



Final Report

Following the publication of the *NHS Five Year Forward View (5YFV)* in 2014 a “Vanguard” programme was set up by NHS England to test different approaches to fulfilling the Triple Aim with its focus on population health, effective care, and per capita cost. The NHS invited individual organisations and partnerships, including those with the voluntary and community sector, to apply to become pilot sites for the new care models (NCMs) programme.

In the North East five Vanguards were selected:

- Newcastle Gateshead (Enhanced Health in Care Homes Vanguard)
- North East Urgent and Emergency Care Network (Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguard)
- Sunderland (Multi-speciality Community Providers Vanguard)
- Northumbria Foundation Group (Acute Care Collaboration Vanguard)
- Northumberland (Integrated Primary and Acute Care Systems Vanguard)

Collectively, the five North East Vanguards initiated an evaluation study, which is unique in its focus on region-wide issues, to compliment the separate individual evaluations being undertaken. Evaluation was undertaken by a consortium of three local Universities:

- Newcastle (Institute of Health and Society);
- Durham (Centre for Public Policy and Health): and
- Northumbria.

The study explored the regional implementation of the five North East Vanguards and aims to identify key aspects that can be shared across all Vanguard sites in the region and provides a mapping of the implementation arrangements, focusing on three themes:

- the organisational (team working, culture and relationships);
- the technological, and;
- the cost effectiveness context.

The full report can be accessed at:

<http://www.necsu.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/NEVE-Final-Report-September-2017.pdf>

A summation of the report findings can be accessed at:

<http://www.necsu.nhs.uk/necs-news/north-east-vanguards-programme-report-published-3280>

SUMMATION OF FINDINGS

A number of important lessons have emerged, and are still emerging, from the implementation of the five North East Vanguards. While the context for each Vanguard is separate and distinct, there also exists a set of common issues and themes which have a regional dimension. It should be noted that, in spite of identifying some regional strengths and opportunities, in many respects the five sites are not comparable and there is a potential danger of over-simplifying critical features, such as Multi-Disciplinary Teams, in order to draw comparisons across them.

Overall, all five sites acknowledged that the Vanguards programme provides a significant opportunity for the North East to improve the way services are organised and provided to meet the rapidly changing needs of its population. From a regional perspective, it was recognised among those interviewed that the Vanguards provided a platform for regional collaboration and the sharing of good practice with the potential that this offers to strengthen the scale and pace of change, and to do so in a more cost-effective fashion. Moreover, it was acknowledged that the

resources provided though each Vanguard helped to raise the awareness of the innovative local initiatives taking place across the North East.

What did unite all five Vanguards was their perception of the wider context within which they operated. They were critical of the unrealistic pressure placed upon them to deliver outcomes without the appropriate substantive change being in place or sufficiently embedded and without being able to show adequate evidence to support change. Of particular concern among all Vanguards was the sheer scale and pace of change at the same time as the NHS was being tasked with making significant, if unrealistic, efficiency savings.

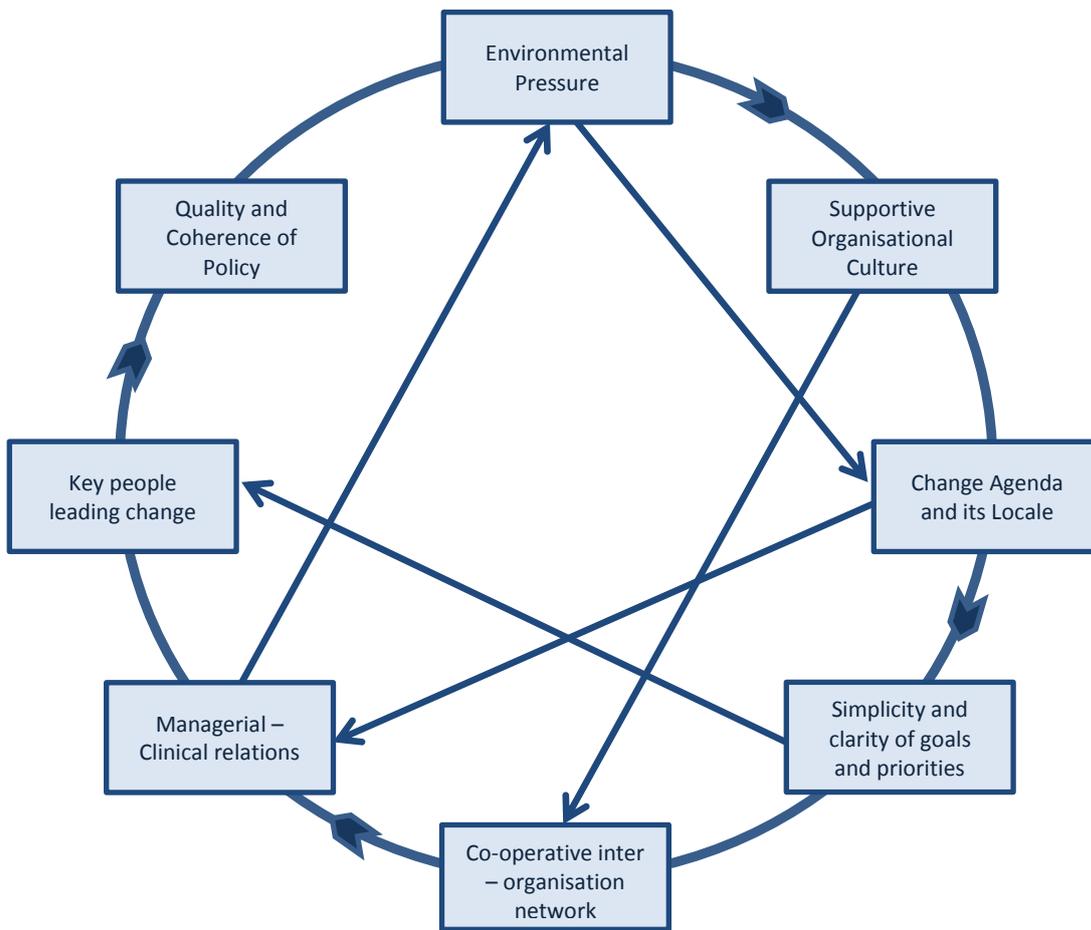
This initial exploratory evaluation over a short period of time (8 months) provides a mapping of the implementation arrangements in five local Vanguards initiatives in the North East. The findings have demonstrated the need for a fuller and deeper understanding of developments by looking in more depth at the development of Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships that are now occupying centre stage in NHS transformation efforts. In addition, there is a need to explore the wider national policy context as well as to understand the perceptions of front line staff and service users in order to establish the degree of alignment.

With its focus on the regional dimension, there are a number of issues that are common across the Vanguards which fall into both barriers to, and enablers of, change. These issues are not unique to the North East Vanguards and are evident in respect of all major transformational change as is known from the earlier North East Transformation Systems evaluation and from work being conducted for WHO Europe.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the five North East Vanguards has been conducted within a short time period, in which there has been considerable policy churn, notably developments surrounding STPs and continuing financial pressure on the NHS. Inevitably, this has raised issues and concerns about the sustainability of the positive developments underway across the Vanguards which have been identified and to which we have drawn attention in this report. Ensuring that the changes have a chance of becoming embedded over time requires a continuing commitment to invest in support and development as well as creating and protecting the space to enable change to occur and prosper. With its focus on the regional dimension, there are a number of issues that are common across the Vanguards which fall into both barriers to, and enablers of, change. Indeed, these issues are not unique to the North East Vanguards and are evident in respect of all major transformational change as is known from the earlier North East Transformation Systems evaluation, referred to at the start of the report, and from work being conducted for WHO Europe.

Using the receptive contexts for change framework (below) has enabled us to highlight those factors which are evident in major change initiatives and which can determine their ultimate success or failure. If any one factor gives cause for concern, then it is likely there will be negative implications for the change initiative as a whole.



Receptive Contexts for Change Framework

Pettigrew, A., Ferlie, E., McKee, L., (1992), *Shaping Strategic Change*. London: Sage

At this stage, it is far too early to conclude with any confidence that a successful outcome for the Vanguards programme will be forthcoming. Early indications show some signs of promise, especially where there was evidence of the ground having been prepared and changes already being put in place prior to the official launch of the Vanguards initiative. However, the overall context in which the complex and ambitious changes are being implemented remains both fragile and fluid. Managing such a context will be critical if the changes are going to survive and yield the desired impact on health and wellbeing for the population in the North East. In this regard, both leadership and relationship-building skills will be at a premium.

To discuss any of the details of the Final Report, please contact the Research and Evidence team: NECSU.RETeam@nhs.net