



About Q

The Health Foundation

We are an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK. Our aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality health care that can be equitably accessed. We learn what works to make people's lives healthier and improve the health care system. From giving grants to those working at the front line to carrying out research and policy analysis, we shine a light on how to make successful change happen.

You can find out more about the Health Foundation at <https://www.health.org.uk/>

The Q Initiative

Q is an ambitious initiative connecting thousands of people with expertise in improvement across the UK, shortly to expand across Ireland. It is being led by the Health Foundation and supported and co-funded by the lead organisations responsible for supporting improvement in the health sector in each part of the UK and Ireland.

Q makes it easier for people from a wide range of backgrounds to learn, share and collaborate, so that the existing skills and the £billions spent on innovation and improvement in the health sector stretch further. Ultimately, our mission is to support continuous and sustainable improvement in health and care.

Following a design and set up phase in 2015, we have established a strong brand, communications infrastructure and set of activities, a novel approach to grant funding and a way of making progress on complex problems.

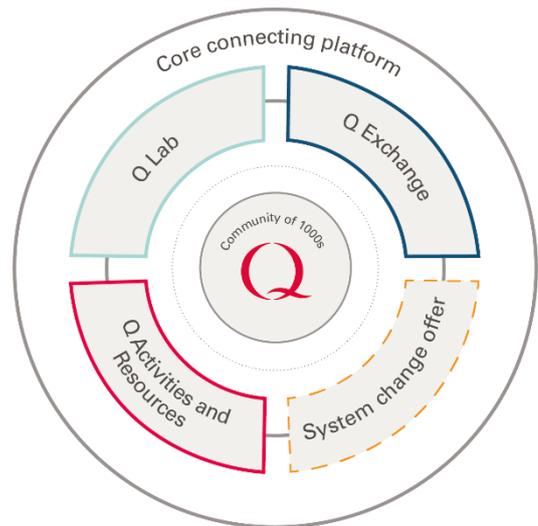


A community of thousands

At the centre of Q is a community of thousands of people, who demonstrate expertise in structured approaches to improvement. In joining Q, they commit to sharing and collaborating with other Q members, as well as within their own organisations and networks.

Core connecting platform

Q's core connecting "platform" - consisting of Q's website, group collaboration spaces, online directory and communications channels - is the foundation for everything Q does. It provides members, partners and others with easier, faster ways to reach improvement practitioners, as well as making the rich and varied improvement work underway across the UK more visible. Q has partnerships with other organisations which are also a critical part of this platform.



Activities and resources

Q provides a range of flexible development, learning and networking opportunities. Our events programme attracts hundreds of members, providing safe and creative spaces to share current learning in improvement. Downloadable tools on creative problem solving and design methods are available for members, as well as access to a number of online learning resources. Q specialises in flexible, interactive opportunities that make the most of sharing between peers.

Q Exchange

Q Exchange is a participatory funding programme that draws on the collective intelligence of the Q community to identify projects that offer the greatest potential to benefit patients and the work that others are doing in the community. Awards of around £30k are available for projects that have been refined, developed and strengthened with the knowledge and expertise of the Q community. Q Exchange encourages alignment with what's already known, emphasising collaboration as much as competition. Participants learn and support each other through a transparent process where the community has a say on which projects receive funding.

Future developments

In summer 2019 we secured in principle commitment to funding and support from the Health Foundation and our partners for a further 10 years. Our overall indicative budget to 2030 is over £50m. This will enable Q to continue to deliver at scale, while also developing and expanding into new areas, exploring new partnerships and sources of income.

We will be growing the community and making the most of the connections between the different elements of what Q offers. In line with learning from a major independent evaluation impact across the system.

We will also be introducing a new paid-for 'system change' membership offer, bringing together organisations involved in leading change across whole countries and systems to learn from each other. You can read more about Q at <https://q.health.org.uk>

Q Labs network

Q Lab works with Q members and others to make progress on specific complex challenges that organisations are grappling with across the health and care sector.

Complex problems are the hardest to address because they cut across many parts of the health and care system, as well as wider societal issues – meaning they can't be tackled in isolation. Too often, improvement efforts do not take account of the wider system in which they operate, and teams/ organisations are not set up to tackle complex challenges together – which limits their ability to lead to sustainable quality improvement. To be successful, improvement efforts must engage people at multiple levels of the system – connecting to system priorities at a national, regional and local level, with buy-in from frontline teams and people with lived experience.

The Lab uses creative and collaborative methods to enable individuals and organisations to develop skills to lead sustainable improvements in health and care. It works with frontline teams to undertake fast-paced research and discovery, valuing diversity of experience and expertise to draw out practical wisdom from patients and practitioners. It supports teams to surface and prototype improvement ideas, giving people space to experiment, learn and reflect in a supported environment.



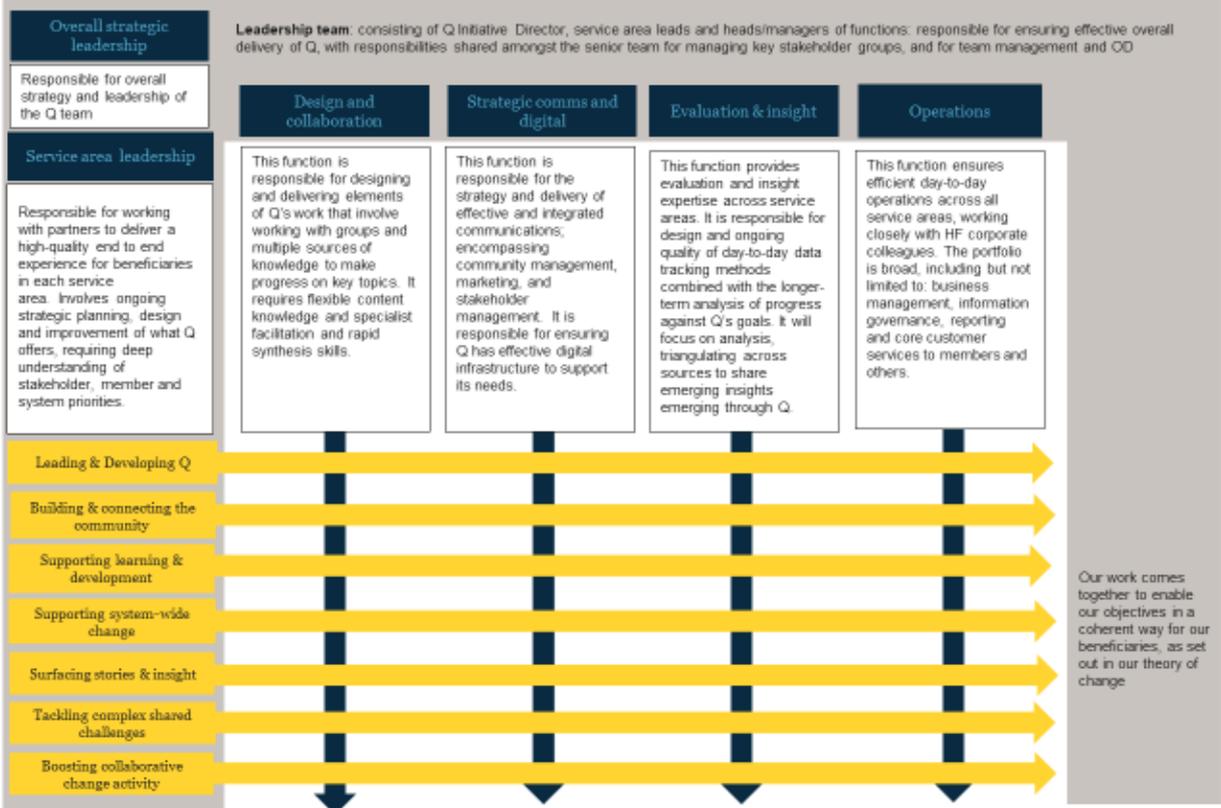
Q supports a growing network of labs across the UK and Ireland. The network currently includes Q Lab UK, delivered by the Q team at the Health Foundation, and Q Lab Cymru. **Q Lab Cymru** is a partnership between Improvement Cymru, the all-Wales Improvement service for NHS Wales and Q. It is an initiative to improve health and care for people in Wales, by embedding lab approaches as part of their existing national improvement efforts. Q Lab Cymru is delivered by a dedicated team in Improvement Cymru, with joint funding from the Health Foundation and Improvement Cymru.



The Q team and how we work

There are 26 people in the Q team, working in a matrix structure as shown below, with people from Q's four functions coming together to design and deliver the various offers and opportunities that Q provides. This role is service area lead for Tackling Complex Shared Challenges and functional lead for Design and Collaboration.

Q's matrix structure 2021



Our culture emphasizes iterative learning and improvement, partnership working and collaborating with members and others to design and refine our offers. We have developed a strong ability to communicate visually, work well with groups, listen and act on feedback quickly and adapt in response. Accelerated by the pandemic, we have honed the team's online collaborative practices, both in terms of our internal ways of working and in our work with members in the virtual events we deliver.

Profiles of people currently in the team are here: <https://q.health.org.uk/about/your-q-team/>