geographical location, method and focus. Annex 1 contains a list of all of the organisations and programmes we found – although this is by no means a comprehensive list of every single programme or initiative that has been established (or is in the process of being established).

20 Wilson, S. and Lilly, A., *Case study*: Beacon Councils Scheme, Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/beacon-councils-scheme.pdf

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24 Wilson, S. and Lilly, A., *Case study: Local Government Knowledge Navigator,* Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/local-government-knowledge-navigator.pdf

25   Wilson, S. and Lilly, A., *Case study: Bloomberg Philanthropies – What Works Cities,* Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/bloomberg-philanthropies-what-works-cities.pdf

26   Wilson, S. and Lilly, A., *Case study: Early Intervention Foundation – Guidebook,* Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/early-intervention-foundation-guidebook.pdf

27   Wilson, S. and Lilly, A., *Case study: Local Government Association – Corporate Peer Challenges,* Institute for Government, London, 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/local-government-association-corporate-peer-challenges.pdf

28   The What Works Network comprises of seven What Works Centres: Centre for Ageing Better, College of Policing What Works Centre for Crime Reduction, Early Intervention Foundation (see case study), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), Sutton Trust/ Educational Endowment Fund, What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth and What Works Centre for Wellbeing. There are also two affiliate members: Public Policy Institute for Wales and What Works Scotland. Cabinet Office, Government Guidance: What Works Network, Cabinet Office, London, 2015, retrieved 14 June 2016, www.gov.uk/guidance/what-works-network

29   http://springconsortium.com

30   Place 5.

31   Local Delivery (LD) Interview 55.

32   The King's Fund, 'Learning network on integrated care for health and wellbeing boards', The Kings Fund, http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/leadership/leadership-development-senior-leaders/learning-network-integrated-care-health-wellbeing-boards

33   LD Interview 73.

34   Place 2.

35   LD Interview 34.

36   Place 4.

37   Davison, N., 'What will English devolution mean for joining up local public services?', blog, Institute for Government, London, 19 May 2016, retrieved 21 June 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/blog/13720/what-will-english-devolution-mean-for-joining-up-local-public-services/

38   LD Interview 70.

39   LD Interview 12.

40   LD Interview 64.

41   LD Interview 78.

42   LD Interview 67.

43   Breckon, J. and Dodson, J. *Using Evidence: What works?* Alliance for Useful Evidence, London, 2016.

44   Education Endowment Foundation *The Literary Octopus: Communicating and Engaging Research*, updated 10th June 2016, retrieved 28th June 2016, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evaluation/projects/the-literacy-octopus-communicating-and-engaging-with-research/

45   LD Interview 74.

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49   LD Interview 74.

50   LD Interview 64.

51   Institute for Government roundtable to launch the briefing paper *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs* with 20 representatives from local and central government as well as the wider policy community. October 2015.

52   Place 4.

53   Place 7.

54   Place 4.

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56   Wilson, S., Davison, N., Clarke, M. and Casebourne, J., *Joining Up Public Services around Local, Citizen Needs*, Institute for Government, London, 2015, p. 21, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/joining-up-local-services

57   LD Interview 70.

58   LD Interview 37.

59   LD Interview 64.

60   Norris, E., Kidson, M., Bouchal, P. and Rutter, J., *Doing them Justice: Lessons from four cases of policy implementation*, Institute for Government, London, 2014, retrieved 21 June 2016, www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/doing-them-justice

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62   LD Interview 74.

63   LD Interview 81.

64   Education Endowment Foundation, *Teaching & Learning Toolkit*, Education Endowment Foundation, London, 2016, retrieved 7 June 2016, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit

65   LD Interview 68.

66   LD Interview 69.

67   LD Interview 21.

68   LD Interview 79.

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72 LD Interview 80.

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81 LD Interview 39; LD Interview 74.

82 LD Interview 33.

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