

# NHS Supplychain: Collaboration to Maintain Infection Prevention and Control Resilience

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**Who NHS Supply Chain are and Why resilience Matters**

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**Building resilience for Infection prevention and winter pressures**

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**The Future: Strengthening System Wide Collaboration**

# We are NHS Supply Chain

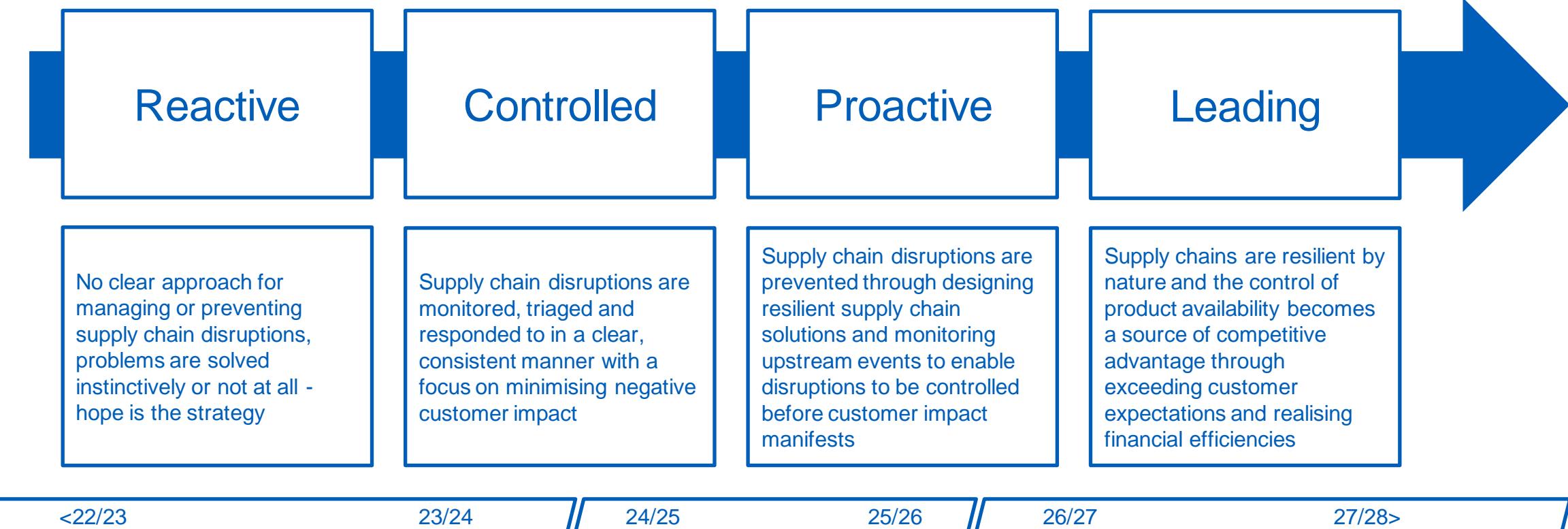
**Our role is to source, deliver and supply healthcare products, services and food for NHS trusts and healthcare organisations across England and Wales.**

By working in collaboration with the healthcare system and suppliers, we help the NHS to put patients first.

We provide cost-efficient, resilient, clinically assured products that are responsive to frontline needs.

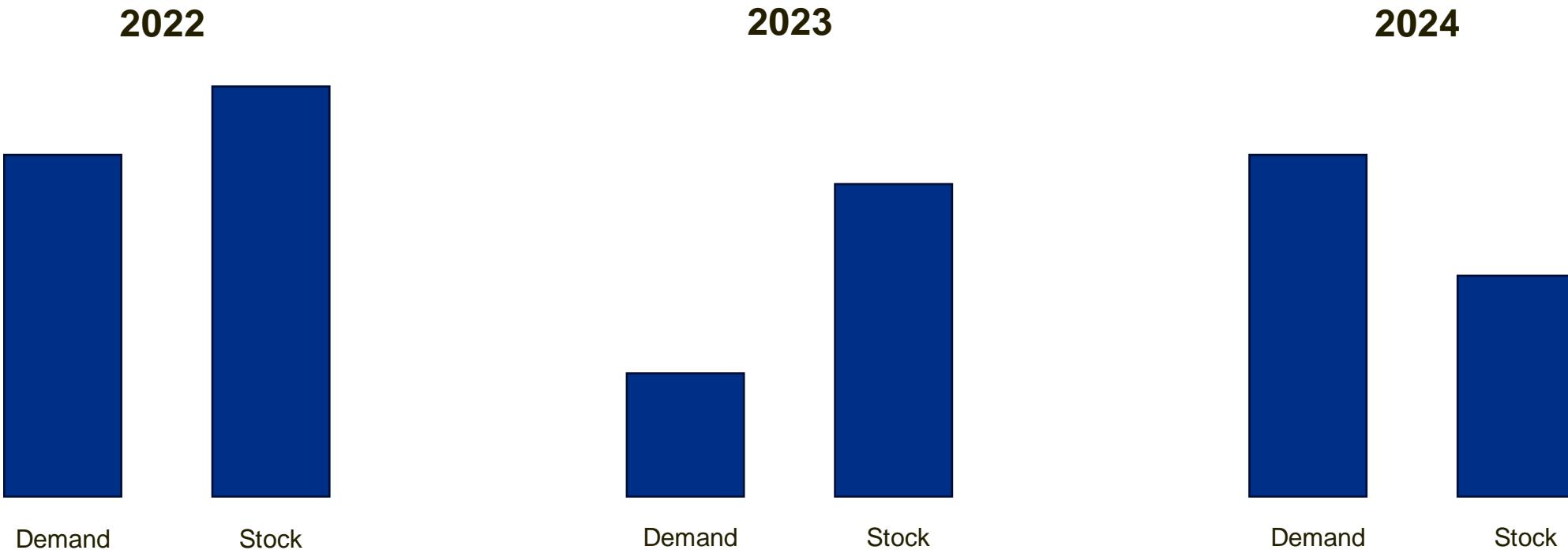


# Resilience Maturity Road Map



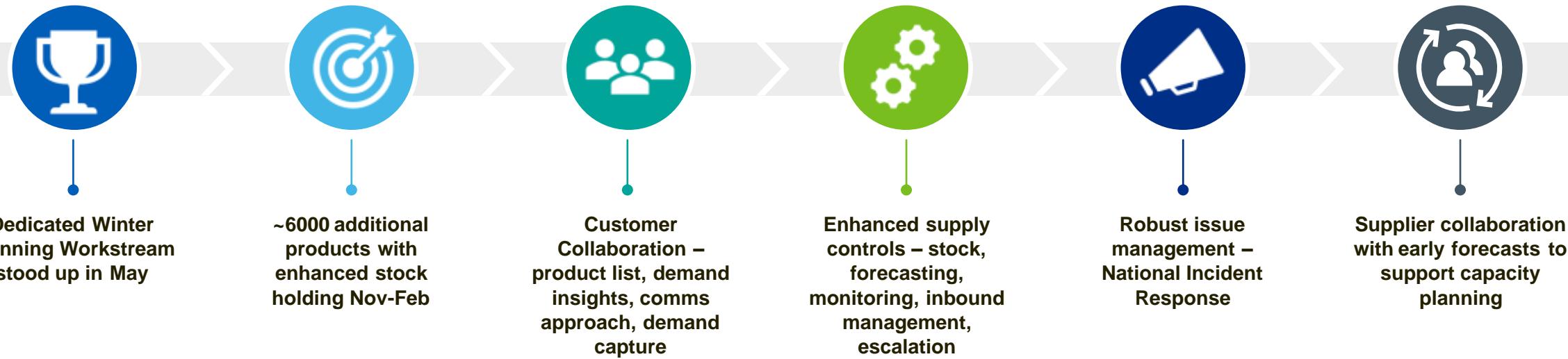
# Why? And Why Now?

- Ensuring robust winter preparedness is a key priority for NHS Supply Chain.
- 2024 saw system-wide residual stock deplete, coinciding with a quad-demic spike in demand.
- Collaborative national response prevented major disruption – lessons learned pointed to a need to adapt.



# What Are We Doing Differently?

- Winter 2025/2026 operated with enhanced treatment strategies, to reduce the risk of supply disruption.
- Following a lessons learned review, we identified several areas to strengthen our approach to:
  - Enhance collaboration
  - Identify of critical products
  - Improve engagement
  - Align with national strategies



# IPC & Clinical Considerations around winter

## Seasonal IPC Guidance Changes

Winter brings regular NHSE and UKHSA IPC updates in response to flu, RSV, norovirus and emerging pathogens. We monitor changes and assess impacts on clinical products and stock availability.

## Masking & PPE Protocols

Masking requirements shift based on regional transmission and risk. Early insight helps us adjust stock levels proactively.

## HCID Triggers

Local or regional HCID declarations can increase demand for specific PPE. Close links with IPC leads ensure rapid awareness and response.

## Data-Driven Clinical Insight

Flu surveillance, hospital activity data and infection trends inform our demand forecasting and stock planning.

## System-Wide Information Sharing

Regular intelligence sharing across NHS Trusts, IPC teams, public health partners and NHS Supply Chain supports a consistent, safe winter response.



# IPC Collaboration - Winter Focus

- A key lesson learned in 2024 was that changes in IPC guidance can result in supply challenges
- 2025 saw proactive communication, meeting regularly with regional IPC leads
- Reviewed changes in guidance, and infection rates – using insight to inform forecasts
- Buying decisions were informed by IPC insight
- When guidance changed, we were among the first to know
- As a result, local needs were met throughout winter, with contingency in hand
- Feedback has shown NHS trusts have found inventory and forecasting information has improved their decision making.



# IPC Collaboration- Future ways of working

**Strengthening Early-Warning Mechanisms**

Develop faster routes for IPC leads to flag emerging risks so stock planning can respond even earlier.



**Embedding IPC Insight in Supply Decisions**

Systematically integrate IPC intelligence into forecasting, stock controls, and product range decisions.



**Expanding Regional Partnerships**

Continue building regional forums where hospitals, IPC teams, and supply chain colleagues can share trends and operational challenges.

**Enhanced Data Sharing**

Use shared dashboards and real-time surveillance data to support mutual visibility of infection trends and product implications.



**Scenario & Surge Planning**

Co-develop winter and outbreak scenarios with IPC leads to stress-test response plans and ensure resilience.



**Continuous Improvement Cycle**

Annual “lessons learned” review with IPC colleagues to embed improvements into the next winter plan.

