Digital Strategy: Leading the culture change in health and care

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Digital Strategy: Leading the culture change in health and care

Department of Health

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Technology and the internet are transforming society. They are changing the way we talk to each other, work with one another and organise our lives. More open access to quality data increases our understanding of how diseases develop and spread. Linking data gives us insight into the whole patient journey, not just isolated episodes of care. Advances in technology help people to do things quicker, more efficiently and with better results. Launching a health information revolution that puts patients in control of their own health and care information, and makes services convenient, accessible and efficient, is now a major priority for the Department of Health.

This change means everyone will benefit from a joint-up care, better services, and more transparent sharing of information. Patients and the public will access information and/or services in ways designed for them and not the system. HCPs will spend more time caring for those who need it and less time serving inefficient information systems.

This strategy outlines the department of Health's aim to become a digital exemplar in Whitehall, giving its staff the knowledge, skills, permission and confidence to embrace digital opportunities to deliver better health, better care and better value for all. In this strategy the Department of Health commit to:

1. **Improve the development and impact of its open policymaking by:**
- Training policymakers consistently to use digital techniques to inform policy development, engage different audiences and evaluate effectiveness
- Creating a minimum digital standard for all formal consultation, including developing new methods for analysing, not just collecting, responses digitally
- Developing a toolkit to help policymakers identify the most appropriate digital tools and techniques for each of the policy cycle

2. **Increase the effectiveness of its communications to, and engagement with, audiences and stakeholders by:**

- Adopting a digital first approach to all communications activity and evaluation, starting with a formal pilot in early 2013
- Developing virtual networks for internal teams and key stakeholders to discuss and share information and ideas openly and transparently
- Embedding a more distributed model of digital communication by encouraging staff across the department to use social channels for communication, staff engagement and relationship-building

3. **Develop the digital skills it needs across the organisation by:**

- Working with heads of profession and civil service learning to ensure that the department's 2013 Learning and Development strategy reflects the needs of staff and the digital ambitions in the Civil Service Capabilities Plan
- Developing an internal programme of digital masterclasses to share experiences, knowledges and best practice
- Reviewing in-house capability to develop and manage new digital products. Revising existing and creating new roles as required, working closely with the Government Digital Service and suppliers

4. **Improve its day-to-day efficiency by:**

  - Adopting a new, transparent, 'open by default' principle for information and delivering new ICT and knowledge management systems in early 2013
  - Developing and delivering the right digital products and services by bringing together staff with skills in a range of disciplines from the outset to ensure the design meets the needs of users
  - Introducing a new fast-track approvals route for procuring external digital products and services for business use, using a SME's and the CloudStore wherever possible

5. **Steward the health and care systems towards a health information revolution by:**

- Implementing the Digital First channel strategy for health and care to deliver a consistent approach to digital across the system, this includes bringing the best information and services across the NHs together with public health and social care into a single integrated customer service platform for citizens.

- Developing an active community of digital professionals within the health and care system and providing a digital workspace to share best practice, case studies and digital knowledge
- Developing the information policies and improving data quality to ensure that Digital First and the health information revolution become a reality across the health and care system for the benefit of all

This strategy sets the direction for that programme of change, and demonstrates how the future Department of Health can lead the way as a digital department of state, and provide policy leadership for a digitally enabled and technologically ambitious health and care system