

How Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley helped Ufonia prove the value of AI to the NHS.

**Economic evidence
in the real world.
Smarter innovation.
Better patient care.**

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Meet Ufonia

Ufonia is a UK-based digital health company using autonomous voice calls to deliver routine outpatient follow-up.

Their AI assistant, Dora, supports clinicians by safely handling post-op conversations, starting with cataract surgery.

They began as a small team with a big idea: to ease pressure on NHS services while improving patient experience.



How Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley helped Ufonia prove the value of their innovation to the NHS.

Now in 10+ NHS organisations
60,000+ patients benefitted

Real-world evidence delivered

We lead a full economic analysis across Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - comparing Ufonia's AI-led model with face-to-face care.

Published results

We co-author a peer-reviewed study proving Ufonia's AI assistant is safe, accurate - and offers strong economic value to the NHS.

[Available now on ScienceDirect](#)

2024

2023

Clinical trial and national funding

Ufonia secures an NIHR Artificial Intelligence in Health and Care Award. HIOTV co-designs a multi-site study with real-world health economics built in from the start.

Public involvement led by experts

Dr Sian Rees, Director of Community Involvement and Workforce Innovation at HIOTV, ensures patient voices shape the work and reflect best practice in co-production.

2022

Early-stage economic modelling

We deliver Ufonia's first health economics analysis - showing cost-effectiveness versus standard care. This early insight helps shape their evidence strategy.

2021

Barriers to adoption uncovered

We map out the blockers to NHS uptake, giving Ufonia a clearer path to clinical integration.

2020

Kick-off with Innovate UK

Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley (HIOTV) joins Ufonia's Innovate UK project to test automated phone calls following cataract surgery.

2019

What they said

“Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley has been an essential partner in ensuring Dora is not only safe and effective, but truly centred on the needs of all patients. Their leadership in public and patient involvement helped us build trust from the outset — by ensuring we listened to voices that are too often excluded, including people with learning disabilities, autism, and underrepresented communities. Early on, they helped us understand how to approach sensitive topics, including conversations around cancer care.

More recently, they’ve supported us in developing Dora for patients who don’t speak English — running focus groups to explore how multilingual AI conversations can be culturally sensitive and appropriate. This inclusive, co-productive approach has shaped how we design and deliver Dora — now used across 13 NHS Trusts and 2 Integrated Care Boards, primarily in ophthalmology, but also across a range of high volume, low complexity clinical pathways.

Crucially, Health Innovation Oxford and Thames Valley also supported our early evidence generation and health economic evaluation — providing critical insights into Dora’s clinical effectiveness, safety, and cost-efficiency. This early-stage support enabled us to demonstrate value to the NHS and build a strong foundation for wider adoption.”

Aisling Higham, Medical Director, Ufonia

Want to build NHS-ready evidence?

Start early. Use health economics strategically. Let us help.

Get in touch: info@healthinnovationoxford.org