

Lessons learned from Catalonia: A pediatric healthcare innovation ecosystem



Background

In the heart of Catalonia, a revolution in healthcare innovation is unfolding. Spearheaded by the [Ministry of Health](#) and supported by AQuAS, Catalonia's Health Technology Assessment Agency, the region is pioneering a model that prioritizes digital solutions and pediatric healthcare. This centralized approach seamlessly integrates hospitals, social care, and primary care, all underpinned by an ambitious data-sharing and innovation strategy.



The opportunity

- Catalonia's centralized system creates a unique opportunity for advancing pediatric healthcare through innovation.
- A unified insurance entity simplifies the adoption and scaling of innovations, especially through reimbursement models.
- The system fosters a holistic strategy that combines healthcare delivery with innovation, encouraging systemic improvements.



The challenge

- While Catalonia excelled in promoting innovations within hospitals, pediatric care struggled to gain the same traction.
- Clinicians had difficulty adopting pediatric healthcare innovations despite strongly promoting hospital-level innovations.
- Despite successful pilots and small implementations, achieving widespread clinical adoption of pediatric innovations remained challenging for innovators.



The approach

1. **Centralized data management:** AQuAS manages electronic health records, digital prescriptions, diagnostic imaging, and pathology data across the healthcare system to seamlessly share patient data, creating a robust

infrastructure for innovation.

2. **Public-private partnerships:** Catalonia uses public-private partnerships and social impact bonds to finance and promote pediatric healthcare innovation.
 - Strategic partnerships facilitate testing across multiple healthcare providers, allowing for the systemic deployment of innovations.
3. **Pediatric innovation action plan:** The European Union funded a 12-month project to align interests across the healthcare ecosystem to drive pediatric healthcare innovations.
4. **Reimbursement-driven innovation:** Catalonia's single insurance entity streamlines the adoption of healthcare innovations by incorporating them into reimbursement schemes.
 - The model incentivizes outcome-driven, value-based care through innovation that directly benefits patients.



The success

Catalonia's centralized model has created a highly efficient healthcare innovation ecosystem:

- ✓ **Digital infrastructure:** Facilitates rapid adoption of innovations across hospitals, making it scalable and adaptable to other regions.
- ✓ **Pediatric focus:** The Pediatric Innovation Action Plan is set to drive significant advancements in pediatric healthcare solutions, with Europe-wide implications.
- ✓ **Global leadership:** Catalonia's model for value-based, patient-centric pediatric healthcare is gaining recognition as a potential blueprint for healthcare innovation globally.

“We have moved from promoting a health ecosystem to creating a health innovation ecosystem.”

— Ramon Maspons Bosch

Chief Innovation Officer (CINO), Agency for Health Quality and Assessment of Catalonia (AQuAS)