

# Global Ambitions and Local Leaders

HIRANI and the Association of British HealthTech Industries (ABHI) jointly established the NI HealthTech Leaders' Forum in 2024, as an alliance of health technology leaders to strengthen relationships with the UK and global HealthTech sector.



## The Forum enabled rich conversations and:

- Forged a representative strategic vision from across the HealthTech Ecosystem in industry, health, academia and policy
- Promoted company growth acceleration, access to skills, and market access knowledge
- Developed collaborative programmes
- Provided an enabling infrastructure which supports a health and wealth partnership and underpins access of patients to the latest developments in HealthTech

The Forum included 26 HealthTech Leaders from the NI HealthTech Ecosystem, plus invited experts and guests from ABHI and HIRANI.

## What was explored?

- Opportunities with dual market access
- Exploration of international and AI registration policies
- MHRA perspective on supporting NI Health and Life science sector
- North, South, East and West collaboration in United Kingdom
- Making Northern Ireland a powerhouse for Life and Health Sciences and medical technology
- Barriers to innovation?
- How health and economy work closer to achieve prosperity and better health outcomes for NI



- How we capitalize on the strengths of NI ecosystem
- How we learn from other clusters and replicate SME scaling spin outs into the NI life and health science ecosystem

## Impacts of the forum

- The forum helped us frame a paper with three regulatory asks for the health sector in NI. This has been instrumental in conveying regulatory support required from MHRA and from government policy leads to ensure LHS ecosystem to ensure it's not affected post Brexit.
- Developed a working relationship with the MHRA and supported the opening of a Northern Ireland regulatory hub.

## Who was involved?

The ABHI is the UK's leading industry association for health technology. Members, including both multinationals and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), supply products from syringes and wound dressings to surgical robots, diagnostics and digitally enhanced technologies.

HealthTech is the largest employer in the broader Life Sciences sector, employing 154,000 people in 4,465 companies, with a combined turnover of £34.3bn. The industry has enjoyed growth of around 5% in recent years. ABHI's 400 members account for approximately 80% of the sector by value.



**HIRANI hosted the forum along with Richard Devereaux-Phillips, Executive Director of Policy & Partnerships, Association of British HealthTech Industries (ABHI)**

Richard joined the ABHI in June 2015 with over 20 years' experience in the pharmaceutical and medical devices industries.

In his role at ABHI, Richard oversees the Association's policy and communications activities as well as working closely with his CEO on senior government engagement and the future shape of the organisation.



**Professor Joan Condell FHEA FCHERP, School of Computing, Engineering and Intelligent Systems**

Professor Condell creates testbeds for non-invasive intelligent technologies: the design, application and testing of sensors, for human body monitoring and data analysis. She works particularly in health but also across other sectors, disciplines and stakeholders. Professor Joan Condell has published over 250 papers and actively secured grants from external sources with a total project value over £98M. She has been principal and co-investigator on over 100 multiple EU, national and regional projects. Recently Professor Condell joined a major new UK-wide taskforce established to secure the future of medical science careers.

Launched by the Academy of Medical Sciences, the UK Medical Science Careers Taskforce brings together senior leaders from academia, the NHS, MedTech and the pharmaceutical industry to identify and address gaps across clinical and non-clinical career pathways.

Professor Condell, is among a select group of experts from across the UK appointed to shape a national plan for strengthening the medical science workforce.



**Rahul Kapoor, Managing Director of Healthtech at CPI**

Rahul is the managing director of HealthTech at CPI, part of the high value manufacturing catapult network. CPI offers R&D and innovation development and manufacturing services for

innovative technologies. CPI works with CPI is a founding member of the high value manufacturing catapult network, and we work across mature companies to start-ups to help develop transformative ideas into commercial products.

Rahul has 15+ years of global P&L management experience working for Johnson & Johnson, Unilever and HealthTech startups across pharmaceuticals, medical devices and consumer goods.



**Dr David Gibson is Professor of Personalised Medicine and Research Group Lead of the Personalised Medicine Centre, based in the School of Medicine, at Ulster University.**

He is a biochemist with 20 years of experience in arthritis and

immunology translational research. He was awarded a PhD from Queen's University Belfast in 2001 for work on drugs to reduce the spread of brain cancers. Dr Gibson has 85 publications, including patents and book chapters and has held research posts in both the USA and UK.



**Joseph Burt, is Head of IVD and General Medical Devices with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).**

With over 26 years of experience working in small to global medical device companies, he

has developed several in vitro diagnostic medical devices, including the approval of developed devices with multiple jurisdictions. Joseph is the Head of IVD and General Medical Devices with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).



**Professor Mark Lawler is Professor of Digital Health at Queen's University Belfast and Scientific Director of DATA-CAN, the UK's Health Data Research Hub for Cancer.**

He chairs the International Cancer Benchmarking Partnership a global initiative which looks at

cancer outcome across the world. Marks pioneering work on Covid-19 and cancer received the Royal College of Physicians Excellence in Patient Care Award and the prestigious European Communique Award. His team won the HDR-UK Impact of the Year Award for providing the crucial intelligence informing a change in policy for treating colorectal cancer.

Mark was one of the leadership involved in developing and launching a radical new data-informed UK plan for cancer research and cancer care in the House of Commons, Westminster. In January 2024, he provided the crucial evidence on the need to re-establish a National Cancer Plan to the Health and Social Care Select Committee in the House of Commons, which was a key deciding factor in the Secretary of State for Health committing to a National Cancer Plan.



**Professor James McLaughlin is the Director and co-founder of Ulster University's Nanotechnology and Integrated Bioengineering Centre-NIBEC.**

He is also currently heading up the £43M BCRD Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology-CDHT. A Fellow of the Institute of Physics and

the Irish Academy of Engineering, he was awarded a CBE in 2022 for Research & Education. He is a Senior Distinguished-Fellow and his world-leading Digital-Healthcare-Technology research addresses the integration of AI enhanced decision-making diagnostic algorithms with clinical sensing systems.



**Clare Guinness is the CEO of Belfast Chamber. A finance graduate, and Chartered Director, Clare has over 25 years commercial experience across various sectors including banking, Agri-food and infrastructure.**



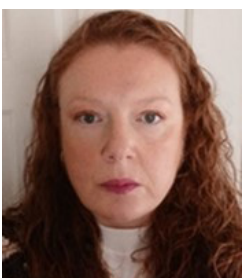
**Richard Kennedy is Global VP and Medical Director at Almac and Professor of Oncology at Queen's University of Belfast.**

He graduated in medicine from Queen's University Belfast in 1995. As a post-graduate he trained as a medical oncologist and received a PhD in Molecular Biology in 2004.

From 2004-2007 he worked as an Instructor in Oncology at Harvard Medical School, USA, where he identified novel biomarkers and drug targets for cancer treatment. This work was published in several high impact journals and the associated patent was in-licensed by a Boston-based start-up company in 2007. In August 2007 he joined Almac Diagnostic Services and has been medically responsible for the development and delivery of lab tests for over 300 clinical trials on behalf of multiple large pharmaceutical companies. In 2011 he also established a research group in Queen's University Belfast focussed on various aspects of precision medicine. He continues to publish regularly in this field. He currently sits on the MATRIX NI Government science advisory panel and the Royal College of Physicians Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine Oncology Advisory group. He is a Director on the Boards of both the Odyssey Trust and W5 Science Centre, which promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Northern Ireland and provide facilities for leisure and recreation. Richard is also the Interim Chair of HIRANI.



**Martin McMullan is the Site director at Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies and leads a team of more than 300 employees.** Martin holds a BSc in Biomedical Engineering and a PhD in Material Science and Analytical Chemistry from the University of Ulster.



**Dr Roisin McAllister is the Life and Health Science Sector Lead, Department for Business and Trade in Northern Ireland.** She helps NI businesses export and attract investment by utilising the Department's large UK and global network.



**Dr Mary Jo Kurth is the Director of Business Development, Randox Laboratories,** the largest indigenous manufacturer of clinical diagnostics in the UK and Ireland.

As Business Development Manager, Mary Jo is involved in national and international collaborative Health and Life Sciences R&D projects with academia and consultants to identify and address clinical challenges.



**Since 2024, Dr David Ribeiro has been the Chief Operating Officer of ARC Regulatory,** a Belfast-based company which delivers integrated solutions to the Precision Medicine sector, supporting the implementation and compliant research of in vitro diagnostics (IVD) in precision medicine trials worldwide.



**Dr Susan Kelly is the cofounder and CEO of Respiratory Analytics.**

She previously worked in market access and government affairs in pharma and has over fifteen years experience bringing novel technology to patients in conditions with high unmet clinical need. Susan has won four Innovate UK awards, including a prestigious Women in Innovation award. Both Ulster and Queen's Universities have invested in the company.



**Cheryl Wallace is the Life Sciences Lead at Invest Northern Ireland**

Having worked in Public Service for more than 25 years across equality and economic development she has established strong working relationships and networks for collaboration.



**Roisin Molloy is the CEO and cofounder of TriMedika Ltd a medical device manufacturer based in Belfast.**

As end-of-life carer for her sister, sleep disruption and distress caused by contact hospital thermometers led her to develop a non-contact

hospital grade thermometer, now used in hospitals in 21 countries.

As an entrepreneur she completed MIT Entrepreneur Development Program, Maserati Top 100 Disruptors, Dell Women's Entrepreneur Network Alumni, Finalist EY Entrepreneur of the Year, DBT Export Champion 2023 and participated in Manchester Health Accelerator and KidsUp Accelerator in Sheffield.



**Professor Cathy Harrison is the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for Northern Ireland, working at the Department of Health.** In this role Cathy is the head of the pharmacy profession in Northern Ireland and the most senior professional advisor to the Minister of Health on pharmaceutical and medicines issues.

Cathy is a qualified pharmacist and undertook her pharmacy undergraduate degree at Liverpool John Moore's University and postgraduate degree at Queen's University, Belfast. After graduation she worked in community pharmacy in England and Northern Ireland before joining the Department of Health in 2005 as Principal Pharmaceutical Officer. She was later promoted to Deputy Chief Pharmaceutical Officer before being appointed as Chief Pharmaceutical Officer in January 2020.

Cathy is also SRO on the Department of Health's Neighbourhood model launched in April 2026.



**Kathryn Robb has been with Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies (Terumo BCT) for over six years serving in Regulatory Affairs, supporting medical device solution products manufactured in the Larne facility. Over the past fifteen years she has also held roles in Analytical Development**

with pharmaceutical manufacturer Teva and in community pharmacy. She holds a BSc in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Queens University Belfast and an MSc in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Ulster.



**Professor Helen McCarthy is the Chair of Nanomedicine at the School of Pharmacy, Queen's University Belfast and the first Chief Scientific and Technology Advisor for Northern Ireland.**

Helen is also a named inventor on >40 patents that involve 3 peptide technologies: RALA, CHAT and, most recently, HAWC. She has also just spun out her second company (XapHe) on the targeted delivery of mRNA therapeutics using AI, a first for Northern Ireland. As CSTA, Helen provides scientific advice to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, is an independent scientific voice, represents NI in the CSA network and advocates for science and technology across government policymaking. Helen has also recently been appointed to the Foreign Secretary and Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport's UK Soft Power Council to represent Science and Technology.



**Alex Gee is a Senior associate, Baker McKenzie's London office.**

Alex specialises in domestic and cross-border mergers and acquisitions, with a particular focus on the pharmaceutical, medical devices and healthcare industries, as well as general corporate matters

including multi-jurisdictional reorganisations, joint ventures, distressed M&A, and corporate governance issues. Alex has been recognised in Legal 500 Life Sciences and Healthcare for his "deep knowledge and experience", and by the 2023, 2024 and 2025 editions of Best Lawyers in the United Kingdom as "One to Watch" for Mergers and Acquisitions Law.



**Lauren Hayes is the Business Development Manager at ABHI**

She has extensive experience in driving global business growth and forging strong international partnerships.