INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE GDE PROGRAMME

The Global Digital Exemplar (GDE) programme – An ambitious and transformative initiative to…

advance digitally-enabled (service) transformation in selected exemplar English NHS provider organisations already characterised by relatively high levels of digital maturity and bring them up to an international level

create a national learning ecosystem to spread the knowledge acquired

launched in **2016** origins in the **Wachter Review**

3 ½ **year** programme

33 **acute providers**

mental health providers **15**

3 **ambulance services**

£302 million + internal match funding

central support

A learning programme

- The GDE programme learnt from earlier programmes and was designed to optimise local ownership and accountability
- An independent evaluation was commissioned – and undertaken by the University of Edinburgh, NHS Arden & GEM CSU and University College London – to explore processes and outcomes in real time so that feedback and recommendations could be continually incorporated. The evaluation scope included 36 of the 51 providers involved in the programme.

Findings

The GDE programme has stimulated digitally-enabled transformation and the sharing of knowledge

Provider organisations successfully implemented **ambitious programmes of digitally-enabled transformation**, in most cases major upgrades in core information structures

Critical inter-related success factors were identified included ownership, funding, governance, supplier engagement, vision and the growth of digital transformation expertise

The programme helped to establish **the foundations for a learning ecosystem** through partnerships, blueprints, learning networks and informal relationships

The programme was reinforced by and contributed to **developments in the wider environment** including shared care records and the response to COVID-19

Major transformation programmes inevitably face **complex challenges and tensions**. Ways in which these challenges could be managed are included in the final report.

Lessons to carry forward

1. Build long-term **organisational memory**
2. Address the **digital divide** by transferring experiences
3. Reduce the burden of programme management and reporting tool through engagement and **co-development**
4. Retain and develop **transformation expertise**
5. Institutional **design that balances** central vs regional deployment
6. A national function for **market management**
7. Maintain momentum through **senior leadership support**
8. Ensure that **digital become mainstream**, both operationally and strategically
9. Maximise the value of **formative evaluations** as a way to improve the development and implementation process**.**

View the full report here: https://www.ed.ac.uk/usher/digital-exemplars/final-report