Context

- NPfIT mostly failed to meet goals
- GP sector digitisation has gone well
- Five Year Forward View demands another effort aimed at digitisation and interoperability
- Preparatory work (NIB), £4.2bn allocation in England
- SoS for Health/NHS - learn from past experiences to increase odds of success
- US - recent experience with digitisation
Transformation Trends

Two transformational trends:

Pressure to deliver high-value care

The digitisation of the healthcare system

The Dominant Issue Today

Prediction: Dominant Issue in 2026
Health IT/digital health: The Mother of All Adaptive Problems

“... problems that require people themselves to change. In adaptive problems, the people are the problem and the people are the solution. And leadership then is about mobilizing and engaging the people with the problem rather than trying to anesthetize them so that you can just go off and solve it on your own.”

– Ronald Heifetz, Kennedy School of Government

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The Two Keys to Unlocking the Productivity Paradox

Improvements in the technology

Reimagining the work itself

Reference: Erik Brynjolfsson, MIT
Ten Insights

1. Purpose of digitisation is not to digitise

2. Clinician buy-in & engagement absolutely essential

3. Government’s tendency to overregulate technology should be resisted

4. In the U.S, a national programme that offered money to subsidise local purchases of IT systems meeting national standards led to high level of implementation

5. Advantages of UK national system (Spine, NHS number) should be leveraged
Ten Insights

6. User-centered design must be a core value

7. Interoperability is crucial for many reasons

8. IT systems need to evolve/mature... need workforce (incl. CCIOs) to do that, and some tolerance for messy early days

9. The IT system is just the backbone—must have culture, people, flexibility to innovate/reimagine people/processes on that backbone (adaptive change)

10. Be careful about overpromising: remember the ‘Productivity Paradox’
Main concerns at start

• Too little money spent too fast trying to wire all trusts to meet “paperless 2020” could fail
• No clarity on who would get money, how much, and when
• Need to balance equity with excellence: value of having advanced trusts as shining stars and leaders
• “If you think about the things that would get a CEO fired, not digitising is not on the list”
• Thinness of clinician-informatics workforce - individuals who can bridge worlds of IT and clinical care
Recommendations

1. A long-term national engagement strategy
2. Appoint and give appropriate authority to a national CCIO
3. Develop a workforce of trained clinician-informaticists at the Trusts, and give them appropriate resources and authority
4. Strengthen and grow the CCIO Field
5. Allocate the new national funding to help Trusts go digital and achieve maximum benefit
Recommendations

6. While some Trusts may need time to prepare for digitisation, all Trusts should be largely digitised by 2023

7. Link national funding to a viable local implementation/improvement plan

8. Organise local/regional learning networks to support implementation and improvement

9. Ensure interoperability as a core characteristic of the NHS digital ecosystem – promotes clinical care, innovation and research

10. Conduct a robust independent evaluation of the programme