

ICS Intelligence Function

KPMG point of view

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What is an Intelligent Function?

An Intelligence Function is a well-structured multidisciplinary team from across the ICS organisations working together to support informed decision making and a Population Health Management (PHM)-based approach to planning and delivering care. Its purpose is to ensure that ICS decisions are routinely informed by evidence that is tailored to the local context, including a detailed understanding of health inequalities between population groups.

By bringing together the combined strength and diverse expertise of the ICS organisations, including NHS Providers, Local Authority care services, public health teams and voluntary sector partners, the work of the Intelligence Function is based on a comprehensive understanding of the local population, essential for the first stage of the PHM cycle, but also the other stages that depend on this understanding.

What are the benefits of an Intelligence Function?

The primary benefit of an Intelligence Function is the provision of actionable insight to support leaders across an ICS in making better, data-driven, and evidence-based decisions. This enables leaders to have more insight about their populations to identify their needs and deliver targeted services and interventions, leading to more effective use of resources, as well as better outcomes and experience for patients.

Leaders also have the insight to focus on cohorts of the population experiencing greater health and care inequalities, allowing them to tackle these inequalities and support broader social and economic development. In other words, the key objectives of an ICS.

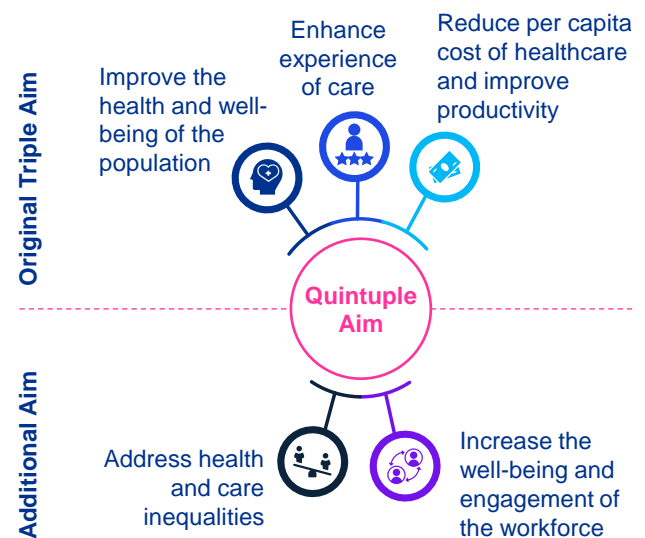
Additionally, an Intelligence Function would provide the appropriate data sharing to promote research and foster collaboration with academia and private sector.

Background

Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) were established as statutory bodies in July 2022. An ICB brings the NHS together across an Integrated Care System (ICS) to improve population health and establish shared strategic priorities within the NHS. The purpose of ICSs according to NHS England is to bring partner organisations together to:

- Improve outcomes in population health and healthcare
- Tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- Enhance productivity and value for money
- Help the NHS support broader social and economic development

ICSs can achieve this through population health management (PHM) and its quintuple aim, which is aligned almost perfectly, as shown in NHS England^(a)'s diagram below.



Note: (a) [PowerPoint Presentation \(imperialcollegehealthpartners.com\)](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/health-partners/)

PHM is achieved through a cycle of continuous improvement, where:

The health needs of a population are assessed	Groups with similar needs are identified (segmentation and stratification)	Appropriate interventions are designed and implemented	Outcomes are monitored and evaluated	Successful interventions are scaled and incentivised while unsuccessful ones are stopped
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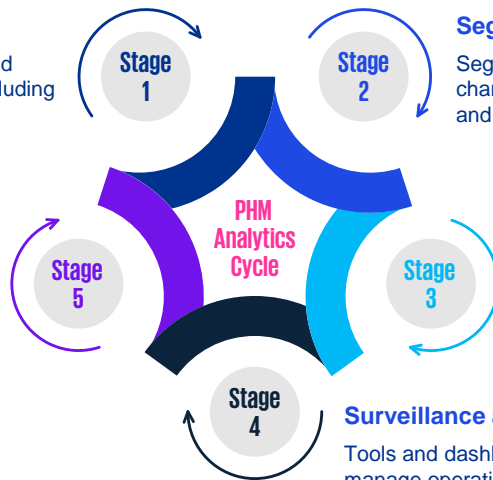
PHM analytics cycle

Understand your population

Understand and assess the needs and characteristics of your population, including health inequalities

Evaluate performance

Evaluate the effectiveness of your new services and interventions



Segment & stratify your population

Segment your population by need and characteristics, predict future risk and cost, and stratify by risk/cost

Plan for the future

Design new services and interventions for population segments, an outcomes framework to monitor performance, and determine the workforce to achieve your ambitions


Surveillance and care co-ordination

Tools and dashboards to monitor performance, manage operations and co-ordinate care


Data and analytics are intrinsic to every step in this process and are used to effectively shepherd resources. It is therefore critical that each ICS has an Intelligence Function to enable this.

What foundations are needed?


An Intelligence Function needs to have the following foundations to support the ICS in delivering PHM, alongside a co-developed and prioritised plan that builds on the positives and has demonstrable quick wins.

Systems – to lay the groundwork 

- Infrastructure to collect, store and curate data
- Governance and data management
- Self service functionality
- Tools and dashboards to monitor outcomes & performance

Data – to surface the key insights 

- Linked datasets that provide a single source of truth
- Segmented and risk stratified
- Automated processes to free up analysts to do more strategic work
- Trust in the data

Skills – to extract insights and take action 

- Statistics and advanced analytics
- Population Health Management core concepts including intervention planning and evaluation
- A multidisciplinary approach to problem solving and a shift in mindset moving away from restrictive task-based thinking
- Data literacy to enable clinicians to make decisions based on data
- User-centred design of PHM products and services

How can we help?

We can help with systems, data and skills. We have developed an Analytics Learning Programme that gives attendees a holistic view of analytics and introduces innovative approaches and real-world problem-solving skills. Learning is provided via live interactive classrooms and hands on technical labs making an immersive and applied experience. The programme is aligned to national competency frameworks, to improve the technical and non-technical skills of the analytics and intelligence workforce.

We also work alongside our clients to:

- Set up system-wide Intelligence Functions or analytical Centres of Excellence
- Assess their BI capabilities and the maturity of their PHM function
- Develop a data strategy and roadmap, and provide implementation support including fostering a data culture, and establishing best-practice data management
- Design and implement cloud-based data platforms and intelligence products in line with the latest technologies





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