# London event highlights challenges and opportunities for AI-driven healthcare transformation



This month in London, over 200 healthtech founders, investors, clinicians, and policymakers gathered to address a pivotal challenge: transforming healthcare through the strategic application of artificial intelligence (AI) and data. The event, hosted by The Future Health and sponsored by leading organisations including NTT DATA, Better, MBI Health, Lifelight, and Insource, revolved around two pressing themes—scaling preventive AI and unlocking better clinical decisions via improved data quality and governance.

One of the core discussions confronted the unmet promise of preventive AI in healthcare. While the NHS 10-Year Health Plan champions a transition from reactive treatment to proactive, preventive care, significant barriers remain entrenched in the system. Panellists highlighted systemic, cultural, and financial obstacles impeding widespread adoption. For instance, a hypertension monitoring solution demonstrated up to 80% adherence and markedly lowered risks of stroke and heart attack, yet adoption faltered as clinicians perceived additional workload without immediate benefit. Similarly, a technology-enabled care pilot generated cost savings and better health outcomes but failed to advance due to unresolved payment responsibilities between the NHS and local authorities. These examples underscore the fragmented nature of the NHS, which remains mired in siloed budgets and a historically doctor-centric, paternalistic model. Without structural changes such as aligned incentives and ring-fenced investment, the rhetoric advocating prevention risks remaining unfulfilled.

Concerns about evidence, trust, and equity further complicate the road to effective AI integration. Though AI-driven innovations—such as smartphone tools for blood pressure measurement—garner enthusiasm from technologists, broader clinical uptake remains stalled in many cases due to the demand for rigorous peer-reviewed studies, regulatory approvals, and real-world validation. The often opaque "black box" nature of AI algorithms exacerbates clinician scepticism. A suggestion emerged to reframe AI more transparently as “statistical algorithms,” a tactic that may alleviate anxieties and foster confidence. Clinician liability also poses challenges; despite automation benefits, health professionals retain ultimate responsibility for patient outcomes. Regulators are actively addressing these ethical dimensions, emphasising the importance of keeping humans “in the loop” to ensure safe and trustworthy AI deployment.

Equity in healthcare delivery was a recurrent theme. While AI holds the promise of truly personalised medicine—from adaptive obesity treatments to customised drug dosages—there is a risk that underserved populations will be excluded if datasets lack diversity and quality. The NHS procurement culture, criticised for sometimes prioritising novel technologies over practical, equity-focused solutions, could inadvertently widen health disparities. This issue resonates beyond the NHS, reflecting a global concern in AI implementation within healthcare systems.

When asked about investment priorities, panellists consistently rejected funding “shiny new tools” in favour of strengthening clinician education, digital literacy, and workforce support, recognising that technology can only be as effective as the professionals who use it.

A related fireside discussion honed in on the NHS’s digital ambitions and the fundamental role of trusted data. Without high-quality, reliable data, even the most advanced AI systems cannot deliver meaningful improvements. True interoperability extends beyond enabling apps to communicate directly; it requires building a unified data layer that supports safe, consistent, and scalable information exchange across all health and care settings. Tom Winstanley, CTO at NTT DATA UK&I, outlined four key steps toward this goal: identifying data stewards across hospitals beyond CIO teams, educating operational staff to ensure consistent data capture, embedding governance that clearly defines “who can do what, when, and why,” and harnessing AI itself for tasks such as data cleansing, maintenance, and bias detection. This approach recognises that the main barriers are less technological than cultural and procedural, necessitating policy and funding strategies that treat digitisation—and data—as strategic clinical assets.

These London sessions culminated in a shared insight: AI and data are not silver bullets. Their success depends on systemic alignment—integrating incentives, evidence, trust, equity, and governance firmly into healthcare frameworks. Embedding preventive care and trusted data at the heart of health service delivery will be decisive for future progress. The event underscored the value of fostering ongoing collaboration among clinicians, technologists, investors, and policymakers to build a collective path forward.

This dialogue fits within broader UK health policy, notably the NHS’s 10-Year Health Plan, which envisions a digitally advanced, patient-centred health system by 2035. The strategy prioritises the integration of AI, genomics, wearables, and robotics to personalise care and improve outcomes while underpinning economic growth. Initiatives include creating a Health Data Research Service, expanding genomic sequencing, and embedding AI across clinical pathways. The plan also calls for proactive digital innovation, exemplified by projects like AI-enabled stethoscopes deployed in London to detect heart disease early. Additionally, the UK government is advancing AI tools to enhance patient safety; a pioneering system is being developed to monitor NHS data in real-time, identifying patient safety concerns and enabling timely interventions by regulators like the Care Quality Commission.

Separately, practical implementation efforts are underway, with organisations such as EBO contributing NHS App functionalities that support multilingual patient access and automated appointment management—core steps towards moving from analogue to digital and fostering patient engagement. These developments align closely with the event’s calls for investment in workforce education and infrastructure to fully leverage AI’s potential.

While no single solution will transform healthcare, the breadth of initiatives and discussions illustrates a decisive shift towards harnessing AI and data responsibly, equitably, and collaboratively for the betterment of patient care.

### 📌 Reference Map:

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* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.htworld.co.uk/news/scaling-preventative-ai-using-better-data-for-better-decisions-sb25/), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future/fit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england-executive-summary?dm_i=2OYA%2C1KU84%2C96KSEB%2C6DNUN%2C1), [[4]](https://www.pslhub.org/learn/commissioning-service-provision-and-innovation-in-health-and-care/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future-dhsc-3-july-2025-r13334/), [[5]](https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/ten-year-health-plan-what-you-need-know), [[6]](https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future/sickness-to-prevention/), [[7]](https://healthcare.ebo.ai/2025/07/07/turning-the-ten-year-plan-into-a-reality/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.htworld.co.uk/news/scaling-preventative-ai-using-better-data-for-better-decisions-sb25/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/world-first-ai-system-to-warn-of-nhs-patient-safety-concerns> - The UK government is developing a pioneering AI system to scan NHS data in real-time, identifying safety issues and triggering early inspections. This initiative aims to enhance patient care by proactively addressing potential failures, aligning with the NHS's 10-Year Health Plan to digitise services and improve safety. The system will analyse healthcare data to detect emerging concerns, enabling swift action by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This approach seeks to prevent harm before it escalates, marking a significant advancement in patient safety through technology.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future/fit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england-executive-summary?dm_i=2OYA%2C1KU84%2C96KSEB%2C6DNUN%2C1> - The UK's 10-Year Health Plan outlines a vision to revolutionise healthcare by integrating technologies like AI, genomics, wearables, and robotics. The plan aims to personalise care, improve outcomes, and boost economic growth. Key initiatives include creating a Health Data Research Service, making the NHS the most AI-enabled health system globally, and expanding genomic sequencing for newborns and adults. These efforts are designed to transform the NHS into a digitally advanced, patient-centric service by 2035.
4. <https://www.pslhub.org/learn/commissioning-service-provision-and-innovation-in-health-and-care/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future-dhsc-3-july-2025-r13334/> - The UK's 10-Year Health Plan focuses on transforming healthcare through innovation, particularly in AI, genomics, wearables, and robotics. It aims to personalise care, improve outcomes, and boost economic growth. The plan includes creating a Health Data Research Service, making the NHS the most AI-enabled health system globally, and expanding genomic sequencing for newborns and adults. These initiatives are designed to revolutionise healthcare delivery and patient outcomes by 2035.
5. <https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/ten-year-health-plan-what-you-need-know> - The NHS Confederation provides an overview of the UK's 10-Year Health Plan, highlighting key initiatives such as integrating AI into clinical pathways, expanding genomic sequencing, and promoting the use of wearables and robotics. The plan aims to personalise care, improve outcomes, and boost economic growth. It outlines strategies for embedding AI across clinical and administrative pathways, developing a Health Data Research Service, and enhancing the NHS App to become a 24/7 AI-powered assistant for patients.
6. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future/sickness-to-prevention/> - The NHS in London is implementing the 10-Year Health Plan by shifting from a sickness-focused system to one prioritising prevention. This involves making healthy choices easier, reaching patients earlier, and maximising health improvement during patient interactions. The plan includes deploying AI-enabled stethoscopes for early detection of heart disease, demonstrating a commitment to proactive, preventive care through technological innovation.
7. <https://healthcare.ebo.ai/2025/07/07/turning-the-ten-year-plan-into-a-reality/> - EBO discusses the practical implementation of the UK's 10-Year Health Plan, focusing on transforming the NHS through digital empowerment and preventive care. The article highlights EBO's contributions, such as providing core NHS App-aligned functionalities, including multilingual patient access and automated appointment management. These efforts aim to shift the NHS from analogue systems to digital, enhancing patient engagement and staff efficiency, and moving from reactive treatment to proactive, preventive care.