ABHI STATEMENT ON THE NHS LONG-TERM PLAN

The Association of British HealthTech Industries (ABHI) welcomes today's publication of a long-term plan for the NHS. The Association is currently preparing a detailed analysis for its Members.

ABHI Chief Executive, Peter Ellingworth, said;

"A long-term strategy to address the demands placed on the NHS is essential. That officials have been able to work diligently on this publication whilst juggling other, high profile priorities is hugely encouraging. ABHI Members and the patients we serve have been as adversely affected as anyone by problems in the delivery of non-elective and out of hospital care. Unnecessary hospitalisations, poor demand management and planning and delays in the transfer of care out of hospital, have all contrived to produce a significant year-on-year reduction in the number of elective procedures carried out by the NHS. This is bad for patients awaiting routine care and is bad for our country as it attempts to deliver an Industrial Strategy for our important sector. Any efforts to reduce bottlenecks are welcome. The HealthTech sector already has many solutions that can facilitate the delivery of care out of hospital settings and improve the efficiency of those services that will always need to be delivered in hospital.

The long-termism of the plan must also be adopted by the NHS in its approach to the adoption and spread of technology more generally. The service needs the freedom and confidence to be able to invest in solutions that produce returns in the longer-term. A focus on in-year savings, as important as it is, cannot be allowed to undermine a more expansive vision. The annualised, silo nature of NHS budgeting is a persistent and significant barrier to the introduction of the innovation that will be needed to deliver this ambitious plan. ABHI looks forward to working with colleagues from the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and the operational health and care service to fully realise the opportunity presented by our sector."