



In depth: Building an inclusive and resilient society

How can we build on the learnings of Covid-19 to achieve a more inclusive and resilient society?

Harnessing the power of innovations will build societal health and resilience, with better outcomes for everyone.

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£6m

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SDG 3

good health and wellbeing.

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There is an intrinsic and indivisible link between a healthy and resilient society and inclusive capitalism. By building a healthy society and enabling people to live well for longer, we all benefit, both socially and economically.

This aim is central to SDG 3, which includes a target to achieve universal health coverage for all.

To increase resilience to future pandemics and address the long-term challenges facing society, our health system must pivot away from being geared towards managing illness to enabling people to live well for longer by directing resources at addressing the risk factors that impact health. Covid-19 severely impacted the health and care system in the UK, and reasons include the high prevalence of risk factors that affect health in our ageing population and the need to address health inequalities. Before the crisis, around 85% of the 'burden of disease' in the UK was from long-term conditions rather than infectious disease. While measures were put in place to

protect and support vulnerable people during the pandemic, access to health services for people with pre-existing conditions was down 20% at the peak of the crisis.

As we look to emerge from the pandemic stronger and more resilient, we must seize on opportunities offered by Health Tech innovations and data to support prediction and prevention. Achieving this will require integration between health, care and other partners – be that health innovation companies, investors, the NHS, social care, housing, benefit systems, private companies, payers and providers. Public and private funding can come together through truly inclusive partnerships that make new innovations available to all. This is why we are partnering with Innovate UK to deploy £6 million in grants to technology start-ups that are making a difference in the healthy ageing market. Our aim is to invest in dynamic health-tech businesses that have a proactive, predictive and preventative advantage; helping reduce cost and occurrence of ill-health, linked to the ageing process.

The response to Covid-19 and the incredible success of the vaccination programme have shown that collaboration across sectors, with all of society coming together to address a common challenge, can achieve remarkable benefits. The overwhelming response to 'Clap for Carers' indicated how the nation values our National Health Service and a renewed recognition of the need for inclusive health and social care for all. If we can harness this clarity of purpose, leadership and spirit of working together across the health innovation ecosystem, then we have an unprecedented opportunity to improve public health for the long term. ■