

## Unmet Need Call: Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Monitoring

Health Network North (a partnership between the Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC) and the Innovation Super Network) are working with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, to launch a new unmet need challenge, connecting innovators and exploring collaborations that improve health outcomes.

The search is on to find a partner to help with the development of a device, allowing patients to self-test for their serum/blood Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) concentrations, within a home or community setting. We are looking for innovative technologies capable for use by prostate cancer patients, or their carers.

There are many potential benefits for patients and the NHS, including a reduced burden of hospital outpatient appointments and patient footfall into hospitals and GP surgeries, which has even greater significance due to the pandemic.

The project is supported by the Northern Cancer Alliance, as a result of its work on Prostate Cancer follow up. Applications are welcomed from companies of all sizes, individuals, NHS teams and charities interested in forming collaborations to develop the device to address this unmet need.

We are hosting a Launch Event for interested parties to find out more and ask any questions on **Thursday 17th February 2022 at 12.30pm – 1.30pm**. To book your place, please email: Christine Jordan on [christine@supernetwork.org.uk](mailto:christine@supernetwork.org.uk)

The deadline for the PSA call is **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022** and expressions of interest can be submitted here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PA78JG/>

Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/3gDhsYP>



# HEALTH NETWORK NORTH



## Background:

We are looking for the development of a device to enable patients to safely and accurately self-test their own PSA levels within a home or community setting. This will meet an important unmet clinical need, which will benefit both patients and the NHS.

## How will it address the challenges?

- A device to meet this need will align with the NHS Long Term Plan, setting out how the NHS will move towards a new service model giving patients more options, better support and properly joined-up care at the right time, and in optimal care settings.
- Over the next five years, the NHS Long Term Plan proposes that healthcare technologies, together with redesigned hospital support, will reduce up to a third of outpatient appointments, saving patients 30 million trips to hospital and the NHS over £1 billion each year.
- A wide-ranging and funded programme to upgrade technology and digitally enabled care across the NHS, will allow patients and carers to better manage their own health and reduce pressures on GP practices and hospital outpatient departments.
- Innovators are encouraged to submit ideas for a device which will enable patients to self-test their PSA levels within the home or a community setting, aligning with the LTP as currently patients are often required to attend six monthly Secondary Healthcare Oncology Services for routine monitoring. A majority are well and do not otherwise need to see a healthcare professional.
- PSA testing is clinically justified and required, but it is not always necessary to attend clinics for these tests. Unnecessary clinic visits or hospital stays could be avoided if patients could use services within their community, in a similar fashion to patients with diabetes self-testing their own blood glucose levels from finger-prick capillary blood samples; or potentially using the device within a community or primary care setting where it might be accessed by multiple patients as a hub for the PSA tests.
- The device will help to promote “patient self-care”, which is associated with significant positive implications for patients, and also promoted by NHS England, to improve outcomes, save money and help people stay well and manage their own conditions better.

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## **Call for Innovators to develop Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) self-testing device**

**A search has been launched for a partner to develop a device allowing patients to self-test for Prostate Specific Antigens (PSA), within a home or community setting.**

It is the latest unmet need call from Health Network North (a partnership between the AHSN NENC and Innovation Super Network) with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, and supported by the Northern Cancer Alliance, as a result of its work on prostate cancer follow up. The aim is to connect innovators from healthcare with innovation pathway partners, to address challenges identified by NHS staff and improve health outcomes.

PSA testing measures the amount of prostate specific antigen in the blood and patients who have been diagnosed with prostate cancer need to closely monitor their levels.

The aim is to make PSA testing as accessible as possible within a home or community setting, enabling patients or their carers to test serum/blood PSA concentrations.

Currently, patients are often required to attend six monthly Secondary Healthcare Oncology Services for routine monitoring. A majority are well and do not otherwise need to see a healthcare professional, but with self-testing (similar to finger-prick self-tests for people with diabetes to check blood glucose levels), unnecessary clinic visits or hospital stays could be avoided.

The challenge would help to solve an unmet need within the NHS in an area which would have a great benefit to the patient population and the NHS. There is a clear market opportunity for such a device within the NHS. Among the benefits is the potential to reduce the burden of hospital outpatient appointments and patient footfall into hospitals and GP surgeries, accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**A Launch Event will be hosted by lead clinician Dr Darren Leaning, on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022. If you would like to attend, or have any questions, please contact Christine Jordan on [christine@supernetwork.org.uk](mailto:christine@supernetwork.org.uk)**

**The deadline for applications is Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022.** Applications will be reviewed and those shortlisted will be invited to present to a panel of industry experts.

If you're interested in submitting an application, you can express interest at:  
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PA78JG/>