

The Department of Health's Strategic Objectives for the Health and Social Care Information Centre: April 2014 to March 2015

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The purpose of this paper

1. This paper provides the Board with an update on the process for preparing and agreeing the Statement of Strategic Objectives for the HSCIC to progress during 2014/15.
2. The Board is asked to note this report and consider whether it wishes to approve the Statement as attached.

The Statement of Strategic Objectives

3. The attached Statement of Purpose has been drafted in collaboration with the HSCIC's sponsor team in the Department of Health. Although it does not have the status of a "mandate", it is intended to address the same purpose, which is to provide a steer to the health and care system as to the HSCIC's priorities for 2014/15. As such, it contributes to the accountability process for the HSCIC.
4. The document is intended to sit alongside the HSCICs strategy and business plan, and support the Framework Agreement by signalling the DH's specific areas of interest/priority for 2014/15.
5. It is framed around six strategic themes, which were proposed by the HSCIC's sponsor. The themes are:
 - Providing information to support better care through the delivery of high quality data collection, analysis and storage services;
 - Delivering the national technology services and maintaining the national infrastructure services used by health and social care organisations. This includes working with the DH to set the strategy and manage the transitional arrangements from current Local Service Provider (LSP) contracts into the new environment;
 - Protecting information by ensuring that services - including those delivered by the HSCIC - are underpinned by relevant and effective information governance standards, and thereby promoting trust and interoperability across the health and care system;
 - Reducing the administrative burden across the health and care system;
 - Working in partnership with the NIB to implement the "Power of Information strategy document published by the DH in 2012, and the informatics delivery strategy that will be published in the Autumn of 2014;
 - Working in partnership with the NIB to ensure there is leadership and expertise to enable the health and care system to look more widely at the future strategic technology agenda, especially in regard to wider social and economic interests.
6. All of these are underpinned by an additional priority, which is to complete the transformation of the HSCIC and its workforce in order to build the capability to fulfil all of its statutory duties as set out in the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and additionally to manage those services, programmes and products it has been commissioned to deliver.

7. The production of this Statement was not completely aligned with the production of our strategy and business plans for 2014/15. This will be rectified in future years.
8. The document has been shared with our national partners. Feedback was received from:
 - Dame Fiona Caldicott commended all the statements about Information Governance in the document, and confirmed there are no errors or omissions in it'
 - Charlotte Buckley, DH Deputy Director for People, Communities and Local Government requested that the wording regarding the HSCIC's commitments regarding technical advice and actions around Care Bill and integration. She expects that HSCIC should, over the course of this year, be taking on a much stronger leadership role in terms of the technical work required around the development of key national standards and technical solutions to support the Care Bill, BCF and Pioneers;
 - Peter Knight, DH Deputy Director, Head of Research Information and Intelligence confirmed that his comments had already been incorporated into the Statement;
 - Chris Carrigan, Public Health England offered a number of additions to emphasise the importance of collaborative working.
9. The only issue that requires discussion concerns the allocation of responsibility regarding the national technology strategy. The Board will be aware that the IGAR recommended quite clearly that the HSCIC should lead on this. Subsequent discussions have resulted in an agreement between the DH and NHS England that NHS England will lead on the technology strategy and the HSCIC will lead on the underpinning technical strategy. This is still subject to discussion, and the draft document which is attached reflects the current position (see bullet 6 in paragraph 5 and bullet 2 of paragraph 23). Other sections of the document are clear on the HSCIC's responsibility regarding the management of the NIB's Technical Design Authority and Standardisation Committee for Care Information, and regarding information and technical standards

Actions Required of the Board

10. The Board is asked whether it is content to approve the Statement as attached, in the light of paragraph 9 above.

Appendix - The Department of Health's Strategic Objectives for the Health and Social Care Information Centre: April 2014 to March 2015

The purpose and background for this Statement

1. This Statement is intended to set the high level strategic priorities that the Department of Health (DH), as the steward of the health and social care system in England, expects the Health and Social Care Information Centre (the HSCIC) to progress on its behalf during 2014-2015, for the benefit of the health and care system as a whole.
2. The HSCIC is an Executive Non Departmental Public Body, and independent Arms-Length Body. It delivers a range of statutory functions for the health and wider care system as a whole, and is commissioned to design and deliver a portfolio of information and technology services, products and programmes for wider use.
3. As such, the HSCIC operates as part of the wider health and care system. The HSCIC must therefore work collaboratively in order to discharge its duties, not only with other national Arms-Length Bodies, but also with commissioners and providers of local NHS organisations and with local authorities.
4. The HSCIC is an active member of the National Information Board (NIB). The NIB has been established out of the Informatics Services Commissioning Group (ISCG) which has played an important role during 2013/14 in bringing together all national organisations in order to facilitate a more collaborative approach to the commissioning of informatics services. The NIB will now take on the ISCG's responsibilities for the development of the strategy for the health and care information system, as well as the management of commissioning and investment proposals.

System-wide strategic objectives for the HSCIC in 2014/15

5. There are six areas where the DH expects the HSCIC to prioritise its efforts. These are broadly aligned with priorities set out in the HSCIC's own strategy document. They are:
 - Providing information to support better care through the delivery of high quality data collection, analysis and storage services;
 - Delivering the national technology services and maintaining the national infrastructure services used by health and social care organisations. This includes working with the DH to set the strategy and manage the transitional arrangements from current Local Service Provider (LSP) contracts into the new environment;
 - Protecting information by ensuring that services - including those delivered by the HSCIC - are underpinned by relevant and effective information governance standards, and thereby promoting trust and interoperability across the health and care system;

- Reducing the administrative burden across the health and care system;
 - Working in partnership with the NIB to implement the “Power of Information” strategy document published by the DH in 2012, and the informatics delivery strategy that will be published in the Autumn of 2014;
 - Working in partnership with the NIB to ensure there is leadership and expertise to enable the health and care system to look more widely at the future strategic technology agenda, especially in regard to wider social and economic interests.
6. All of these are underpinned by an additional priority, which is to complete the transformation of the HSCIC and its workforce in order to build the capability to fulfil all of its statutory duties as set out in the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and additionally to manage those services, programmes and products it has been commissioned to deliver.

Strategic objective 1: Providing information to support better care through high quality data collection, analysis and storage

7. The HSCIC manages the national information asset for health and social care. It has a duty to maximise the accessibility and utility of that asset. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) requires it to:
- Collect, analyse, and present national data on health and social care taking due regard of information standards published (under section 250 of the Act) or guidance issued by the Secretary of State or NHS England;
 - Establish and operate systems for the collection or analysis of information as directed by the Secretary of State for Health or NHS England;
 - Process mandatory or non-mandatory requests from other bodies/persons to set up a system for the collection or analysis of information;
 - In collaboration with partner, establish, maintain and publish a database of quality indicators in relation to the provision of health services and adult social care in England.
8. Additionally, the DH expects the HSCIC to:
- Develop and consolidate the capability and reputation of the HSCIC as the central holder of information for the Health and Social Care system;
 - Extend the HSCIC's capacity and capability to collect, analyse and store securely larger and more complex data sets, according to the requirements of its commissioners;
 - Work collaboratively with partners across the health and care system, and the information marketplace, regarding the provision of accessible and usable information for the public, through NHS Choices and other channels;
 - Ensure that there is effective communications and engagement to support the HSCIC's role and functions, having due regard to the sensitivity of data and public confidence;

- Deliver the extraction and data linkage services required by its commissioners;
 - Work with partners and stakeholders to plan for the effective management of Mental Health data to support the development of parity of esteem for Mental Health;
 - Plan for the information flows that will be required to underpin the Care Bill legislation.
9. The DH welcomes and supports the additional commitments set out in the HSCIC's strategy. These include:
- Introduce a new publications strategy aimed at improving the utility of the data and statistics published by the HSCIC;
 - Act on the recommendations from the Francis Review to ensure there is a better understanding and greater use of outcomes and experience data;
 - Work with partners to develop and publish proposals to rationalise the proliferation of indicators that are used nationally, to help people have greater confidence in the information and statistics that are published.

Strategic objective 2: Maintaining the infrastructure for the health and care system

10. The HSCIC is managing a significant portfolio of major IT programmes and projects which support the whole health and care system. The priorities for HSCIC are to:
- Ensure that the information and data infrastructure is capable of providing a coherent architecture so that health, public health and social care organisations can work together currently, and in the future;
 - Manage the procurement of those components of the national infrastructure, and in doing so, ensure that due regard is given to the wider needs across the health and care system, for example as required to support and improve integration and interoperability across care settings;
 - Ensure the security and resilience of informatics assets including those classified as components of the 'critical national infrastructure' and engage in appropriate risk management and assurance reporting.
11. Additionally, the DH expects the HSCIC to support Trusts to maximise the benefits from the central investment made in the LSP contracts, and to guide the Trusts to manage their exits prior to contract expiry.
12. The DH also welcomes the additional commitments set out in the HSCIC's strategy, including:

- Developing closer links with the market, to ensure that system suppliers are better able to develop services which work alongside the national infrastructure;
- Extending the availability and use of standards to support greater interoperability;
- The transition of the local service provider contracts into local management arrangements.

Strategic objective 3: Protecting health and care information

13. As an organisation entrusted with confidential data, the HSCIC has a responsibility to ensure all data is kept secure, that any disclosure is legal and that standards are established for the wider system. In doing so, it will balance the expected benefits against the associated risks.

14. The HSCIC has a duty to provide leadership and guidance to the health, public health and social care organisations to set standards for protecting information and assuring compliance with those standards.

15. It has a duty to:

- Prepare and publish the Code of Practice in respect of the practice to be followed in relation to the collection, analysis, publication and other dissemination of confidential information concerning, or connected with, the provision of health services or of adult social care in England;
- Develop and publish appropriate guidance and advice on Information Governance matters to support the wider system;
- Ensure that there are clear arrangements in place for the accreditation and oversight of Accredited Safe Havens and their use of personal confidential data;
- Publish a register containing details of the information the HSCIC collects or may derive from a collection, for example, following analysis of the information;
- Review and assess the extent to which the information it collects meets the relevant published information standards, and publish that assessment to inform future requirements.

16. In addition, the DH expects the HSCIC to:

- Progress the establishment of an Information Governance Alliance which will operate as a “centre of expertise” to provide a single source of authoritative advice and guidance for the care system, promote appropriate information sharing and develop networks to support all parts of the system;
- Provide staff and expertise to support the implementation of the Government’s response to the second Caldicott Review;
- Provide advice on cyber-security and the safeguarding of data.

17. The DH welcomes and supports the additional commitments included in the HSCIC’s own strategy document, in regard to:

- The development of clear standards by which organisations can apply to become accredited safe havens to enable controlled access to data as set out in the Act.

Strategic objective 4: Reducing Burdens

18. The HSCIC has a statutory duty to work with its partners to manage an overall reduction in data burden on health and care services.

19. This is one of several statutory functions carried out by the HSCIC. It is currently of the utmost importance across the health and care system.

20. The DH's key priorities are for the HSCIC to:

- Fulfil its statutory duties in respect of reducing the data burden on NHS organisations;
- Co-ordinate and manage the implementation of the Concordat signed by Arms-Length Bodies to reduce data burden;
- Ensure there is a system-wide response to the NHS Confederation's report on "Challenging Bureaucracy" which was published in November 2013;
- Extend the focus of the ROCR processes and the "Busting Bureaucracy audits to cover burden generated in all care settings, by national and local commissioning organisations, and to include the burden on local authorities, for adult social care.

Strategic objective 5: National Information Board Strategy

21. The National Information Board is a new group which brings together the national partners who have an interest in the commissioning and investment in informatics services and programmes. It builds on the work carried out by the Informatics Services Commissioning Group during 2013/14.

22. The HSCIC is a key member of the National Information Board and is also a vital delivery partner. As such, it has an important role to play in the NIB to ensure robust portfolio management arrangements are in place.

23. The DH expects the HSCIC to:

- Play an active role in the development and the implementation of the NIB's strategy for fulfilling the informatics vision set out in the "Power of Information";
- Provide leadership, authority and capacity in respect of delivery and the system-wide technical strategy necessary to underpin health and social care services;
- Work with partners and stakeholders, through the National Information Board's informatics strategy, to agree the future requirements for national infrastructure, programmes and services;

- Support the DH in ensuring that the NIB and its strategy are rooted in the pan-government ICT strategy, and in particular ensure alignment with the Cabinet Office and the Government Data Service;
- Be responsible for the NIB's Technical Design Authority and the Standardisation Committee for Collections and Extractions;
- Support the DH and the Informatics Accountable Officer in the oversight of the national portfolio of programmes, projects and services.

24. The DH welcomes the fact that the HSCIC's own strategy document commits the organisation to working in partnership with the NIB and its members.

Strategic objective 6: Expertise and Support to Emerging Technology Needs

25. The HSCIC has a leading role to play in coordinating engagement with industry, research and academia to ensure that technology advances are used to best effect to support transformational change as well as improvements in the safety, quality and efficacy of care. It will discharge this in collaboration with its national partners.

26. The technology agenda is moving rapidly, and it is essential that the HSCIC collaborates with all national partners to ensure there is clear leadership on the major developments on the horizon – especially regarding Open and Big Data, and around genomics. The collective approach must be underpinned by strong principles of interoperability and standards, and demonstrate the high regard for security, trust and confidentiality that the public will expect of us.

27. Specifically, the DH expects the HSCIC to:

- Support the DH by leading the technical work on the development of key national standards and technical solutions to support the Care Bill, the Better Care Fund and the Integration Pioneers;
- Engage with Genomics England, on the appropriate storage, analysis and usage of gene sequencing data;
- Help England's health and care organisations benefit from wider experience and knowledge from international settings, and especially through the programmes of work set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between NHS England, the HSCIC and the US Department of Health and Human Services.

28. In addition, the DH supports the commitments set out in the HSCIC's strategy, which relate to innovation and skills, research, the information and technology market place and the wider economy.

Conclusions

29. It will be important for the HSCIC's work on all of these priorities to be underpinned by:

- Strong and clear leadership in managing the delivery of the informatics programmes and projects;
- Robust information management and technical expertise and design assurance;
- The highest quality project and delivery management to ensure that all major NHS IT infrastructure projects are delivered throughout the planning, approval, procurement, delivery and benefits realisation phases;
- The highest standard of management of the major programmes to deliver excellent value for money optimal benefits realisation;
- Effective partnership and collaborative working with all key stakeholders, including other Government departments, notably the Cabinet Office and the Government Data Service, the IT marketplace and industry organisations.

30. The Department and the HSCIC recognise that the scale of the strategic transformation is significant and will require sustained effort in collaboration over a number of years. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to expect improvements in all areas by March 2015.

31. This Statement is not exhaustive. The Department and the HSCIC will review this Statement during 2014/15 and agree any substantial new matters of detail that need to be reflected in this Statement.

32. The DH will hold the HSCIC to account through its sponsorship arrangements and the Framework Agreement.

33. The HSCIC's Strategy and Business plan both contain more detail as to how the HSCIC will address these priorities.