



CASE STUDY



NHS Supply Chain

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This case study illustrates the power of a simple, efficient and transparent guided supplier innovation channel.

STATE OF FLUX



NHS Supply Chain is operated by DHL as an agent of the NHS Business Services Authority.

Since 2006, it has supported the National Health Service (NHS) and other healthcare organisations in England and Wales, by providing end to end supply chain solutions. The business aims to deliver over £1 billion of cash savings to the NHS by 2016, with over £600 million saved to date.

NHS Supply Chain manages the sourcing, delivery and supply of healthcare products for over 1,000 NHS trusts and healthcare organisations. It provides a single point of access to over 620,000 products, ranging from orthopaedic implants to gloves, bandages to sutures, and even diagnostic capital equipment such as MRI scanners.

How does the innovation scorecard work?

Innovation is key to driving savings and improving patient outcomes across the NHS. The innovation scorecard is an online tool that allows suppliers to submit truly innovative products outside of the tender process, for contract consideration by NHS Supply Chain.

Once a product is ready for market, suppliers are encouraged to advise NHS Supply Chain through the innovation scorecard. The product will be thoroughly assessed by our category experts and, where necessary, clinical experts will be consulted to ensure that it delivers benefits to either the patient or clinician.

If awarded, the product will be set up on an existing framework or with a pilot agreement, enabling NHS organisations to order it through the national catalogue. It will also be listed for three months on the new product showcase; a dedicated innovation section of the contract information area on the NHS Supply Chain website.

Since its launch in 2009, the scorecard has received 300 submissions, 28 of which have made it to contract, with more in the pipeline. One successful product has seen £270,000 worth of sales in just over a year, which is an increase of 10% for one SME.

Products brought to market so far through the innovation scorecard route, include:

- Tournistrip™
- Bailey Instrument's Nail Nipper™
- Econix home birth delivery packs
- SleepAngel™ pillow

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Bailey Instruments Ltd were one of the first suppliers to have their product brought to market through the innovation scorecard, Simon Charlesworth Business Development Director at Baileys says,

"NHS Supply Chain has taken a proactive and supportive approach in recognising innovation and adopting it into their product range. The whole process has been relatively swift, responsive and visible, and allows new product entry without undermining the tender process."

"NHS Supply Chain is a major route to market for us, accounting for around 52% of our sales for the innovation. We have had over £330,000 worth of UK sales between August 2012 and September 2013 for this product, solely through this route. This is an increase of over 22% from last year. We are looking forward to working with them in the future, and especially using the new tool and process again." Simon concludes, "NHS Supply Chain acts in a genuinely entrepreneurial way to achieve a balance between clinical design innovation and commercial returns, even for SMEs".

For further information on the innovation scorecard, please contact innovation@supplychain.nhs.uk, or to submit through the scorecard, visit <http://innovation.supplychain.nhs.uk/innovation/login/>

