

Navigating the **UK** **Private Healthcare** Market.

| A guide for HealthTech companies.



The UK's private healthcare market is growing.

Valued at £12.4 billion, there is an increase demand for healthcare outside the NHS due to its constraints.

As a market, the private sector is appealing to HealthTech startups due to its perceived lower barrier to entry when compared to the NHS.

This carousel is adapted from the LinkedIn Live delivered on this topic with **Tim Wright**.

The graphic is a LinkedIn Live event banner with a dark blue background. On the left, there are two small video thumbnails: the top one shows Dr. Derrick Khor with the caption 'Dr. Derrick Khor' and the bottom one shows Tim Wright with the caption 'Tim'. The main text in the center reads 'UK Private Healthcare Market Opportunities for HealthTech Companies'. To the right, there is a circular portrait of Tim Wright with the caption 'Tim Wright Founder & CEO'. At the bottom center, there is a logo for ZOQS with the tagline 'Driving Digital Solutions'. A small information icon (i) is located at the bottom left of the main text area.

Could you tell us about your experience in the UK private healthcare market?

I'm originally from Australia, where I trained as a physiotherapist.

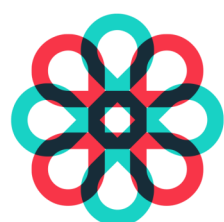
I founded a business offering onsite physiotherapy for corporates, which grew significantly and was eventually acquired by Nuffield Health.

Over the past decade, I've worked with over **50 digital health businesses**, helping them scale in the UK private market.

At Zoas, we provide **go-to-market strategies, sales, and partnership advisory services** for digital health companies.



Tim Wright, Founder.



ZOAS

Driving Digital Solutions

What are the key challenges digital health startups face when entering this market?

One major challenge is understanding the market's complexity.

The NHS dominates, but the private sector's growth offers opportunities if startups can navigate its nuances.

The biggest challenge is identifying the right vertical to target.

For example, telehealth exploded during the pandemic, but its business models have struggled with high utilization rates.

Knowing where and how your solution fits is critical.

Could you tell us more about the current state of the UK private healthcare market?

The private sector is growing, driven by increased NHS strain, Brexit, and the pandemic.

The market consists of multiple verticals:



Private health insurance



Private health providers



Occupational health



Corporate health



Pharmaceuticals



Telehealth

Each of these has unique dynamics and opportunities.

For example, the insurance sector is focused on reducing claims costs, while the corporate health sector prioritizes diversity, inclusion, and hybrid working solutions.

What about opportunities and areas should startups focus on?

Mental health, musculoskeletal (MSK) care, women health and cancer are key areas.

There's high demand for solutions that reduce **claims costs for insurers** or **improve workplace health** for corporates.

Digital triage and self-management tools are gaining traction, especially those that integrate AI with human oversight.

Startups should also explore less saturated segments like **occupational health or cash plan insurance providers**, which are more receptive to innovation.



What market entry strategies do you recommend for HealthTech startups?

Start with **comprehensive market research** to understand pain points and gaps in specific verticals.

Feasibility studies are crucial.

Next, **focus on building relationships.**

The UK private healthcare market is relationship-driven—you need a network to get your solution in front of decision-makers.

Leverage critical friends in the industry for feedback on pricing, product fit, and positioning.

Finally, **consider ambassador models.** Offering your solution at a reduced rate to high-profile clients can generate valuable case studies and credibility.

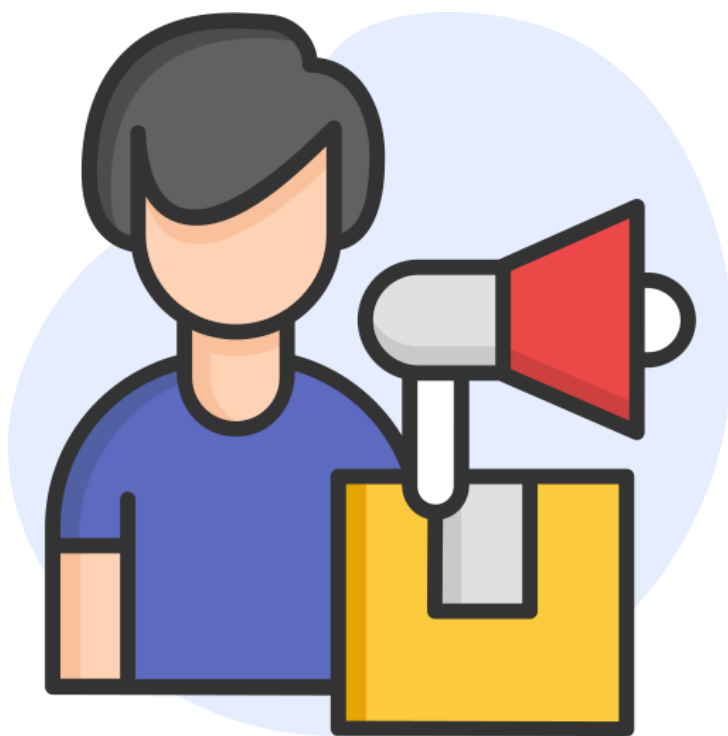
Can you share more about ambassador models?

Ambassador models involve **partnering with high profile clients** to build credibility.

Startups offer their solution at **a reduced cost**, often in exchange for PR, testimonials, and case studies.

This creates a snowball effect, as **other clients see the value** and are more likely to adopt the solution.

It's an excellent way to establish a foothold in the market, especially for early-stage companies.



What role does NHS validation play in breaking into the private market?

NHS partnerships are a significant advantage.

They demonstrate that your product **meets stringent regulatory and operational standards.**

For example, solutions with NHS success often find insurers and private providers more receptive because the validation reduces perceived risk.

However, it's not essential.

Some startups succeed purely by addressing private market needs effectively.



How should startups approach pricing in the private market?

Pricing must be tailored to the vertical.

Insurers might prefer capitated models, while private providers often opt for transactional pricing.

Corporate clients are sensitive to budget constraints, so startups might offer discounted first-year rates.

The key is flexibility and understanding the value drivers for each segment.

Solutions that combine cost reduction with added value tend to perform best.



How can startups validate willingness to pay before heavily investing?

Critical friends and focus groups are invaluable.

Engage potential buyers across verticals – HR directors for corporates, proposition leads for insurers, and commercial directors for cash plans.

Present your concept and gather feedback on pricing, perceived value, and potential adoption barriers.

This approach is cost-effective and helps refine your offering without burning through resources.



Marketing and branding seem equally important. What's your advice here?

High-quality marketing collateral is a must.

Create visually appealing decks, case studies, and demo videos tailored to each vertical.

Ensure your messaging highlights unique selling points and aligns with buyer pain points.

Don't underestimate the power of first impressions – **a polished presentation can make or break a deal.**



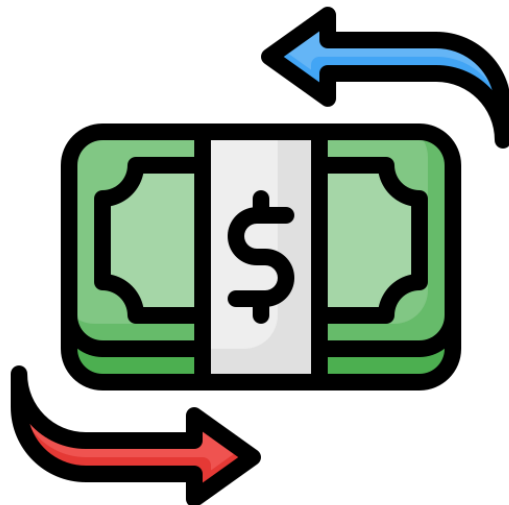
What about sales cycles? How should startups manage expectations?

Sales cycles vary widely.

Insurers might take **8-12 months** due to complex procurement processes, while smaller corporates or brokers might close deals in **3-6 months**.

Startups need to plan cash flow accordingly and focus on building a pipeline to sustain momentum.

Patience and persistence are key.



How important are brokers in this ecosystem?

Brokers are key players, especially in the insurance market.

They act as intermediaries, helping corporates find the best health insurance, EAPs, or digital health solutions.

If startups can build relationships with brokers, they can gain access to a **large pool of corporate clients** without having to approach each one individually.

Brokers also **provide valuable feedback** on market trends and pricing.



What final advice would you give HealthTech startups looking to succeed in this market?

1. Know your market.

2. Invest in building relationships.

3. Tailor your strategy to each vertical.

4. Be agile in pricing and development.

5. Use case studies to build credibility.

And most importantly,

Enjoy the journey.

Hope you all found this helpful!



This is part of a series to help
HealthTech founders access better
resources for their projects.

For more resources, visit:
<https://adoptadoc.com/resources/>