

Strengthening governance in a small state health system

NHS 2020-2030

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Strengthening governance in small state health systems: The role of clinical & public health leaders

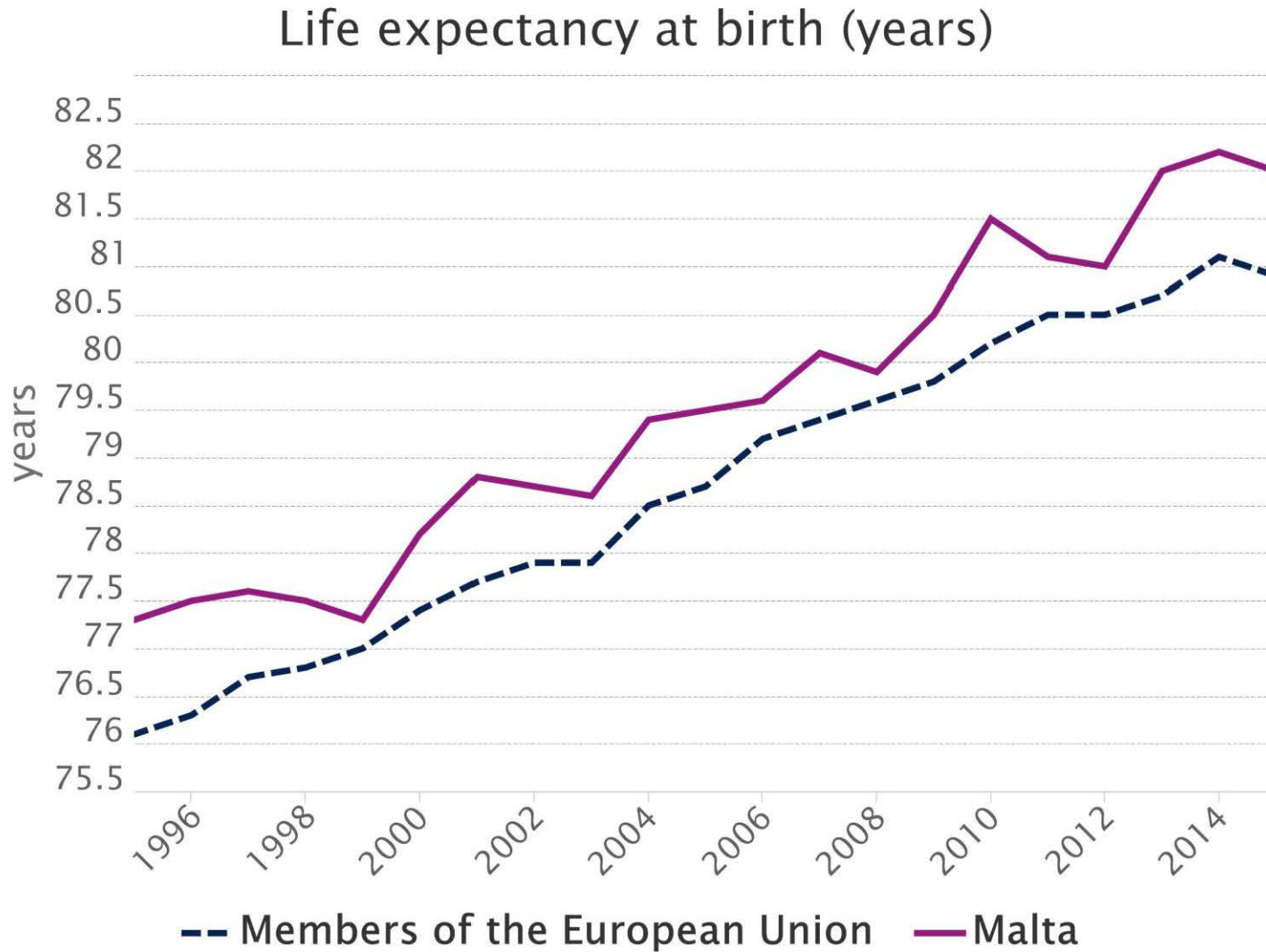
- The health system in Malta – key issues
- Strengthening governance
- NHS 2020-2030 – objectives and next steps
- Joining forces and building bridges

Malta Health Systems in Transition 2017

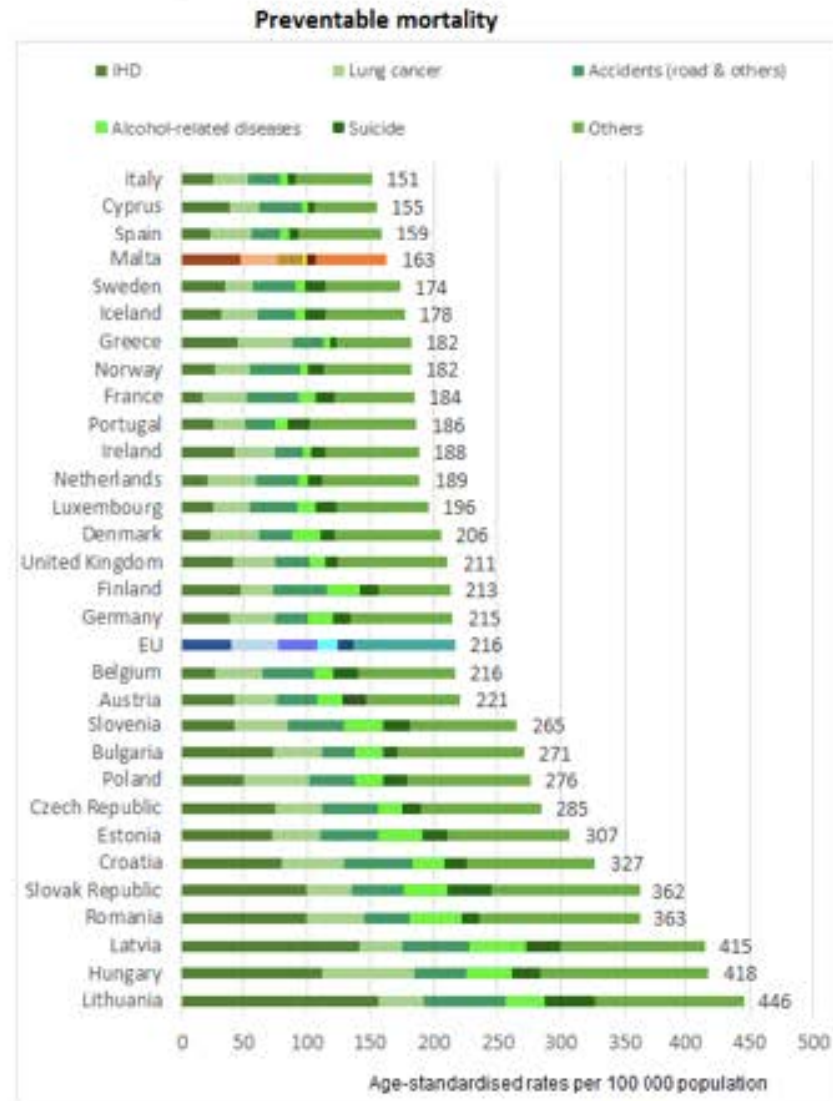
“Overall, the Maltese health system has made remarkable progress, with improvements in avoidable mortality and low levels of unmet need.

*The main outstanding challenges include: **adapting the health system to an increasingly diverse population; increasing capacity to cope with a growing population; redistributing resources and activity from hospitals to primary care; ensuring access to expensive new medicines whilst still making efficiency improvements; and addressing medium-term financial sustainability challenges from demographic ageing.**”*

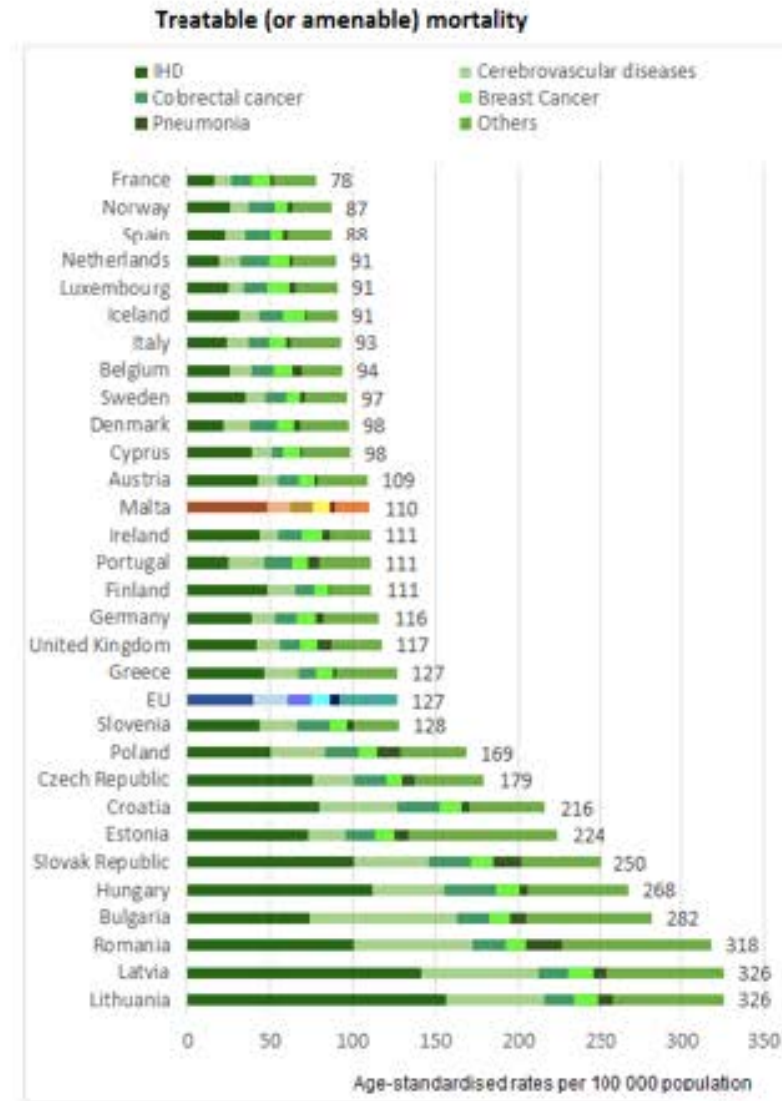
Azzopardi Muscat N, Calleja N, Buttigieg S, Merkur S. Malta: health system review. Health systems in transition. 2017;19(1):1-37.



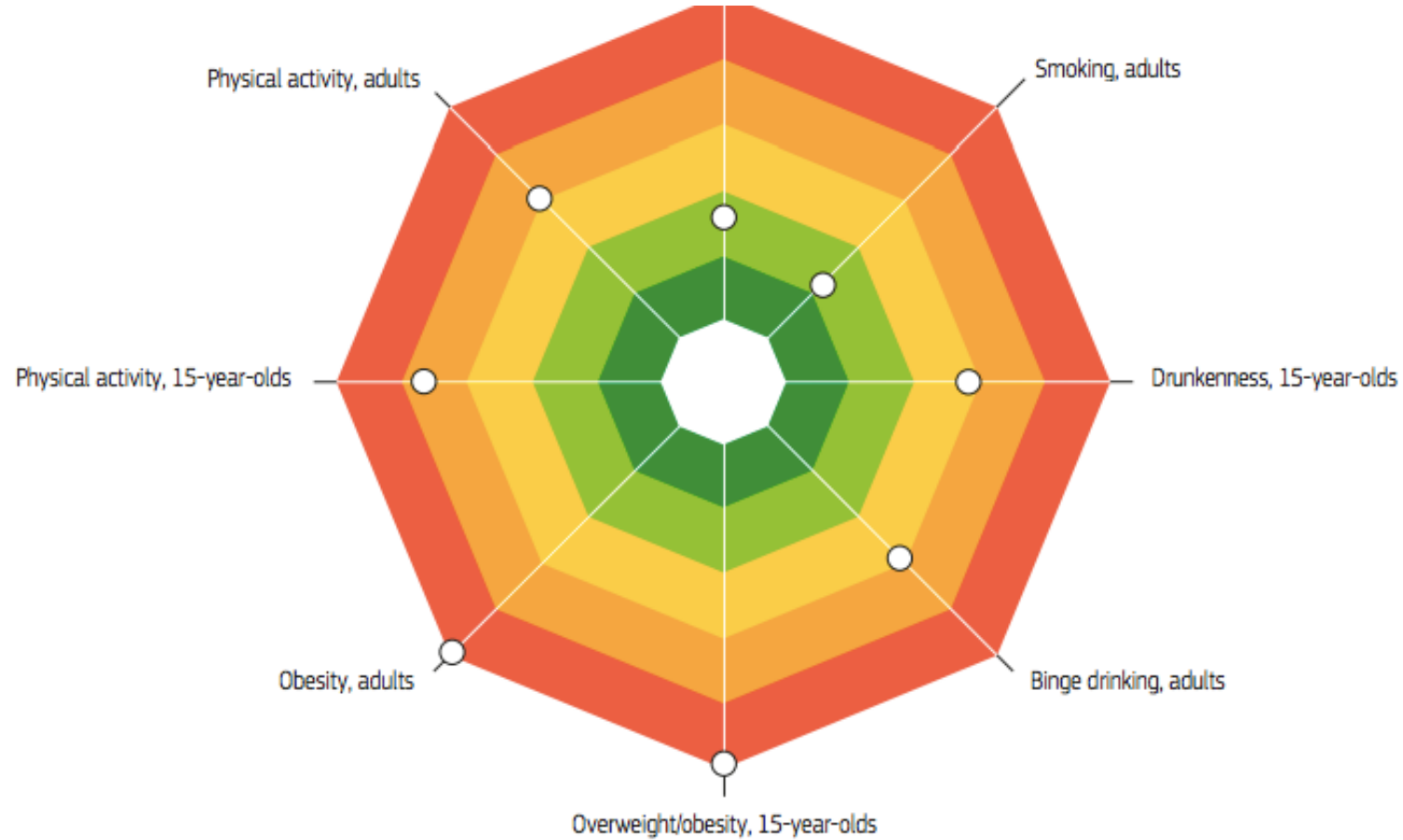
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Source: Eurostat Database (data refer to 2015).



Risk factors compared to other EU MS



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Wednesday, April 24, 2019, 14:53

Construction worker buried under rubble as wall collapses in Swieqi

Man hospitalised with grievous injuries



The annual rave has become a hotspot for party-goers but many have lamented the youngsters that descended upon the streets of St Paul's Bay were only interested in debauchery.

Christine Goodaire, who was raised in Malta but resides in the UK, said she found the Qawra Palace Hotel occupied by young people who, she claimed, were openly taking drugs.

"We bocked with the notion we would have seven wonderful days of peace and tranquillity but, unfortunately, our dreams were unexpectedly shattered when we saw our hotel overrun by teenagers," she told the Times of Malta.

Footage seen by the Times of Malta shows people laying poolside and appearing to be inhaling air from balloons.



Hotel guests were seen appearing to inhale air from balloons by the pool.

Reports have recently emerged of Buġibba and St Paul's Bay residents raising the alarm over consumption of nitrous oxide, which is often found in balloons and party cannisters.

Health & Wellbeing in the 21st Century

- Tremendous achievements have been registered since 2000
 - BUT there is a real risk of our success being reversed
 - Progress cannot be taken for granted
- The nature & scale of public health challenges is rapidly changing
- Health Systems will experience ‘disruptive innovation’

Health workforce challenges

- Shortages
- Multicultural workforce
 - adapting to diversity and turnover
- Feminisation
 - (achieving work-life balance)
- Aging health workforce (private sector GPs)

Health System Performance in Small States

- World Health Organisation ranking (2000) featured several small states in top ten ranks e.g. Iceland, San Marino, Malta
- Health care access and quality index (Institute of Health Metrics & Evaluation, Seattle – Global Burden of Disease Consortium) – several small states in top decile, no small states in the bottom decile
- Is small size an advantage? Or Do small countries do well in spite of their small size?

Building resilience in small health systems

- Small island states face specific unique challenges due to their culture, inherent features and limited resources.
- In the small island state context the importance of culture, *values*, working together across boundaries, networking, *awareness of the limited resources*, having a *helicopter view* and having *unbiased, accountable decision-makers* at all the levels, are factors which foster resilience.
- In spite of the barriers and gaps encountered, small island state health systems can still foster resilience through ***smart interrelated decision-making*** processes, which identify and grasp opportunities which minimise their vulnerabilities.

Factors impeding resilience building in the Maltese health system

- Inherent vulnerability associated with geographic, socio-demographic features
- Inherent vulnerability due to finite and limited resources (human, financial)
- Fragmentation of the health system
- Erosion of social values

Implicit and explicit actions and policies to foster resilient health systems

- Policy formulation in accordance with the vision of the health system
- Investments in adequate and appropriate resources
- Capacity sharing - working across boundaries
- *Improve the capacities of health systems to understand and change*

Resilience & Governance

- The concept of resilience as applied to health systems is being increasingly promoted as a dimension of health system performance in spite of the paucity of research and lack of operationalisation of the term
- The utility of resilience as a ‘factor’ that promotes stable and sustainable performance of health systems requires proper characterisation
- Literature on the vulnerability /resilience nexus in small states provides a theoretical framework

Governance in health systems

Governance structures involve the *capacities* and *processes* within a health system, as a pre-condition for the attainment and implementation of well-designed policies:

reforms

crisis response

implementation of routine processes

(Greer, Wismar and Figueras, 2016; Saltman, Duran & Dubois, 2011)

TAPIC framework

- **Transparency** : providing information about decisions (upcoming or taken)
 - Regular reporting; Performance assessment; open meetings, publicly available datasets
- **Accountability**: explaining decisions with the possibility to be sanctioned
 - Organizational separation; conflict of interest policies; standards; codes of conduct; choice mechanisms
- **Participation**: opening up of decision making to affected parties, so that they can influence the outcome
 - Stakeholder forums; consultations; appointed representatives; choice mechanisms; advisory committees
- **Integrity**: representation, decision-making and enforcement should be defined in a way that stakeholders are able to understand them and can predict the way decisions are made
 - a legislative mandate; budget; established procedures, defined organizational roles and purpose
- **Policy capacity**: ability to develop policy in light of available resources and stated goals

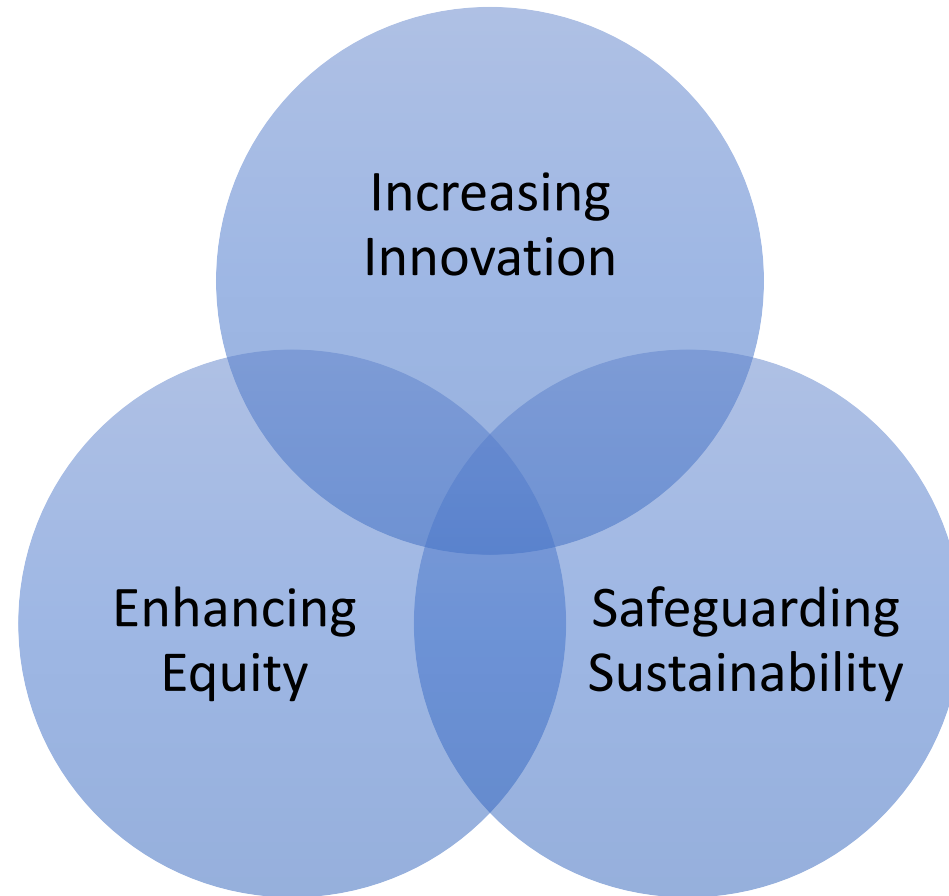
Statements on governance

- Small states have overall relatively good governance structures in place. Well-designed governance is arguably one of the reasons why they score well on economic and development indicators despite existing vulnerabilities.
- Small states with poor governance are likely to end up as ‘failed states’ since governance is an essential component of policy induced resilience that counteracts their inherent vulnerabilities.
- Some small states are amongst the most developed nations with high levels of government effectiveness
- *Proximity and personalism associated with small size encourage a form of democracy seemingly at odds with ideas of good governance*

Why do we need a new Health Strategy?

- Rapid and far-reaching economic, demographic and social change
- Medical and technological innovation
 - Health System Transformation (funding, organisation and delivery)
- Change & opportunities for the Maltese Health System
- Incorporate the 2030 SDG Agenda (WHO)
- MFF EU 2020+ (Effectiveness, Access and Resilience)
- Opportunity for co-creation, involving societal actors

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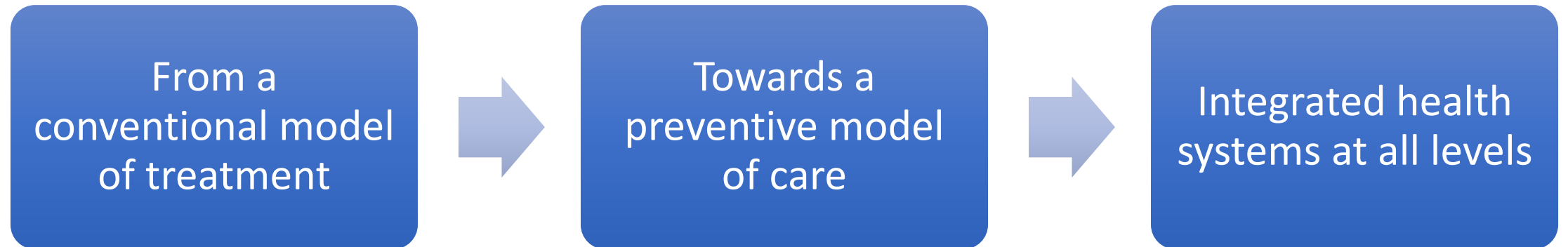
Outline NHS 2020

- Fostering a healthy environment
- Tackling health inequalities
- **Integrated health services**
- **Sustaining a competent and adaptive health workforce**
- **Harnessing the benefits of research and innovation**
- Dynamic and responsive health system governance

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Reorienting Health Systems



Health Services -

- Person-centred services (eServices)
- Decentralisation from Hospitals to Community
- Strengthening the preventive orientation

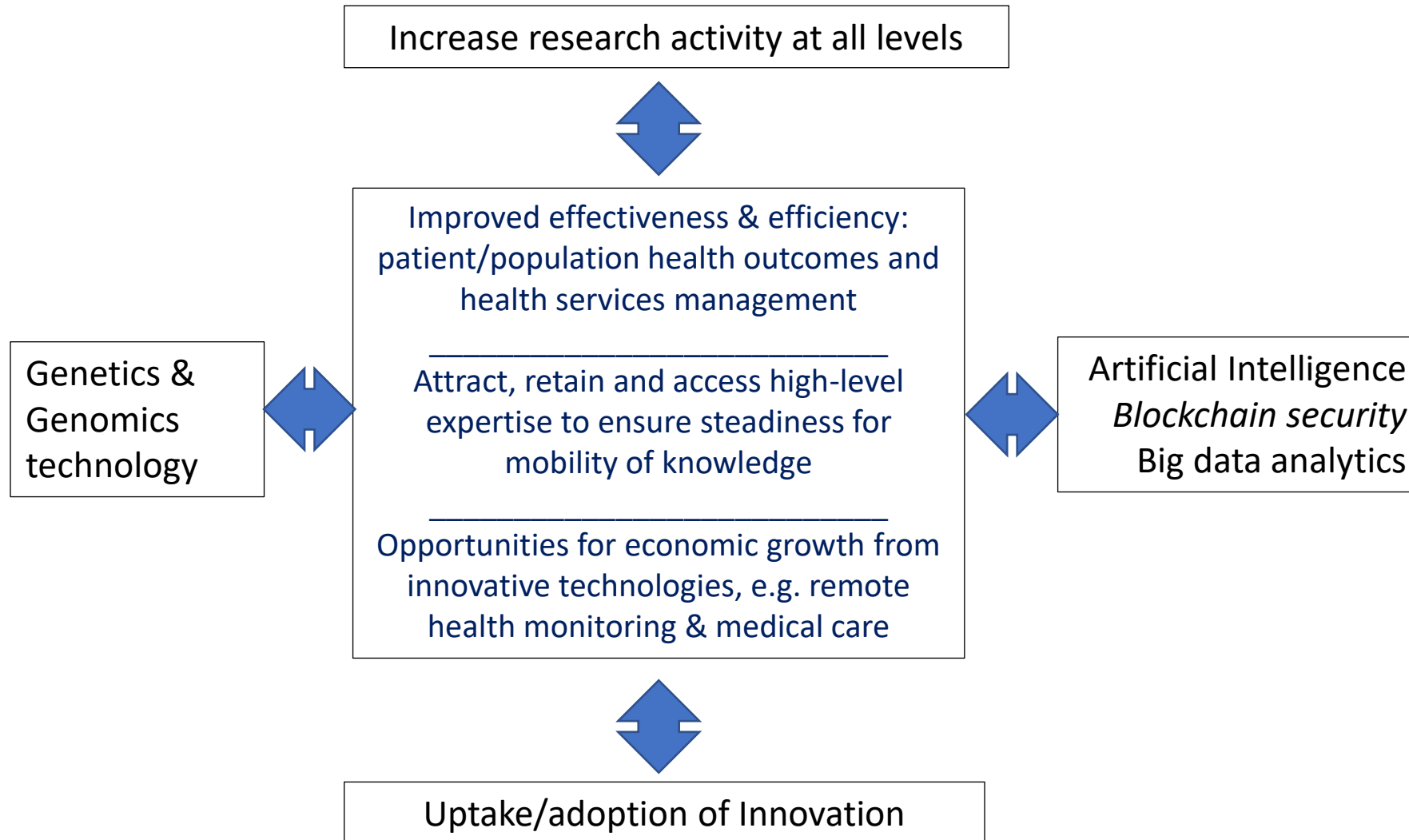
Health Systems Revolution?

- Eliminate wasteful spending and practices
- Adopt 'value based' healthcare
- Redesign health workforce
- Exploit digitalisation



“Precision Public Health – Between Novelty and Hype”

- excessive focus on personalised medicine moving us towards focussing on the *individual* rather than the *structural* causes of ill-health. This would play nicely in the hands of those pushing for more “individual responsibility
- advances in data storage, computational power, and genomic data will help improve understanding of mechanisms connecting the macro and micro, and the social and the biologic.



Working upstream

- An Equitable Start to Life
- Reducing inequalities in mental health
- Support for healthy living conditions
- Integration of migrants
- Using health systems to address inequalities

Transformational leadership for health

- Improving unit performance in the health system
 - Leads to improved national outcomes
- Reaching out and building bridges
 - Within the health system
 - Beyond the health system
- Advocacy for reduction in disease burden
- Equipping and empowering the next generation