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Business models as a facilitator of organizational change: Telehealth in the NHS

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Purpose

Changes to the architecture of a business model affect not only how it delivers value but also necessitate organizational change (e.g., to job roles, organizational structures, culture). This paper takes a socio-technical perspective in order to develop current understanding of business models, using a case study from the implementation of telehealth in a healthcare context. It will a) illustrate the value of applying socio-technical systems thinking and scenario planning techniques in this context; b) reframe understanding of what a business model is; and c) present some illustrative findings from the area of telehealth.

Design/Methodology

Researchers worked with 4 NHS sites (UK) and 23 industrial partners, over a 3 year period, undertaking interviews (n= 146) and scenario planning workshops (n=10) with a cross section of all stakeholders (e.g., industry suppliers, commissioners, NHS professionals, patients, carers). Template analysis within a socio-technical framework enabled alternative business and service models to be explored.

Results

Unsuitable business models are currently a barrier to mainstreaming telehealth. By collaborating to develop future scenarios, stakeholders were able to develop alternative future business and service scenarios to better meet their needs.

Limitations

The new scenarios are yet to be implemented.

Research/Practical Implications

Existing business models for mainstreaming telehealth within the NHS are not viable or sustainable. A socio-technical approach, involving all key stakeholders can help organizations to collaboratively realise alternative ways of delivering service.

Originality/Value

This paper argues that business and service models are inextricably linked, which has implications for those involved in organizational change.

(246 words)