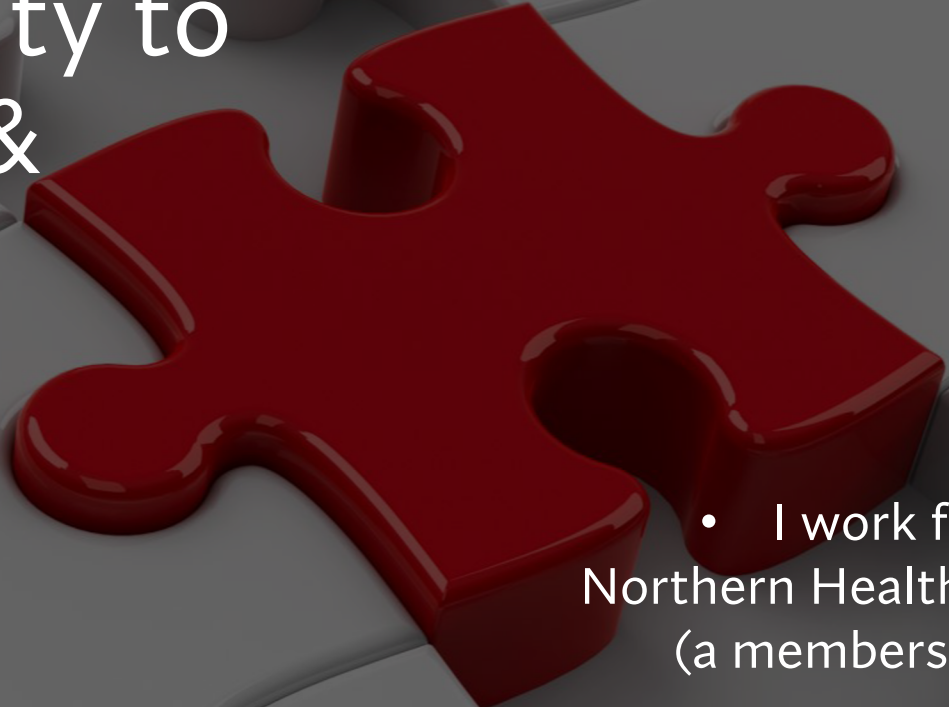


The Power of Collaboration

Professor Nicola Wilson,
October 20th , 2021

“How to Bring Meaning and Authenticity to Collaboration & Networking”

- 
- My name is Nic Wilson
 - I work for an organisation called the Northern Health Science Alliance, or NHSA, (a membership alliance created in 2013).
 - Professor of Practice, Wolfson Research Institute for Health and Wellbeing
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NHSA Purpose

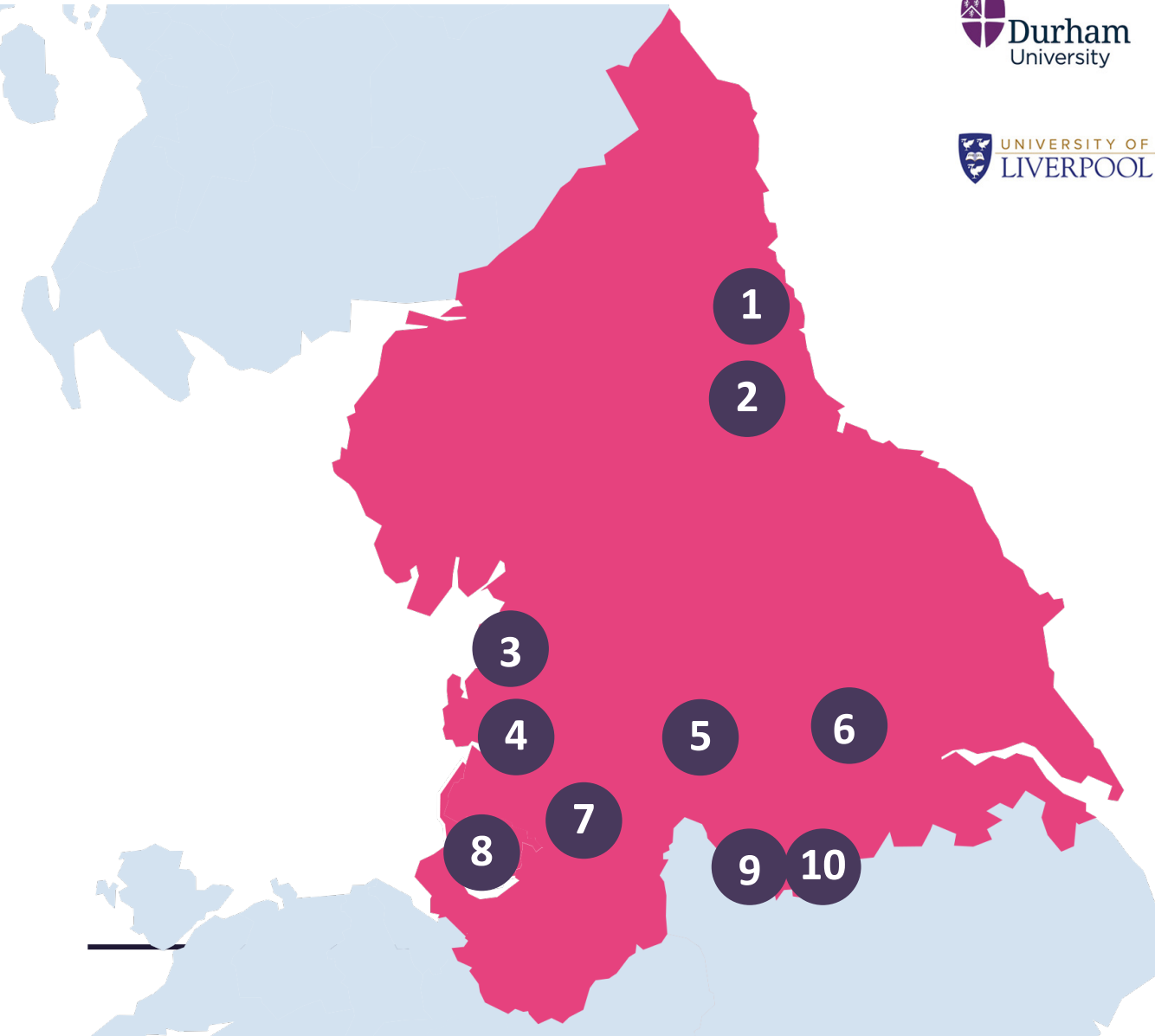
Our Mission

To unlock the combined potential of the North's health research and innovation assets for the benefit of the people and the economy

Our Vision

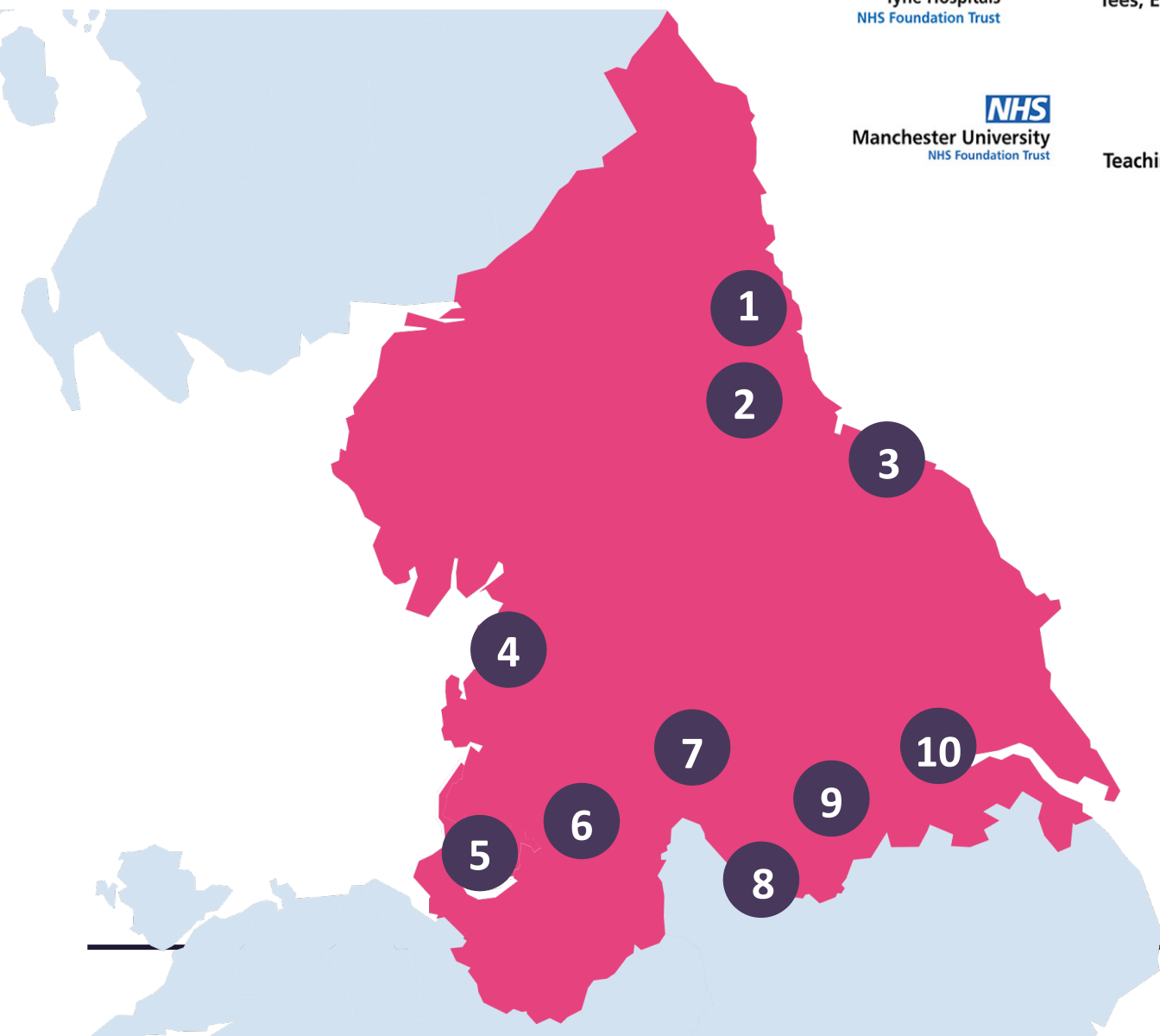
A healthy and prosperous North, powered by excellence in research and innovation across healthcare and academia with industry engagement and citizen involvement as key drivers

University Members



- 1 Newcastle University
- 2 Durham University
- 3 Lancaster University
- 4 University of Central Lancashire
- 5 University of Leeds
- 6 University of York
- 7 The University of Manchester
- 8 University of Liverpool
- 9 The University of Sheffield
- 10 Sheffield Hallam University

NHS Members



The Newcastle upon
Tyne Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Lancashire Teaching
Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Liverpool University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Manchester University
NHS Foundation Trust



The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust



Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Rotherham Doncaster
and South Humber
NHS Foundation Trust



Hull University
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust



- 1 Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals
- 2 Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (Mental Health)
- 3 South Tees Hospitals
- 4 Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
- 5 Liverpool University Hospitals
- 6 Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
- 7 The Leeds Teaching Hospitals
- 8 Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
- 9 Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber (Mental Health)
- 10 Hull University Teaching Hospitals

Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) Members



- 1 North East and North Cumbria
- 2 Yorkshire and Humber
- 3 Innovation Agency (North West)
- 4 Health Innovation Manchester

Primary role in ensuring adoption of innovation for the health and care system.

The Role of the NHSA



- ✓ Develop and promote, on behalf of our Members, the collective offer of the Northern Health and Life Sciences cluster



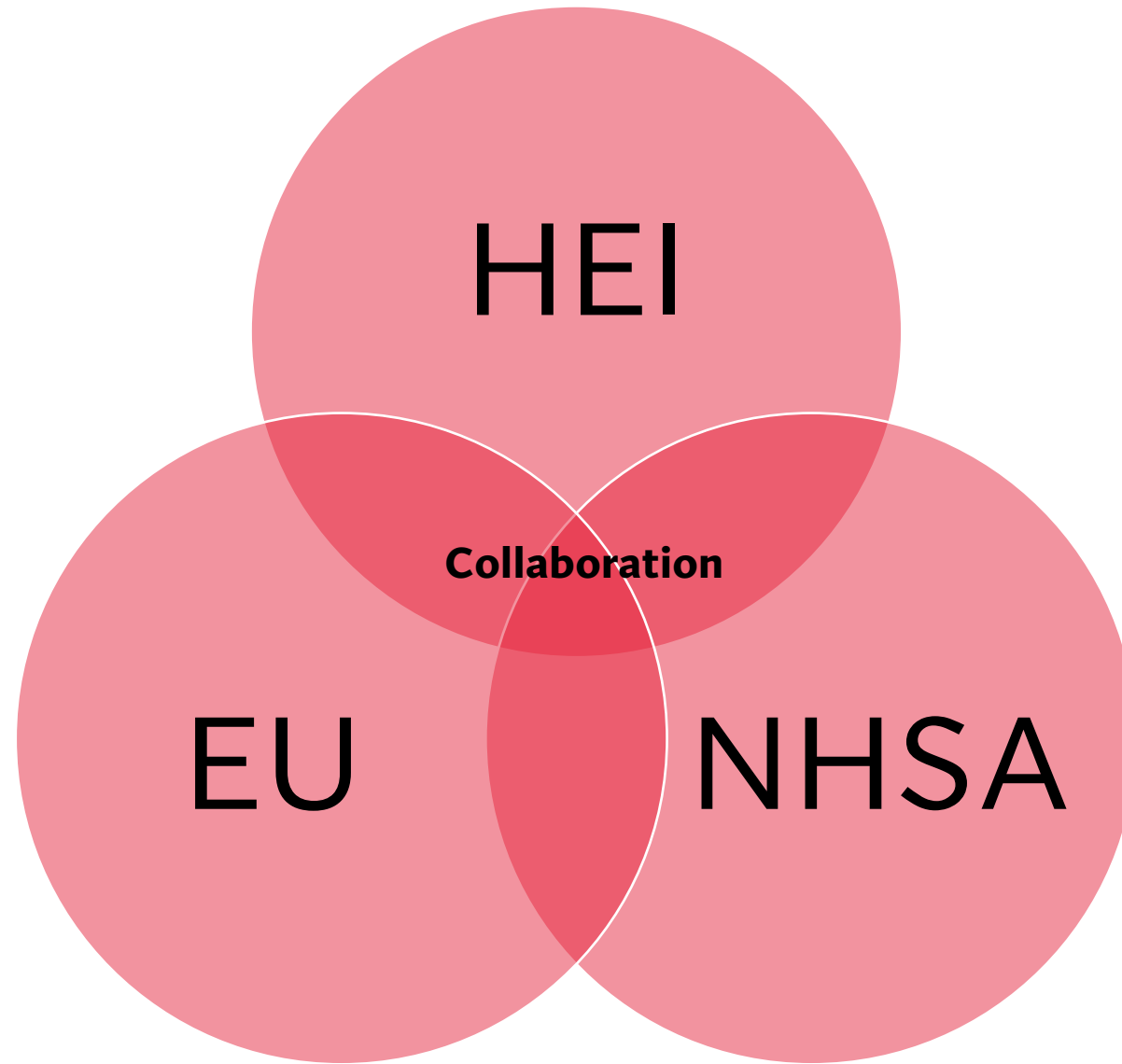
- ✓ Act as a front door for Industry to the North's Health Science research, evaluation and adoption capabilities.



- ✓ Work with members to showcase the impact of their research and services on the health of the North & UK.



- ✓ Work with funders to secure greater public (and private) sector investment in the North.
-



Started out my career training in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

Appointed to lead a Counselling and Wellbeing Service at a HEI.

Set about designing a service based on 2 principles:

- That an intervention was necessary, and
- that the University was part of the student's bigger world.

Multi-model and multi—disciplinary.

Just because something hasn't been done before, doesn't mean that it can't.



Intervention: meaning in this context to prevent further harm and/or improve functioning. Based upon this principle, it is fair to assume that most people who access counselling or mental health services are seeking an intervention.

In 2012, I was given an amazing opportunity

To be seconded to lead a team of people tasked with building research collaborations between North of England, and other regions of Europe.

Gaps in knowledge = EU funding frameworks!!!

Transferrable skills

- learning technical theory
- communication and engagement
- being multi-lingual, but not in the obvious way.

Richard Branson once said, “If someone offers you an amazing opportunity, and you are not sure you can do it, say yes and then learn how to do it later.” To avoid the perception of winging it, I would change that last word to “quickly” !



From across Europe and Into the NHSA

I have worked at bringing people and their institutions together around an idea that is **about** the people of my region and **for** the people of my region.


Institutions and organisations, often historically in Competition for funding and talent, have been Supported to work together.

Ethos of “eyes up and out” as demonstrated in social and political movements.





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1 result (1.10 seconds)

‘eyes up and out’ isn’t a thing When you google it, this is what is returned

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Learn more about your symptoms at FND Hope, cognitive issues, fatigue, seizures

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In Our Short History, We Have Already Seen Incredible Advances Made in CHM Research

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Societal and political change that has come about through collaboration.

Bringing people together with different opinions, strengths, and objectives towards a common goal



Scientific Advances Made Through Collaboration

#1: The collaborators and pioneers of In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)

it is my belief that **we make advances through collaboration because we each have a piece of the jigsaw, we each bring a skill to the collective party, and that the sum is greater than the parts in terms of resulting impact.**

Robert Edwards, a Physiologist, and Jean Purdy, a Nurse and Embryologist were working on the biological mechanisms of reproduction with their team at Cambridge University, with the early focus of their research being on genetic disorders.

Patrick Steptoe had been a Consultant Obstetrician at Oldham General Hospital since 1951, and had been pioneering surgical advances, notably the benefits of laparoscopic surgery – where you had a couple of small incisions, over the riskier large incisions usually used.



For anyone interested in reading more on the collaborative path to IVF success, I can recommend this article by Martin H Johnson, titled ‘Robert Edwards, the Path to IVF’, published in 2011 in Reproductive Biomedicine Online.

Let’s hear some further observations from a colleague of mine, that build upon the importance of

- Why an enquiring mind,
- A ‘never give up’ attitude, and
- Why a ‘team science’ approach, is critical to success.

The screenshot shows the NCBI PubMed interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'NCBI Resources' and 'How To' links. Below this is the 'PMC' (Public Medical Center) logo and a search bar. The article title 'Robert Edwards: the path to IVF' is prominently displayed, along with the author 'Martin H Johnson'. A banner for 'REPRODUCTIVE BIOMEDICINE ONLINE' and 'ELSEVIER FREE Full-Text Article' is visible. The article is dated '2011 Aug; 23(2): 245–262' and has a PMCID of 'PMC3171154'. The abstract text is visible, starting with 'The early influences on Robert Edwards’ approach to the scientific research that led to human IVF are described. His interest as a graduate student in the genetics of early mammalian development stimulated him later to investigate whether the origins of human genetic diseases such as Down, Klinefelter and Turner syndromes might be explained by events during egg maturation. This clinical problem provided the most powerful stimulus to achieve both oocyte maturation and fertilization *in vitro* in humans. Indeed, preimplantation genetic diagnosis was his main goal until he met Patrick Steptoe in 1968. A re-evaluation of his meeting with Steptoe suggests that initially Steptoe’s laparoscopic skill was of interest for its potential to solve the sperm capacitation problem. Steptoe’s impact on Edwards was twofold. First, Steptoe’s long-held interest in infertility raised this application of IVF higher in Edwards’ priorities. Second, Steptoe offered a long-term partnership, in which oocyte collection without in-vitro maturation was a possibility. The professional criticism generated by their work together encouraged Edwards to pursue a deliberate programme of public education about the issues raised and to challenge and develop professional bioethical thought and discourse about reproduction.'

On the right side, there are sections for 'Formats' (Article, PubReader, Printer Friendly, Cite), 'Share' (Facebook, Twitter, Google+), 'Save items' (Add to Favorites), 'Similar articles in PubMed' (Biology: Changing the world--a tribute to Patrick Steptoe, Robert Edwards and Jean Purdy. [Hum Fertil (Camb). 2015], Why the Medical Research Council refused Robert Edwards and Patrick Steptoe support for research on huma [Hum Reprod. 2010], Thirty years of IVF: the legacy of Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards. [Hum Fertil (Camb). 2009], In vitro fertilization in Japan - early days of in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer and future pro: [Proc Jpn Acad Ser B Phys Biol ...], Development of in vitro fertilization in the United States: a conversation between Zev Rosenwaks and Jair [Fertil Steril. 2018]), and 'Cited by other articles in PMC' (Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine Effects on Assisted Reproductive Technology: Six Cases [Medical Acupuncture. 2019], IVF: The women who helped make it happen).

Scientific Advances Made Through Collaboration

#2: The Discovery of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

“NEW HOMOSEXUAL DISORDER WORRIES HEALTH OFFICIALS.”

(article headline in the New York Times, May 11, 1982)

Sometimes, when two forces are working on the same thing, by agreeing to collaborate, they can avoid the unnecessary duplication that commonly arises by working in silo.

Scientific Advances Made Through Collaboration

#2: The Discovery of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

Sometimes, **in a world where we are all too often tempted by the desire for recognition as an individual, we risk losing sight of what can be achieved by bringing our work together with like minds working on the same problem**

Once, it was known as 'Gay-Related Immunodeficiency' – GRID
Now known as 'Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome' – AIDS.
French virologist Luc Montagnier and his team at the Pasteur Institute in Paris.
Physician-Scientist Robert Gallo and his team at the National Cancer Institute, in U.S.

Credited with their roles in the discovery of HIV as the infectious agent responsible for causing AIDS.
What began as bitter rivalry brought together two massive forces.

Book recommendation: 'And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic', Randy Shilts, Souvenir Press (2011 ed.)



Some final observations

Activism

Leader or Convenor?

Unmet Need

Network

Political and/or Social Landscape

Identify the role that suits you best. I never wanted to be 'the story', I wanted to help tell the story.

Do be open to the principles of activism to fuel your collaboration.

Convening and leading are two very different roles, and generally require very different skills sets. It is very rare that a leader of a collaborative also has the time to act as convenor.

For a collaboration to succeed it should fill an unmet need, why will collaborating succeed where going it alone hasn't worked previously?

Networking doesn't have to be a dirty word! It has become synonymous with 'pressing the flesh' and frankly, off putting.

Take the temperature of the political (small and large 'p') and social landscape, ask yourself what is the difference that you are trying to make?

Further Reading:

[On the role of emotional intelligence in 'ethical' leadership]:

Comey, J, (2019) *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership*. Pan, London

[On building successful collaboration]:

Ehavarria, M, (2016) *Enabling Collaboration: A Framework for Successfully Establishing Strategic Alliances and Partnerships: Achieving Success Through Strategic Alliances and Partnerships*. LID Publishing, London

[On the diverse forces that need to collaborate to make change happen]:

Shilts, R, (2011) *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*. Souvenir Press, London

It has been an absolute pleasure speaking with you today

Please do feel free to reach out to me, either through my work email, Nicola.Wilson@theNHSA.co.uk or my personal email address, nickiwilsoncbt@gmail.com or you can get a message to me via Amanda Ellison.

We have some time now for discussion, and I would be delighted to answer any questions you might have!
