



The UK and Global Healthcare Market: Trends and Opportunities for 2022 and Beyond

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Executive Summary

In the UK and in every country around the globe, people need healthcare. In 2018, the most recent year for which the World Health Organization (WHO) has published data, global health expenditure was US\$8.3 trillion, or 10% of global GDP. In the UK, total current healthcare expenditure in 2020 was estimated at £269 billion, a nominal-terms increase of 20% on spending in 2019, with the share of GDP attributed to healthcare rising to around 12.8% in 2020 from 10.2% in 2019.

As we head into 2022, the need for supplies and services in the UK covering everything from the most sophisticated medical technology and systems to more basic medications and equipment remains as high as ever. Consequently, there are significant opportunities available for suppliers of every kind of medical goods and services to win new business on their own doorstep.

UK suppliers can find many benefits from bidding for and winning healthcare opportunities. The simplest and most obvious is the opportunity it can bring for business expansion, increased sales and increased profits. Winning work at home or overseas can support jobs in the UK, particularly in the service and IT sectors, where the UK is strong. The innovation asked of NHS suppliers in recent years also gives UK suppliers the opportunity to be leaders in the field in a new country should they wish to work overseas in the future.

Given recent Government announcements of increased funding in the NHS in the UK and the reforms set out in areas such as social care, it is clear that opportunities to supply to the sector in the UK will remain plentiful, even when the COVID-19 pandemic eventually

subsides. Clearing the backlog of tests and scans, increasing patient capacity, improving efficiencies, investing in new equipment and technologies, and improving the NHS's community presence outside hospitals will all be priorities in the years to come.

Increased opportunities will inevitably lead to more companies looking to supply their services, meaning suppliers will need to work harder to stay ahead of the competition. Keeping tabs on new tenders will of course be paramount, but so too will early engagement activities with buyers, improving their carbon footprint in light of COP26, and maintaining and upholding standards in areas such as health and safety, modern slavery and other regulations if suppliers wish to stand out from the rest and win new contracts.

Health Contracts International (HCI) is an innovative new business intelligence service for the UK and global healthcare market. Its powerful database of live healthcare tenders, actionable insights on emerging opportunities, buyer/supplier/industry award analysis and specialist industry news makes it indispensable for suppliers with ambition to grow. While HCI draws on a UK and global contracts and awards database based on diligent daily research of over 3000 sources, its use of the data is revolutionary. HCI creates a unique experience for each subscriber based on AI, machine learning and tracking, recording and analysing user behaviour. HCI gives suppliers an unprecedented opportunity to understand the healthcare market and pinpoint the opportunities, at home and overseas, that they are most likely to bid for and win.

Introduction

In the UK and beyond, people will always need healthcare, and successful healthcare will always need supplies and services, ranging from saline and syringes to the latest and most innovative equipment. While there are of course many opportunities overseas for suppliers looking to fill gaps in the market, there also unending opportunities to supply here in the UK and benefit from the relative simplicity of providing their goods and services to national buyers rather than negotiate the processes and intricacies of working overseas.

Government funding for the NHS is increasing, social care is being overhauled, and while COVID is still causing issues for the healthcare sector and beyond, opportunities to supply to the sector will remain plentiful and lucrative

long after the pandemic subsides as the NHS looks to return to normal ways of working and boost its services into 2022 and beyond.

All this means that there are going to be many opportunities for healthcare suppliers and service providers to work with the public, private and third sectors across the UK in the coming years, and in that context we at HCI have put together this report to give a high-level overview of the UK healthcare marketplace and the opportunities that will be on offer for both current and new suppliers.

**Healthcare
is a universal
requirement,
making it a truly
global market**

The current UK health market

The NHS accounts for around 80% of all healthcare spending in the UK and spends around £27 billion every year on goods and services, and with recent Government announcements of increased investment in the years to come, the NHS will remain the key market for companies looking to supply to the health sector for the foreseeable future.

The recent announcements from the UK Government's latest spending review also provide a few clues as to where opportunities are likely to lie in the sector for suppliers in the near future. This includes the announcement that £2.3 billion will be invested over the next three years to transform diagnostic services, with at least 100 community diagnostic centres set to open across England.

Also announced was a £2.1 billion investment to support the innovative use of digital technologies to improve connections and efficiencies in hospitals and other care organisations, while another £1.5 billion will support the development of new surgical hubs, increased bed capacity and equipment to help elective services recover from the pandemic, including surgeries and other medical procedures.

All of this should inevitably lead to significant opportunities for suppliers looking to sell to the sector, especially those in the construction, IT, digital and medical equipment industries, but if the last year is anything to go by, opportunities will continue to present themselves for suppliers in almost every conceivable sector as investment in healthcare in the UK continues to gather pace.

Over the course of January to October 2021, over 6,000 contract awards were signed in the UK healthcare sector, with suppliers ranging from those providing diagnostics equipment and pathology services, to training programmes and energy efficiency consultancy. Whatever your business provides, there will almost certainly be a market for it in healthcare.

The size of these contracts ranged from several billion pounds to less than £1,000, demonstrating the breadth of the size and scale of the goods and services required by the NHS and the size of the businesses who are supplying to them.

The highest value contract saw a collection of suppliers agree to provide apprenticeship training and end-point assessment services to the Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust.

Among the other large contracts was a £47 billion deal for a collection of construction firms to build educational and research buildings and residential real estate for the Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, and a £15 billion contract for a collection of firms to provide research and laboratory services for Public Health England.

The NHS spends around £27 billion a year on goods and services

All these figures demonstrate just how big the healthcare supply market is in the UK and the scale and diversity of opportunities available for companies looking to supply to the healthcare sector in general and to the NHS in particular – and there is little reason to expect this to change anytime soon.

Social Care

Among the proposed reforms recently set out by the UK Government in the Health and Care Bill were changes to adult social care. The main headline for patients was that, from October 2023, no one arranging support (such as home care or residential care) will have to pay more than £86,000 over their lifetime in care costs. Individuals with assets of less than £20,000 won't have to pay anything towards their care from their assets, and those with assets under £100,000 will be eligible for some state support, up from £23,250.

Behind that headline, further proposals were announced that will aim to change the way adult social care is managed in England, which suppliers will need to be aware of if they are to remain compliant and continue to provide (or start providing) their services to the sector.

The Health and Care Bill proposes introducing a new duty for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to assess how local authorities are meeting their adult social care duties. There will also be a new power for the Secretary of State to intervene where the CQC considers a local authority to be failing to meet these duties.

A number of proposals also touch on digital and data driven health and social care, including an intention to legislate to ensure more effective data sharing across the health and care system. Further detail on precisely what these reforms will be are

to be set out in the forthcoming Data Strategy for Health and Social Care.

Perhaps most importantly for buyers and suppliers, as part of the wider package of changes to the arrangement of healthcare services, it is also proposed that section 75 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 Act will be repealed, including the Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition Regulations 2013, and that the powers in primary legislation under which they are made will be replaced with a new provider selection regime.

Under the new model, bodies that arrange NHS Services as the decision-making bodies will be required to protect, promote and facilitate patient choice with respect to services or treatment.

The minutiae of how procurement legislation will work if the acts and regulations mentioned above are repealed is still to be ironed out, but in short, the new requirement to facilitate greater patient choice should result in increased opportunities for suppliers of treatments and services to provide for the sector, while the greater use of data should also provide more opportunities for IT and data companies to supply their services, though they will need to be mindful of the inevitable regulations that will govern data sharing, privacy and record keeping.

Early Engagement with buyers is key

There are many things that suppliers can do to increase their chances of winning healthcare contracts, but results from a 2021 survey of current and potential healthcare suppliers undertaken by Cadence Marketing on behalf of HCI indicate that early engagement with buyers is key. Whether through marketing activities, networking or attendance at trade shows and procurement events such as P4H England 2022 (which takes place in Birmingham on 7 July), suppliers can develop and build relationships with buyers before the process begins.

Doing so could lead to advanced notice of contract opportunities, improve the quality of responses, and identify which opportunities are worth bidding for. With this in mind, 43% of participants describe their current approach to market engagement as proactive, working closely with buyers to engage early and tracking potential future opportunities.

While the above figure may not be as high as expected, there nevertheless appears to be a widespread consensus among participants of

the importance of early engagement, with 88% stating it is very important or fairly important. 72% of organisations also agree that early market engagement often provides their organisation with a better chance of winning public sector contracts.

Once the formal part of the procurement process is under way, engagement with buyers can continue, but responses to questions and clarifications will be shared with all participants in the tendering process.

There are many benefits associated with proactive business development, including the ability to plan and allocate resources in advance, anticipate potential challenges, and understand the market and competitors (including new entrants). Early engagement should be an integral part of a proactive business development plan; not least in the healthcare sector where requirements can be complex and subject to extensive regulations and standards.



Distribution of global healthcare spending

While there are clearly significant opportunities available for healthcare suppliers here in the UK, it is more difficult to generalise about the nature and extent of the opportunities available globally. At one extreme are countries like the US, where the very latest medical technology is available and spending on health is high, while at the other extreme are countries like Afghanistan and the Yemen, both of which have been massively disrupted by conflict for years and where meeting even the most basic healthcare needs can be challenging.

Overall global health spend is increasing according to the World Health Organization (WHO) report Global Spending on Health:

[Weathering the Storm \(2020\)](#), which considered data up to 2018. Obviously, 2018 is now over two years ago and, more importantly, is before the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a significant, though not yet fully apparent, effect on both healthcare spending and the wider economy of both individual nations and the world.

In that year, global health expenditure was US\$8.3 trillion, or 10% of global GDP – a clear indication of the importance of healthcare in every country and society on earth. Global health spending grew year on year from US\$7.8 trillion in 2017 and US\$7.6 trillion in 2016*. In 2018, 59% of global health spending was domestic public spending – ie spending by government on the healthcare needs of its population, with almost all the remainder being domestic private spending, mostly what is known as household out of pocket spending (OOPS). For the second consecutive year, healthcare spending from external aid accounted for just 0.2% of the total. From a supplier viewpoint, this is encouraging as

*Source: World Health Organization (WHO) report Global Spending on Health: A World in Transition (2019) available at: https://www.who.int/health_financing/documents/health-expenditure-report-2019/en/

Every country needs a vast range of medical and healthcare supplies and services

government spending is probably the sector most likely to offer opportunities for overseas suppliers to win contracts and sell into foreign markets.

The WHO's 2020 report outlines a significant disparity in the distribution of global healthcare spending around the world, with over 75% being in the WHO Europe and the Americas regions. 42% of global health spending was in the United States alone. The WHO Western Pacific region, which includes Australia, New Zealand, China, Singapore and Japan among its 27 nations, was responsible for 19%, while the South East Asian and Eastern Mediterranean regions accounted for 2% each and Africa for just 1%. The inequalities are clear, as the WHO report points out:

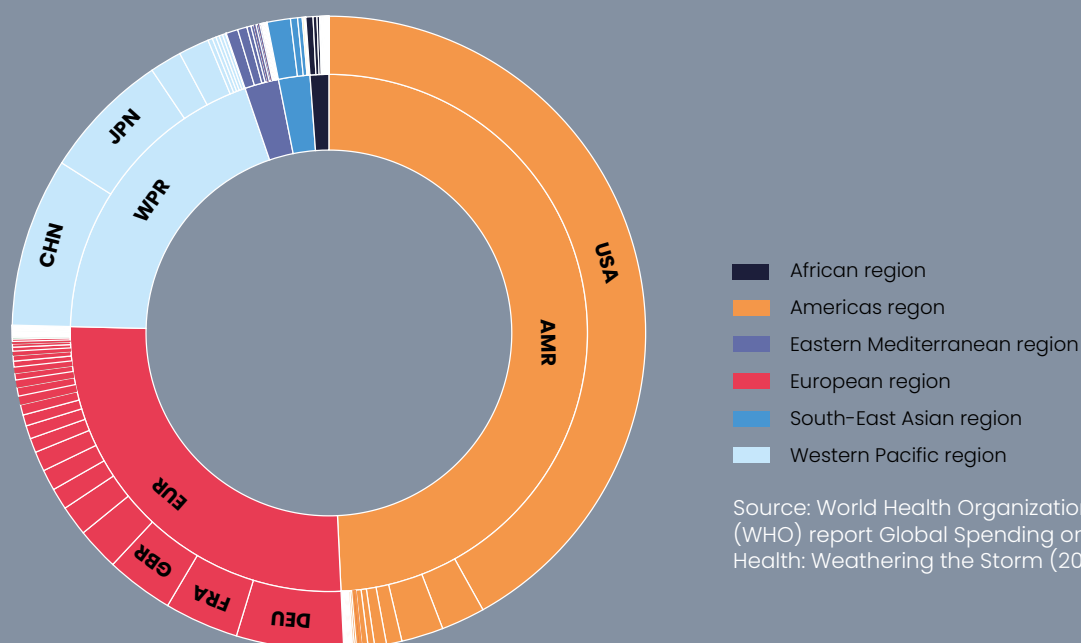
*"In 2018, 40% of the world's people lived in 51 countries with per capita health spending below US\$100. Five countries (France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States), with 9% of the world's people, accounted for more than 60% of global health spending."***

From the supplier perspective, this means that healthcare spending is concentrated

in a relatively small number of nations. This does not, however, mean that opportunities are confined to these few top spending nations. As the WHO report points out, while the high income group of nations spent an average of 8.2% of GDP on healthcare, upper middle income countries' average spend was 6.3% of GDP, suggesting that opportunities are potentially available in this group of nations too. Individual countries make very different decisions on the priority of healthcare spend. The WHO 2020 report cites South Africa and Thailand which have roughly equal GDP per capita, but South Africa spends 8.3% of GDP on health whereas Thailand spends 3.8%. This is a reminder of the extensive research a supplier needs to do when considering a potential market's suitability (more on this later).

Only a minority of countries are in the fortunate position to offer their citizens universal healthcare, free at the point of delivery, as the NHS does in the United Kingdom. For most countries, health spending is divided between government, the private sector – whether paid for out of pocket by patients or, as for many in the US, by

** Source: World Health Organization (WHO) report Global Spending on Health: Weathering the Storm (2020), available at: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240017788>



private health insurance – and the third sector, usually in the form of NGOs, charities and external aid organisations. In general, government/social insurance (eg UK National Insurance) spending on healthcare was highest in high income countries, where, according to the WHO, it accounted for two thirds of healthcare spending. In contrast, in low and lower middle income countries, the largest contributor to healthcare spending was individual out of pocket spending at 41% and 42% respectively – as poignantly illustrated on BBC Radio 4's From Our Own Correspondent on 6 February 2021, in which correspondent Will Grant described "queues outside the suppliers of oxygen tanks snaking round the block" and "a black market in air for the breathless" in which a man seeking help for his mother is given "a list of medical supplies he had to find himself, from drugs to syringes and disposable gloves". While this example is from a period of pandemic, it still illustrates the expectation that individuals will spend out of pocket to procure medical supplies and equipment from private sector suppliers in a way that is simply alien to the UK. From a supplier's perspective, scenarios like this suggest that these markets are largely based on private enterprise operating within the country concerned.

While this structure does potentially afford opportunities for collaboration with and selling to healthcare businesses, only a smaller percentage of healthcare spending is likely to be covered by any form of public sector procurement in these tiers of nations. In low income countries, external aid accounts for 30% of healthcare spending – and this is an area that offers opportunities for UK suppliers as aid agencies, NGOs and UN bodies all use competitive procurement and transparent processes to obtain their requirements.

Overall, global healthcare expenditure is dominated by the US, which was responsible for 42% of total spend in 2018, with European countries, together with Japan and China, as the other leading spenders. The majority of these countries and regions have good governance and a track record of public sector procurement involving overseas suppliers, so would be prosperous and generally safe places to do business with. In other areas of the globe, opportunities do exist but the systems are generally very different from the UK so research and caution are required.



Benefits of accessing global contracts

While the healthcare sector operates in very different ways in different regions and countries, one thing remains constant: healthcare is a universal need. In much of the developed world, in particular, citizens have high expectations of healthcare, assuming they will be protected from or cured of the vast majority of diseases, and that medical care will optimise their quality and quantity of life – even if they have chronic or life-limiting conditions. In the developing world, expectations of healthcare vary hugely, with the wealthy able to afford excellent treatment, while the poorest struggle to access even the most basic care,

vaccinations and treatments. What all these situations have in common is the need for supplies and services covering everything from the most sophisticated medical technology and systems to the most basic medications and equipment. While some of these items are produced in-country, there are opportunities for the suppliers of every kind of medical goods and services somewhere in the world.

But why would a UK supplier consider expanding into the global market, selling to or winning contracts in a foreign country or countries, with all the research, preparation and other work involved?

The simplest and most obvious benefit of accessing and winning global healthcare contracts is the opportunity it would bring for business expansion, increased sales and increased profits. Winning work overseas can support jobs in the UK, particularly in the service and IT sectors, where the UK is strong. IT plays an increasingly important

The global healthcare market offers opportunities to UK businesses of all sizes – but careful research is needed

role in healthcare and hospital management – for instance, stock management systems are used in the NHS to improve efficiency in reordering. Winning a contract overseas in an area such as IT, or the supply of specialist equipment manufactured in the UK, can provide enhanced job security for a UK workforce.

Running every aspect of an overseas contract from the UK can be at best challenging, at worst impossible. However, in many countries it is possible for a UK company to build a relationship with a local partner or partners – for instance providing on the ground support and maintenance – and also to link into or develop a local supply chain. This has multiple advantages. From the point of view of contract delivery, local partners can respond quickly, are fluent in the local language and know their way round local systems and administrations. Such partnerships are also likely to enhance the possibility of obtaining future work as buyers will have the reassurance of knowing they don't have to go overseas for answers to any problems or queries and will be supporting local businesses and employment as well as benefiting from overseas innovation and

expertise. From the point of view of a supplier, building local partnerships and a local supply chain can open up further opportunities as a skilled overseas workforce can have benefits, including cost savings on labour and transport, which can make business development and expansion easier.

While working outside the UK carries additional costs, a range of grants and innovation funds exist to support exporters. For example, businesses exporting to the EU can apply for grants to help with recruitment, training and IT costs for the staff and systems needed to complete customs declarations (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/grants-for-businesses-that-complete-customs-declarations>); while SMEs with fewer than 500 employees and a turnover of less than £100 million could be eligible for up to £2000 to support them if they are new to exporting to the EU (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/grants-to-help-small-and-medium-sized-businesses-new-to-importing-or-exporting>). Breaking into overseas markets is undoubtedly a challenge; the Department for International Trade provides grants through the Tradeshow Access Fund for companies to attend overseas trade shows – in many



sectors, these are a key way for a business to get noticed by potential overseas buyers.

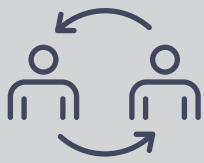
Innovation is increasingly important in the UK health sector. Working in other countries can inspire innovation by seeing trends and technologies in other countries that could in future help set a business apart from its competitors in the UK. And, of course, the obverse is true. The NHS has a worldwide reputation for excellence and is currently going through a period of change, where innovative solutions are being sought in order to maximise efficiency and deliver the optimum care to patients. A company that has won work with the NHS could find itself spearheading innovative change abroad.

Winning work internationally will enhance a company's reputation and prestige in the UK as a company that can demonstrate that it works in different parts of the world will be well regarded, including by buyers. The global healthcare market is hugely diverse and UK companies can benefit reputationally from winning work at all levels, whether by supplying the latest innovative solutions to a high or middle income country or winning contracts to supply NGOs, the UN

or aid agencies with the essentials for basic healthcare for the poorest.

Indeed, winning work with NGOs, the UN or charities can stand companies in very good stead in the UK. Since such organisations spend citizens' and taxpayers' money, they tend to have clear and transparent procurement processes with clear accountability. Many are concerned not only with price but also with value for money, green procurement and the sourcing of goods and components, and have strong ethical policies around avoiding exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking and the like. All these are increasingly concerns of UK buyers, so work with this sector can be a valuable addition to a company's portfolio.

Overall, accessing – and, more importantly, winning – global healthcare contracts can provide a UK company with many benefits, not only from the actual work won but also from the standpoints of business development, diversification of risk and reputation with UK buyers.



Organisations that can help

All this being said, getting involved in overseas markets is not entirely simple for any business and requires extensive research and planning. We in the UK are fortunate to live and do business in a country which has low levels of corruption and clear and legally enforceable regulations about how procurement and other business is conducted. While the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 are lengthy and sometimes cumbersome, they do offer a clear statement of what should happen during a procurement, something which protects both buyer and supplier. By no means every country is as well regulated and it is important for any business that they do research and get advice before getting involved in an overseas country.

The Department for International Trade has a network of experienced international trade advisers who give expert trade advice to help grow your business internationally. DIT also organises events that support businesses looking for trade opportunities.

Its [Exporting is Great](#) website offers market guides, advice on which countries are potentially most suitable in each sector – 22 nations are recommended for healthcare – and much more.

Similarly, [Open to Export](#), a free online information service from the Institute of Export & International Trade – the professional membership body representing and supporting the interests of those involved in exporting and international trade – is dedicated to helping small UK businesses get ready to export and expand internationally. It focuses on getting UK businesses ready to export, including getting started, selecting a market, reaching customers, pricing and

Working with global agencies, charities or NGOs can be a way into the marketplace

getting paid, delivery and documentation. HMRC also offers advice on import, export and customs for business (<https://www.gov.uk/topic/business-tax/import-export>).

SMEs considering working in Europe could benefit from consulting Enterprise Europe Network. [Enterprise Europe Network](#) describes itself as “the world’s largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions”. Its purpose is to help businesses innovate and grow internationally. Individual businesses cannot become members but can benefit from business support and advice from the Network’s 3000 advisers in over 60 countries.

The Scottish Government offers a range of support to Scottish businesses looking to work abroad (<https://www.gov.scot/policies/international-trade-and-investment/helping-businesses-become-exporters/>) including peer to peer mentoring through the Export Champions programme. Further support is provided by agencies such as Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Development International. Scottish Enterprise provides essential advice and support to businesses

of all sizes (<https://www.scottish-enterprise.com/support-for-businesses/exports-and-international-markets>) together with information about funding and networking opportunities, while Scottish Development International (<https://www.sdi.co.uk/>) has a network of offices and experts around the world who can support a business as it seeks to export and expand.

Focusing on healthcare, the Government runs [Healthcare UK](#), part of the Department for International Trade, the Department for Health and Social Care and NHS England. It focuses on exporting UK healthcare innovation and expertise, both that of the NHS and its suppliers. Healthcare UK runs the Healthcare UK Export Catalyst (<https://exportcatalyst.com/>) which offers export consultancy, mentoring and support.



Practices, rules and things to look out for

Procurement is an area where countries and regions behave in very different ways. UK suppliers will find the procurement regulations in the EU remarkably familiar, since they are based on the same EU Directive as the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. International bodies such as the UN and World Bank also have clear procurement rules which all participants must follow, as does the public sector in many other developed nations. It is important for suppliers to familiarise themselves with the procurement rules in the country or of the organisation so that they do not ruin their chances of winning a tender by making a procedural error. As with so much of working internationally, research is key.

It is also important to find out to what extent early engagement with buyers – which is increasingly encouraged in the UK – is considered appropriate as it can be hugely beneficial. Understanding what the buyer is hoping to achieve through a procurement can offer suppliers the opportunity to demonstrate value for money and innovation – for instance, a UK supplier could introduce a new product into the local market.

It can also be helpful to look for pre-existing agreements between the UK and other countries to cooperate in the health sector. For instance, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UK and Kuwait was signed in 2014, which focused on building closer cooperation between the two countries in nine areas of the health sector: infrastructure; knowledge transfer; digital infrastructure/informatics; primary care; training and education; medical equipment and devices; health systems management; administration of public hospitals; and non-communicable diseases/chronic diseases.*

*Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-kuwait-agree-closer-cooperation-on-health>

Winning global healthcare contracts can improve a company's reputation and help them build their business

This type of MoU not only indicates that cooperation is expected in these particular areas but indicates that the wider market is likely to look favourably on a UK supplier.

However, in some parts of the world, the rules can be more fluid and suppliers need to take care lest they are inadvertently drawn into corrupt practices. [Transparency International](#) monitors corruption around the world and publishes a country by country index indicating corruption levels across the globe. Monitoring sources such as this is an essential element of the initial research needed before getting involved in business or bidding for a procurement opportunity overseas.

Wherever an opportunity arises, research is key, particularly if a supplier chooses to pursue opportunities outside 'the west'. One aspect which needs to be considered is cultural difference – which can range from concern about the use of particular ingredients or materials in products for religious reasons to a very different attitude to and understanding of what happens in a business meeting. Different countries have their own social mores and it is important to be aware of what is appropriate and avoid causing offence.

Suppliers also need to consider the political and economic situation in the country in which they are considering doing business or tendering. While many of the leading overseas healthcare markets are in politically stable and developed nations, there are also extensive opportunities in so-called emerging markets. Although they represent a relatively modest percentage of global health spend, these markets can offer significant opportunities to businesses – getting involved early or introducing a previously unknown innovation can make yours the recognised brand in the sector. First mover advantage can allow a supplier to build local partnerships and place it ahead of competitors, something which can be particularly helpful for a smaller business.

However, emerging markets notoriously come with risks. Some countries can be politically unstable. Political instability can lead to unrest, which in turn has serious economic consequences. Close association with one regime can be disadvantageous for a business if the regime is ousted. The economic uncertainty associated with political upheaval can also mean a sudden fall in demand – or, worse, a failure to pay for goods or services already supplied.

It is also important for a UK supplier not to be drawn into situations overseas that could be materially or reputationally disadvantageous to their organisation in the UK. For instance, while corruption and bribery is taken very seriously in the UK, it is part of normal business practice in some countries. Even major multinationals have fallen foul of this – for instance, in January 2020, Airbus agreed to pay €991 million in the UK and €3.6 billion worldwide as part of a deferred prosecution agreement reached with the Serious Fraud Office and bodies in France and the US for bribery offences overseas.

Similarly, the UK has high standards regarding labour conditions, the avoidance of modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation, all of which are grounds for exclusion from public sector procurement in the UK. However, standards in other countries are not necessarily as high and a supplier doing business overseas or entering into a local partnership or manufacturing agreement overseas must be diligent to avoid involvement, whether directly or indirectly through partners or the supply

chain, with practices that will be detrimental to the business in the UK.

These risks suggest that healthcare suppliers should be cautious about involvement in emerging markets. One potentially less risky way to start working in these parts of the world and potentially to come to a greater understanding of how local markets work without such levels of risk, is to tender for healthcare opportunities offered by NGOs, charities and international bodies such as the World Bank and the UN. As noted above, these buyers are governed by coherent and transparent procurement processes, which protect suppliers from the risk of involvement in corrupt or illegal practices, and in some countries they are responsible for up to 30% of healthcare spend, meaning they offer significant levels of opportunity. Working for this type of organisation is a safe way to start to get involved in the global healthcare marketplace, to make contacts overseas and to improve understanding of the local marketplace, the opportunities it offers and how it operates.



What HCI can do for you

Health Contracts International (HCI) is an innovative new business intelligence service for the UK and global healthcare market. Its powerful database of live healthcare tenders, actionable insights on emerging opportunities, buyer/supplier/industry award analysis and specialist industry news makes it indispensable for suppliers with ambition to grow. While HCI draws on a UK and global contracts and awards database based on diligent daily research of over 3000 sources, its use of the data is revolutionary and creates a unique experience for each subscriber.

HCI draws on artificial intelligence and machine learning to hone each user's experience of the portal. Three users entering the same search terms will each receive subtly different results based on precisely what their user history indicates is most relevant to them. This is achieved by tracking, recording and analysing user behaviour. The system also captures positive relevance interactions when a user views documents and recommends documents of a similar nature. This results in a search experience tailored specifically to each user's needs, as the application sifts through the content, focusing on returning relevant results. This means that HCI users are likely to receive fewer results for their searches – but these results will be highly relevant and actionable, with no cross.

HCI's system also supports you to improve your search criteria. The system evaluates customer search criteria against documents that have been identified as relevant and provides the user with percentage success rates for different criteria as well as suggesting what criteria be removed or added to optimise a user's search success. Changes are logged, making it easy to revert to a previous set of criteria if the user is unhappy with the results.

HCI allows suppliers to understand the UK and global healthcare market

HCI makes use of award data, from which much more can be learned than most people realise. HCI allows users to create specific award data profiles for entire industry sectors, buyers and suppliers and to set contact reminders relating to specific awards and whom to contact for further information, eg about potential retendering. Complex results are presented simply and clearly in a visual format allowing users to know what contracts are coming up, when, and whom to contact, enabling users to create and manage a pipeline of future relevant procurements. The contact details and reminders facilitate early engagement, which is a crucial part of any supplier's strategy. The data also offers opportunities to gain insight into what other suppliers are doing and which buyers they are working with, enabling users both to track competitor activity and identify potential opportunities for collaboration, as well as allowing users to find out which buyers are most active in their market.

HCI offers all of this and more for both the UK and overseas healthcare market, giving suppliers an unprecedented opportunity to understand the healthcare market and pinpoint the opportunities, at home and overseas, that they are most likely to bid for and win.



Get started with a free HCI demonstration tailored to your business today and get full access to the various intelligence insights that HCI has to offer.

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