

Vaccine Onshoring Programme Monitoring Report 2022/23

This is the first annual monitoring report for the Vaccine Onshoring Programme.

At SR 21, £429.5m was allocated to strengthen the UK's onshore capacity and capability in vaccine development, manufacturing and supply chain resilience for this and future health emergencies. Around £94.5m has been legally committed to date but a significant proportion of this funding allocation is yet to be released.

Responsibility for the Onshoring Programme originally sat within the Vaccines Taskforce (VTF) but in September 2022 the VTF was closed, and the Onshoring Directorate transitioned into the Office for Life Sciences (OLS).

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan was developed alongside the programme business case in January 2022. However, this plan was based on the programme activities originally envisaged and needs to be revised to reflect changes in the funded activity. This work will be undertaken separately to this monitoring report, but it is envisaged that the revised plan will maintain the requirement for:

- Annual collection and reporting of monitoring data at programme and project level (beginning in 2022/23).
- Mid-term review (interim evaluation) in 2023.
- Final evaluation in 2026.

The onshoring programme was developed to support a resilient and responsive vaccine manufacturing ecosystem, to reduce the need for non-pharmaceutical interventions, reduce reliance on overseas vaccine manufacturing and ultimately create better health outcomes for the UK population. Onshoring also provides benefits by driving growth and jobs across the country and enhancing the UK's reputation as a science superpower. The original benefits map for onshoring is set out overleaf.

Vaccines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (VMIC)

The Vaccine Taskforce granted funding to VMIC Ltd to support development of the Vaccine Manufacturing and Innovation Centre, a vaccine research and manufacturing facility in Harwell.

VMIC UK Ltd was established in 2018 as a private company following a [I&S] grant from Innovate UK focused on vaccine manufacturing innovation.

Further funding was provided by the Vaccine Taskforce during the COVID-19 pandemic to accelerate completion of the facility and refocus the project on manufacturing vaccines. This brought the total funding allocated to [I&S]

The project encountered significant delays and cost over-runs. This combined with changes in the external environment meant a decision was made in late 2021 to bring the project to a close.

In April 2022, the facility was sold to Catalent through a competitive process. VMIC Ltd subsequently entered a voluntary liquidation. The courts appointed liquidators to act on behalf of creditors and this process is ongoing.

Catalent announced plans to invest [I&S] to complete the facility and equip it for the development and manufacturing of therapeutics and vaccines, anticipating that the site would employ more than 400 people. Once completed, the facility will be capable of producing therapeutics and vaccines, including those with an mRNA platform.

VMIC project was not completed and so did not meet the objective of providing a facility to produce vaccines for UK population but also note that changes in context meant that this was no longer required so it was a positive outcome to stop the project and look at other possible courses of action. Sale of the facility was seen as most beneficial option as it would allow facility to become part of UK vaccine manufacturing ecosystem and be operated commercially.

A lessons learned exercise was undertaken after the decision to sell the facility with the following key lessons highlighted:

Top six tips for other projects

1. Act quickly if you think there is an issue with the project or its management (SRO), clear leadership of the parties is fundamental to success.
2. Flexibility and adaptability is essential. You should tailor the work to the needs of the project. Keep coming back to the big picture aims of the project.
3. Require quality management information (MI) allowing you to make informed decisions- quality, reliability and timeliness. The VTF should be more prescriptive.
4. Always look for creative solutions, but respect the professional advice that you've been given.
5. Insert independent verification of project monitoring. UKRI's management of the project monitoring will affect every future project that goes through them.
6. Take your time to devise a plan and agree your purpose at the start. (keep re-visiting it)

Advanced Therapies Skills Training Network (ATSTN)

In 2020, the Vaccines Taskforce secured [I&S] over 3 years for the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult (CGTC) to establish the Advanced Therapies Skills Training Network (ATSTN). This is a national initiative to drive growth across the advanced therapies and vaccine manufacturing industry, through offering access to national training facilities (University of Birmingham, RoslinCT