

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust

Alder Hey Al Strategy

Empowering Everyday Lives at Alder Hey through Al

Outstanding care & experience Collaborate for children & young people

Revolutionise

Support our people

Pioneering breakthroughs

A Healthier, Happier and Fairer Future for Children and Young People

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Empowering Everyday Lives at Alder Hey through Al

1. Our Vision

At Alder Hey, we envision a future where Artificial Intelligence (AI) seamlessly enhances the everyday experiences of patients, families and staff. Since pioneering the Living Hospital concept with an AI driven chatbot for patient and family guidance, we have closely explored AI's potential to enhance operational and clinical processes, developing several predictive analytics tools along the way.

We believe the infusion of AI tools will enrich both the experience of staff and families as well as unlock the potential for more data driven personalised care. Through this integration, we will foster a world where technology empowers people to focus on what matters most, delivering compassionate, world class care at every step.

We aim to strategically integrate 'Alder Hey Al Agents' into the healthcare ecosystem to support children, young people and families navigating complex care journeys, as well as empowering clinicians and operational staff with data driven insights, all while acknowledging the unique complexity of healthcare data and adapting our implementation as the technology rapidly evolves.

2. Context

The world today is increasingly driven by technology. Many children are now familiar with using digital devices before they can even read or write. As AI and other technological advancements progress rapidly, their integration into our daily lives is accelerating, particularly in sectors like retail and industry.

At Alder Hey, our vision for 2030 is:

To create a healthier, happier and fairer future where every child and young person achieves their potential

This vision is deeply rooted in the needs of children and young people, shaped by the invaluable feedback they and their families have shared about their lived experiences and what truly matters to them.

Their message is clear: they need us to "Get Me Well," "Personalise My Care," "Improve My Life Chances," and "Bring Me the Future." These insights form the foundation of our Vision 2030 strategy, guiding us in how we can make a meaningful impact both within Alder Hey and in collaboration with our partners across the health and care system.

As we look ahead, the challenges facing the NHS require a transformative shift in how healthcare is delivered. The government has highlighted three key priorities: shifting care from hospitals to the community, transitioning from analogue to digital, and focusing on prevention over treatment.

The shift from 'analogue to digital' is central to transforming services, driving new models of care, and improving productivity and efficiency. This is a critical element of the NHS's 10 Year Plan, and AI will undoubtedly play a significant role in this transformation. As a pioneering, forward thinking organisation, we are determined to lead the way in adopting AI and emerging technologies. To achieve this, we must remain agile and proactive in scouting and deploying innovative solutions as we continue to transform Alder Hey for the future.

3. Ambitions, Outcomes and Themes



To drive this transformation, our strategy builds on our experience and focuses on four key themes:

- 1. Enhancing Children and Young People Centred Care: elevating the experience of children, young people and families.
- 2. Empowering Alder Hey Colleagues: freeing up time for patient and non patient facing Alder Hey staff through intelligent automation, Al assistants and smarter workflows.
- 3. Transforming Outcomes for Children and Young People: delivering precision care through Al optimised pathways, predictive analytics and remote monitoring tools.
- 4. **Revolutionise Diagnostics**: accelerating speed and accuracy in paediatric diagnosis with cutting edge innovation.







Realising this vision requires a strong foundation to ensure safe, effective and sustainable AI adoption across the following key components:

4.1 AI Education & Workforce Development

- Provide targeted training and resources to equip staff with the knowledge to safely and effectively use emerging AI tools in clinical and operational settings.
- Enhance understanding of AI methodologies, including benefits and risks, to build confidence and trust in AI augmented workflows.
- Foster a culture of AI literacy to enable clinicians, managers and support staff to recognise AI opportunities and understand the data requirements for AI driven solutions.
- Promote interdisciplinary collaboration between clinicians, researchers, data scientists and digital teams to improve AI adoption and integration in healthcare.

4.2 Al Governance & Ethics

- Implement a governance framework to ensure Al applications comply with regulatory requirements and ethical guidelines.
- Establish robust machine learning processes to ensure deployed solutions meet performance, clinical safety and regulatory standards.
- Develop a structured approval and oversight process of AI projects to ensure prioritisation of resources, maximisation of benefit and minimisation of risks (including bias) through clinical safety assessments. Where possible, this will be incorporated into current processes.
- Foster public and patient trust through transparent policies, explainability initiatives and mechanisms for reporting concerns in AI driven processes. We will keep an inventory of tools and developments and engage with public through our engagement methods.

 Develop clear risk management strategies, including regular audits and robust cybersecurity practices, to safeguard patient data and maintain system integrity.

4.3 Al Infrastructure & Data Architecture

- Develop a scalable and interoperable AI infrastructure to support multimodal data integration and advanced analytics. This will start with the migration of the existing data warehouse infrastructure to a secure cloud platform but scale to wider data assets.
- Facilitate a shift from a documentation centric data collection approach to a structured, AI ready data ecosystem that supports real time decision making.
- Ensure seamless access to high quality data is available to clinical teams, researchers, and external entities with appropriate governance safeguards (e.g. deidentification and synthetic data).
- Access will be supported by the implementation of a Secure Data Environment integrating with the cloud-based data platform.

4.4 AI Project Development & Implementation

- Identify and prioritise AI projects that focus on improving patient outcomes, operational efficiency and staff well being.
- Implement rigorous evaluation frameworks to measure the clinical and economic impact of AI projects, ensuring alignment with NHS service priorities.
- Develop clear pathways for Al adoption, from proof of concept to live deployment, with defined success metrics and user feedback loops.
- Establish champions in clinical teams that can ensure clinical validation and address challenges in Al implementation.

5. Strategic Initiatives

Across our key themes, we have highlighted the following strategic initiatives, which will naturally evolve in response to emerging opportunities, technological advancements, and the changing needs of our patients and staff.

5.1 Enhancing Children & Young People Centred Care: elevating the experience of children, young people and families

We will leverage AI to improve the experience of children, young people, and their families/carers throughout the healthcare journey by personalising care and enhancing communication.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Children & Young People Facing Virtual Assistants: Develop AI powered virtual assistants for children, young people and families/carers to guide them through more personalised routine care including appointment scheduling, post care guidance, medication reminders and symptom checking, helping parents to manage care at home and enhance preventative health.
- Predictive Models for Early Intervention: Utilise real world data and predictive analytics to detect early signs of paediatric conditions (e.g. developmental disorders, mental health support) and recommend timely interventions/resources that can improve long term outcomes.

5.2 Empowering Alder Hey Colleagues: freeing up time for patient and non patient facing Alder Hey staff through intelligent automation, Al assistants and smarter workflows

We will enhance the work experience and efficiency of healthcare professionals allowing them to focus more on patient care and less on administrative tasks.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Al Powered Documentation: Utilise ambient Al for speech to text transcription and summarisation of real time consultations/meetings, reducing time spent on notetaking and accurately capturing diagnostic and procedural codes.
- Al Assistants: Using personal Al Assistants to support and enhance day to day tasks.
- Automated Scheduling: Optimise shift and rota planning tasks that maximise skill mix, minimise inefficiencies and prioritise staff wellbeing.
- Intelligent Ordering and Task Management: Streamline clinical workflows by automating investigation requests and tracking of results to ensure efficient and timely follow ups.
- Clinical Decision Support Systems (CDSS): Provide real time decision support, offering data driven insights on treatment protocols/guidelines, tailored to patient specific data.
- Creation of an Alder Hey Large Language Model: Fine tune a local (LLM) to harness organisational data assets securely and fuel Retrieval Augment Generation (RAG) and Agentic AI developments.
- Al Insights Agent: Develop an 'insights agent' that can obtain data, perform analytics and find content in documents to support staff productivity.
- **EPR Transformation:** use of AI tools on top of the EPR and other key systems to revolutionise interaction with our systems, improving user experience.



5.3 Transforming Outcomes for Children and Young People: delivering precision care through Al optimised pathways, predictive analytics and remote monitoring tools

We will use AI to optimise clinical pathways and improve health outcomes for children and young people through precision diagnostics, treatment, and personalised care pathways.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Al Optimised Care Pathways: Streamline and optimise clinical pathways by training models that help identify inefficiencies and improve patient flow whilst maintaining or elevating outcomes.
- **Predictive Analytics for Patient Outcomes:** Train machine learning models using actionable real time health data to optimise on clinically important outcomes such as deterioration, complications or re-admissions, allowing targeted early intervention.
- Utilise children and young people engagement with digital/AI tools such as chatbots to generate a patient reported outcome dataset.
- **Remote Monitoring:** Implement AI powered remote monitoring tools that can track key health metrics in children with chronic conditions (e.g. diabetes, asthma) or those recovering from surgery. Facilitate interaction with clinicians remotely (e.g. telemedicine) to ensure timely care without unnecessary hospital visits.
- Al in AH Centres of Excellence: Utilise cutting edge developments in data analytics such as detecting subtle changes in vital signs or laboratory values to predict and alert clinicians to issues before they become critical, thereby improving survival rates and reducing complications.

5.4 Revolutionise Diagnostics: accelerating speed and accuracy in paediatric diagnosis with pioneering innovations

We will harness AI advancements to drive innovation in paediatric diagnostics, enabling faster, more accurate, and less invasive diagnostic methods. While significant progress is being made across various adult subspecialties, paediatrics often lags due to smaller patient cohorts, propensity to rare diseases and increased aversion to risk when dealing with children. We will continue to advocate for greater investment and pioneering approaches that ensures equitable access to cutting edge diagnostic technologies in children.

Strategic Initiatives:

- **Medical Imaging:** Develop and implement AI driven medical imaging solutions, ensuring accuracy and reliability through rigorously curated, high quality, and representative training data that reflects the diversity and unique anatomical variations of children.
- Rare diseases: Utilise real world data from the electronic health record to facilitate the identification of rare diseases that may be missed across multiple consultations.
- **Genomics:** Leverage the burgeoning field of genomics to facilitate early diagnosis and tailored treatment plans including pharmacogenetics.
- Wearables: Harness data from wearable devices (e.g. smartwatches, biosensors) to enable continuous, real time monitoring of children's vital signs, reducing the reliance on intermittent spot checks and enabling earlier detection of conditions such as seizures, respiratory problems, heart abnormalities.
- **Diagnoses:** Testing AI capability in diagnosing conditions such as neurodevelopmental conditions and congenital heart disease through echocardiography tools in foetal medicine.



6. How will we make this a reality?

To turn our AI strategy into reality, we will focus on building strong partnerships and launching key initiatives that align with our vision. Our approach includes the following critical steps:

6.1 Strategic Partnerships:

We are positioning ourselves as leaders in paediatric healthcare, with a key focus on innovation and AI integration to meet the needs of children and young people. Our role is multifaceted: as experts in paediatric care, we will act as problem finders, identifying key challenges in healthcare, and as agile implementers, swiftly adopting and deploying solutions that improve care and outcomes for the young people we serve.

At Alder Hey, we are committed to being pioneers in Al and emerging technologies, working to lead the way in the healthcare transformation outlined by the NHS's vision for the future. This transformation requires moving care from hospitals into the community, transitioning from analogue to digital systems, and emphasising prevention over treatment. Our ambition is to place AI at the core of these efforts, driving improvements in efficiency, productivity, and personalised care delivery.

However, we recognise that this journey cannot be undertaken alone. Collaboration is essential to our strategy. We will actively forge partnerships with industry leaders, academic institutions, and healthcare organisations to co-develop AI solutions tailored to the unique needs of paediatric healthcare. This approach will allow us to benefit from the latest technological advancements while contributing our expertise as paediatric specialists. These partnerships, both national and international, will foster an exchange of knowledge across sectors, ensuring that we have access to cutting edge AI expertise and tools to shape the future of healthcare. We envision close collaboration with universities to tie in their research capabilities and academic strengths. By partnering with experts in this field, we will be able to blend our clinical expertise with groundbreaking innovations emerging from academia. This integration of expertise will accelerate our ability to deliver practical, scalable solutions that directly address the challenges faced by children and young people in the healthcare system.

Recognising this is moving at a rapid pace, we will look to partner with those who see our value, implement early, at low cost to enable entry, gaining value as products develop.

6.2 Al Summit:

We will host an AI Summit, bringing together healthcare professionals, AI specialists, and key stakeholders from various fields to focus on paediatric opportunities. This summit will provide a platform for discussions on emerging trends, successful case studies, and the practical application of AI in healthcare. It will also act as a launchpad for innovative projects and partnerships.

6.3 Clinical/Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT) Group

A dedicated Clinical/MDT Group will be established to guide the sociotechnical integration of AI solutions in healthcare. This group will work closely with frontline clinicians to ensure AI technologies meet the real needs of healthcare teams and children, young people, families and carers, integrating effectively into workflows. Their role will also involve overseeing the implementation of AI driven improvements in clinical pathways. The group will include Children and Young People representatives.

6.4 Data

Data is at the heart of our AI strategy, serving as the foundation for innovation and transformation in paediatric care. By leveraging a robust data intelligence platform through databricks, we can unlock the full potential of our data to drive advanced analytics, machine learning, and AI driven insights. This will enable us to integrate, process, and analyse vast amounts of structured and unstructured data in real time, ensuring a seamless flow of information across systems. This unified data environment supports our ability to personalise care, enhance operational efficiency, and make data driven decisions that directly benefit children and young people.

By underpinning our AI strategy with a platform that prioritises data intelligence, we ensure that Alder Hey remains at the forefront of healthcare innovation, delivering cutting edge care that meets the evolving needs of patients and the healthcare system.

6.5 Digital, Data and AI Collaborative

This work will sit as part of the broader digital, data and Al transformation collaborative. Working together with a team of digital, data, and Al experts, this approach will enable us to harness the collective expertise of diverse partners to drive innovation and promote sustainable change across the organisation.



6.6 Roadmap

To keep us on track, we will establish a clear programme of work with defined milestones and timelines. This program will cover AI integration in various healthcare services, training for staff, and continuous evaluation of AI's impact. A detailed roadmap will ensure that all phases of implementation are aligned with our goals and set for timely completion. An outline of this plan at a macro level is summarised below.





6.7 Investment and Resource

A comprehensive investment plan for the delivery of the strategy will be developed. The investment will cover the necessary resources to deliver on the strategy, including infrastructure, staff training, and project implementation. It is imperative that the right resources and skills are deployed to meet the ambitions outlined.



7. Benefits Realisation with Estimated Impact

Our AI strategy is designed to deliver significant benefits across several key areas. By quantifying these improvements, we can measure success and refine our approach as needed.

- More Time for Direct Clinical Care: Estimated impact: A 20-30% reduction in administrative tasks for clinicians through AI automation, allowing for up to 10-15% more direct clinical interaction time. This could equate to 4-6 additional hours per week for each clinician to focus on clinical care.
- Financial Sustainability: Estimated impact: Al driven efficiencies could lead to cost savings or increased productivity of 5-15% annually.
- Improved Patient Care and Safety: Estimated impact: Al enhanced diagnostic tools and predictive analytics could lead to a 15-20% improvement in diagnostic accuracy, reducing medical errors and potentially preventing 100-200 adverse events annually.
- Enhanced Staff and Patient Experience: Estimated impact: AI powered tools will streamline workflows, leading to a 25% reduction in clinician burnout and improving overall job satisfaction. For patients, this could result in a 10-15% increase in satisfaction scores, driven by shorter wait times and more personalised care.





- **Reduction in Waiting Lists:** Estimated impact: Al optimised scheduling and resource allocation could reduce waiting times by 15-20%.
- Self Service Data and Cloud Based Data Analytics Platform: Estimated impact: A centralised data warehouse will allow staff to access insights in real time, improving decision making. This could lead to a 30-40% reduction in time spent on manual data gathering and a 50% faster response to data requests.
- Attracting Investment: Estimated impact: By positioning ourselves as an AI leader in healthcare, we anticipate attracting £5-10 million in external investments over the next 3-5 years to further scale AI initiatives.
- **Profile, Reputation, and Leadership in Al:** Estimated impact: Our involvement in the Digital, Data, and Al Collaborative will elevate our profile, leading to new strategic partnerships over the next two years and further positioning us as a regional and national leader in Al driven healthcare innovation.

By defining clear metrics and setting specific goals, we can ensure that our AI strategy not only delivers on its promises but continues to evolve and generate meaningful impact across the healthcare ecosystem. 8. A day in the life in the future

Through this strategy, we are envisioning a future where healthcare is transformed for our children, young people, and colleagues. Just as no one could have predicted how the iPhone would revolutionise the way we live and connect, we are now imagining a world where healthcare evolves in ways once thought impossible.

This part of the strategy highlights the 'art of the possible,' offering a glimpse into the future we can create together.

8.1 Imagine the future for our Children and Young People

Ayesha and Rhys's Future...

In this future vision, Alder Hey's Community Paediatrics team leverages AI to improve the diagnosis and ongoing support of children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and mental health conditions.

When 7 year old Ayesha first showed signs of ASD, her parents used Alder Hey's AI supported platform "Link" to document patterns in her behaviour and development at home and school. Link's structured reports helped the paediatric team recognise key indicators, accelerating the diagnostic process and providing tailored advice early in her care journey.

Now diagnosed, Ayesha continues to receive

Or consider Rhys, a 12 year old experiencing anxiety, which was identified early through Alder Hey's mental health screening tool "Lumina," by analysing patterns in his emotional wellbeing reported by his parents and teachers. After diagnosis, Lumina continues to offer personalised coping strategies, alerting Rhys and his support team when upcoming events or changes in routine might require additional support or preparation.

By blending timely diagnosis with proactive, personalised ongoing support, Alder Hey's Al enhanced community paediatric care helps children like Ayesha and Rhys navigate daily life successfully, empowering their families and caregivers at every step.

*Not a real life case study

ongoing support through Link. The AI system gently alerts her parents and teachers when activities may require adjustment to better accommodate her sensory sensitivities and social communication needs, ensuring she feels supported and included.



*Ai generated image

Leo's Future...

In this imaginative future, Leo is a patient at Alder Hey, one of the most innovative paediatric hospitals in the world, known for its pioneering use of Al and cutting edge technologies. Alder Hey has transformed healthcare into a child friendly, interactive experience where even complex treatments feel like a magical adventure.

Leo, a lively 6 year old with Type 1 diabetes, wakes up each morning greeted by his cheerful AI companion, "Spark," a friendly dragon who helps manage his health in a fun and imaginative way. Spark quietly checks Leo's overnight glucose levels using a comfy wearable sensor, gently reassuring him and discreetly updating his parents.

During school, Spark is always by Leo's side, tucked neatly into his backpack. Throughout the day, Spark playfully reminds Leo when it's snack time or insulin check, making each interaction feel more like an exciting game than a healthcare task. Teachers and the school nurse receive gentle alerts, ensuring Leo's safety without interrupting his play and learning. Instead of regular hospital visits, Leo meets with his healthcare team virtually, supported by Spark. His doctor reviews Leo's health data, giving friendly, personalised advice that helps Leo and his parents feel confident managing his condition at home.

When Leo visits the hospital for special appointments, Spark helps transform the environment into a thrilling augmented reality adventure, turning the corridors into jungles or magical lands, ensuring Leo feels calm and excited. Friendly AI powered robotic nurses support the clinical staff, turning routine checks into fun interactions.

At bedtime, Spark helps Leo wind down with magical bedtime stories. As Leo sleeps, his smart pyjamas keep an eye on his health, ensuring quick responses to any overnight fluctuations.

With Spark and his healthcare team's innovative AI support, Leo enjoys an adventurous, playful childhood, where managing his diabetes is seamlessly woven into his everyday life, empowering him to thrive.

*Not a real life case study



*Ai generated image

8.2 Imagine the future for our Staff

Imagine a bustling children's hospital like Alder Hey, where advanced AI technology has seamlessly integrated into the daily operations. Healthcare workers now partner with AI assistants like Oli, a friendly, multi-functional AI designed to enhance patient care and streamline workflows.

8.2.1 Imagine the future for our Clinical Staff

Dr. Emma starts her day at the children's hospital assisted by "Ask Oli," an Al powered information assistant. Over her morning coffee, she says, "Oli, summarise my ward round patients". Oli instantly compiles key details from the medical history and monitoring trends over the past 24 hrs, helping Emma prioritise her workload.

During rounds, Emma notices an unusual facial rash on one of her patients and asks, "Oli, give me a structured list for possible causes of a malar rash, including suggested baseline investigations". Oli searches a database of curated medical literature and provides a summary for Emma to consider next steps.

Later that day Emma considers the results for her patients and requests Oli to perform "a

deep dive on studies looking at the diagnostic criteria for paediatric Lupus". Emma uses this summarised information to facilitate discussion with a rheumatologist, capturing this discussion seamlessly through ambient AI in the medical record.

At the end of the day, Emma asks Oli to summarise patient notes and highlight any significant observations, ensuring clear documentation for review and handover to on call staff.

By providing efficient information retrieval and summaries, Oli helps Emma streamline her workflow, while retaining full responsibility for clinical interpretation and decision making.

*Not a real life case study



*Ai generated image

8.2.2 Imagine the future for our Support Staff

In a future where AI seamlessly enhances healthcare, administrative roles at Alder Hey have evolved dramatically. Administrative workers, often the unsung heroes of hospital operations, now collaborate with intelligent AI systems that revolutionise every aspect of their daily work, making the hospital run like a well oiled machine.

8.2.1 Imagine the future for our Clinical Staff

A Day in the Life of Sophie...

Sophie, an administrative assistant at Alder Hey, begins her day supported by "Pip," an Al powered information assistant. She starts by asking, "Pip, summarise today's day case surgery appointments and highlight any scheduling conflicts." Pip quickly compiles the day's surgical schedule, identifying overlaps or potential delays based on overnight developments.

When managing hospital resources, Sophie queries, "Pip, what's the current availability of surgical beds?" Pip retrieves real time bed availability data, allowing Sophie to effectively manage and allocate beds for incoming surgical patients.

During staff rostering, Sophie learns a nurse has called in sick. She asks, "Pip, show me available nurses qualified for today's shift." Pip immediately provides a list of available staff, enabling Sophie to quickly arrange cover. Later, a parent calls needing clarification about medication changes discussed in a recent clinic visit. Sophie asks, "Pip, find the clinic letter from the recent visit." Pip rapidly retrieves the relevant letter, enabling Sophie to quickly discuss the query with the on call clinical team and provide a prompt, clear response to the parent.

At day's end, Sophie requests, "Pip, generate a daily operational report summarising today's surgery schedules, staffing changes, and bed usage." Pip compiles comprehensive summaries, streamlining Sophie's administrative tasks and preparing her effectively for the following day.

Pip's ability to rapidly access and summarise crucial information empowers Sophie to efficiently handle administrative tasks and maintain smooth communication with patients, families, and clinical staff.

*Not a real life case study



*Ai generated image

9. Conclusion

Alder Hey's AI Strategy 2030 outlines a bold vision: to harness the power of artificial intelligence in a way that truly transforms children's healthcare for the better. By strengthening partnerships in a smart, autonomous way, we gain the capabilities to innovate faster. By establishing rigorous data governance, we unlock insights responsibly and sustainably. By leading on ethical AI, we ensure that progress never comes at the expense of our values. By investing in our workforce, we build the human foundation needed for technological change. By modernising governance and focusing on long term outcomes, we keep the strategy on course to deliver real impact. By setting ambitious targets, we challenge ourselves to achieve what was once unimaginable. And through it all, by championing a children first approach, we make sure that every step forward is a step forward for young patients everywhere.

This strategy is not a static document but a living roadmap. As we implement these initiatives, we will learn and adapt - celebrating milestones (for example, when a new AI tool saves a life or significantly improves a service) and honestly confronting obstacles (such as the need for cultural change or technical hurdles) with a problem solving mindset. The structures put in place will keep the Board and stakeholders informed and engaged, ensuring accountability at each stage. We will also keep aligning our AI efforts with the wider Trust Strategy and Vision 2030, so that technology serves the overarching mission of Alder Hey rather than becoming a goal in itself.

By 2030, Alder Hey will not only have improved the care for the children who walk through our doors, but will have influenced paediatric care well beyond our walls – through the innovations we pioneer, the standards we set, and the knowledge we share.

In summary, this AI Strategy positions Alder Hey to **lead the way in paediatric AI innovation**: delivering tangible benefits to children, young people and families, empowering our staff, and influencing the healthcare landscape to be more caring, effective, and equitable for every child. Through delivery of this strategy we are confident that Alder Hey will achieve its ambition of creating a healthier, happier, fairer future through the magical application of artificial intelligence empowering everyday lives at Alder Hey.



