

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board
Meeting date:	7 December 2023
Item Number:	10
Title:	Digital Strategy Revision 2023-2027
Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:	Paul Allen, Director of Infrastructure & Sustainability
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1 Purpose and recommendations

This is presented to the Board for endorsement and the Board is asked to

- Note the progress implementing the Digital Strategy since 2020
- Endorse the strategic objectives and priorities as laid out in sections 2.3 and 2.3.2 of this paper

This report aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambitions:

- Effective
- Person Centred

2 Report summary

This paper sets out the reasons why a review and refresh of the NHS Grampian Digital Strategy has been carried out and presents the revised strategy for endorsement.

2.1 Situation

Digital technology is central to supporting health and social care services to achieve:

1. Better health and social care outcomes
2. A better experience of health and social care for citizens
3. A better experience for staff
4. Affordable health and care services

The NHS Grampian Digital Strategy sets out how this will be achieved using a layered approach: optimal infrastructure and governance supports improvements in the creation and

use of data. In turn, exploiting that data and improving how it flows will lead to new opportunities for higher quality health and social care.

2.2 Background

The Board approved NHS Grampian's strategy, Plan for the Future, in June 2022. Successful delivery of Plan for the Future is dependent on comprehensive adoption of digital technologies, electronic records, citizen-facing digital services and artificial intelligence, including automation.

The Board previously approved the NHS Grampian Digital Strategy in October 2020, but with the introduction of not only Plan for the Future, but also the NHS Scotland Digital Health & Care Strategy ¹, NHS Scotland Data Strategy ² and the proposed national and North of Scotland AI (Artificial Intelligence) Strategies, it has been necessary to review and refresh the NHS Grampian Digital Strategy to confirm alignment with the ambition and strategic intent set out in those documents.

New planning guidance for NHS Scotland Boards was also issued in February 2023, which requires Boards to 'optimise use of digital & data technologies in the design and delivery of health and care services for improved patient access".

The revised strategy attached at Appendix 1 is the outcome of the refresh exercise.

2.3 Assessment

The underlying principle for the NHS Grampian Digital Strategy (the Strategy), is that all staff and citizens have secure access to the information they need and can access it when and where they need to. The Strategy sets out how NHS Grampian and partners will exploit digital technologies to work with people as partners in their care, enable colleagues to work to the best of their abilities and support financial sustainability.

The Strategy has two main objectives –

- to enable sustainable service transformation through the introduction of digital solutions and greater automation, and
- improve the ways we work with data and information, including maturing our record systems and increasing the use of Artificial Intelligence.

2.3.1 Progress since 2020

Since the original Strategy was adopted in 2020 there have been significant milestones achieved, including, but not limited to:

¹ [NHS Scotland Digital Health Care Strategy 2021](#)

² [Health and Social Care: Data Strategy 2023](#)

1. New models of care - Community investigation hubs enabled by TrakCare order comms; telemedicine enabled by ePrescribing to community pharmacies (a UK first); Remote Health Pathways enabled through Digital asynchronous appointments and introduction of patient-facing digital options. Remote Blood Pressure monitoring is now in widespread use.
2. Electronic records: Electronic note-taking is now in place across all our hospitals Dragon digital dictation allows clinicians to create, sign and send letters to the Electronic Patient Record and GP practices electronically. NHS Grampian is taking a lead role on behalf of North of Scotland Boards in hospital ePrescribing with the deployment of Hospital Electronic Prescribing & Medicines Administration (HEPMA).
3. Safety and security; NHS Grampian is a high performing Board against the annual Network & Information Systems audit in support of cybersecurity and data protection. NHS Grampian took a lead role in improving the monitoring of healthcare IT-related safety incidents and our learning has been shared with rest of NHS Scotland.

2.3.2 Developments planned 2023-2027 – sunshine diagram

The 'sunshine' diagram on page 16 of the Strategy provides the route map to implement the multiple overlapping elements that lead to the destination in 2027 of:

- A fully integrated national record between citizen, health, local government and third sector.
- Data supporting continuous improvement of outcomes, experience and value for money.
- Research and innovation supporting further development of a Digital Strategy for 2030 and beyond.

From 2024 there will be increased focus on automation and other aspects of AI, which will free up staff time to focus on the areas where their skills and expertise make the most difference.

2.3.3 Governance

The Digital Transformation Delivery Group was formed in 2020 and oversees delivery of the strategy. The group comprises representatives from across NHS Grampian and the HSCPs (Health & Social Care Partnerships).

The Digital Transformation Delivery Group reports through the Asset Management Group and Transformation Oversight Board (TOB) to the Chief Executive Team, prioritising and

commissioning specific areas of work. Assurance is provided to the Performance Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee (PAFIC) on the delivery of the agreed priority areas.

2.3.4 Quality/ Patient Care

The Strategy will contribute towards better healthcare outcomes and a safer healthcare environment by enabling self-management and fostering innovation and research. There will be fewer boundaries between health and care services, providing a better patient experience. Patients will have access to their own data which will help them self-manage.

2.3.5 Workforce

Staff will be upskilled to have more confidence to use the new digital tools available and will have better and more accessible digital records. Staff will be supported to work to the best of their abilities. eHealth shall be engaging in a cost-effective online training programme for staff, where appropriate training courses will be factored into personal development plans. This is to take account of new technology adoption and help prepare the wider organisation with new technology adoption via departmental Digital partners.

Training requirements will vary between staff groups covering all staff, whether clinical or not, will need to have some at least basic awareness of automatable processes so they can suggest them to their managers.

Other training will be more specific and will build on the existing materials developed to support Electronic Patient Record (EPR) implementation. For example, when we roll out vital signs tracking, video and written training material will be made available, as it has been made available for other elements of our EPRs.

2.3.6 Financial

Revenue streams are pre-determined annually by Scottish Government and help us deliver our core eHealth services. In addition, based on a risk management approach, eHealth is granted capital funds via the capital allocation formula to assist with like for like equipment replacement. Key challenges exist in relation to cost increases for service contracts, as well as national cost pressures influencing both revenue and capital funding streams, therefore planning and prioritisation is vital. Compliance will continue to be a key determinant of our funding to help ensure service availability, but forward-looking plans must exist with executive-level sponsorship to help shape business cases for future technology adoption.

2.3.7 Risk Assessment/Management

The main risks to successful delivery of the Strategy are summarised here:

Risk	Management approach	Mitigation
Lack of short-term funding	Treat	Appropriate focus on project planning to avoid unanticipated costs.
Lack of long-term funding	Treat	Ensuring budget-setting process is provided with sufficient detail.

Lack of agreement on priorities	Treat	Re-established Transformation Oversight Board. Executive-level sponsorship. Optimise collaboration between all departments involved in delivering digital services.
Dependencies on national programmes of work	Treat Tolerate	Multilateral engagement with relevant UK and Scottish Government Directorates, national boards and national programmes. There will however always be some risk coming from this area due to the highly complex system.
Lack of required specialist skills	Treat Tolerate	Employ sufficiently skilled people for the planned work, including data protection advisory, technical, support and change enablement. Experience teaches us however that sometimes unexpected external factors can influence priorities and could lead to loss of capacity for projects covered within this strategy.

2.3.8 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

Digital Exclusion and Health Inequalities are an important consideration. Digital technologies often help reduce inequalities by improving access to services but there is a risk that some people might be disadvantaged. This topic is addressed on Page 20 of the strategy. Any citizen-facing digital services will have an Equality Impact Assessment done before go-live.

Extract from p20 of the Strategy:

Fairer Scotland Duty: Socio- economic deprivation and digital inclusion

The Fairer Scotland Duty requires public bodies such as NHS Grampian and Health and Social Care Partnerships, when making strategic decisions, to take account of the need to improve equity of health and social care outcomes for areas of multiple deprivation.

Some patients in socio-economically deprived areas may not be able to afford the hardware or revenue costs to access the new services and data. This could make the gap in health and social care outcomes much wider for patients in these areas.

To overcome this issue, we will work with partners to ensure that additional support will be provided in areas of socio-economic deprivation. We will also ensure that any new citizen-facing services have an Equality Impact Assessment performed before they enter mainstream use.

2.3.9 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

An extensive consultation process took place to support the creation of the 2020 strategy including staff, patients and public. The 2023 refresh of the strategy has had a smaller scale consultation, comprising members of the Digital Transformation Delivery Group, with their feedback incorporated into the development of the refreshed strategy. The 2023 refreshed strategy was presented to both Performance Assurance, Finance and Infrastructure Committee and Chief Executive Team in August 2023.

2.4 Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- Note the progress implementing the Digital Strategy since 2020
- Endorse the strategic objectives and priorities as laid out in 2.3 and 2.3.2 of this paper

List of appendices

Appendix 1 – Service transformation through digital – a strategy 2023 - 2027