

Data standards: Smarter care through better standards

Webinar transcript – 10 September 2026

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Speakers

Katie Thorn, Director of Innovation, Digital Care Hub - Chair

Khaled Gamiet, Founder of Qwikify and CEO of Trustsworth Group Ltd

Taffy Gatawa, Chief Information and Compliance Officer from everyLIFE Technologies Limited and board member of the Care Software Providers Association (CASPA)

Bharat Sharma, Lead Product Manager for NHS Standards Directory/ Adult Social Care Director.

Katie Thorn

I'm Katie Thorn from the Digital Care Hub, and I'm delighted to be chairing today's session on smarter care through better standards. We wanted to focus on information standards because they are becoming increasingly relevant to adult social care. During this session, we will explain what information standards mean for adult social care providers, what care providers and software suppliers need to know, and where to find more information.

If you do have questions, please do try and use the Q&A function, which is at the bottom of your screen. You may need to click on the little three dots which says more to open up Q&A. But if you can't find it for any reason, I'll be monitoring both the chat and Q&A, so please don't worry. The presentation as well will be shared with you following this session, and for those of you who would like a transcript or closed captions, please do click on More. There is an option to enable captions, which will happen automatically, and we can send out a transcript of this entire session to you as well, which will come automatically with the recording and with the slides. So thanks very much. Next slide, please. For any of you who aren't familiar with us, Digital Care Hub is a not-for-profit. We provide free support to adult social care providers across England on anything to do with technology, data protection and cybersecurity. And we also run monthly webinars such as this as part of our digital care and focus series, where we do a deep dive on a

particular topic which is relevant around technology and social care. Next slide, please. As I said.

This session includes some background and a live demonstration. We will then move into a panel discussion with Qwikify and Taffy Gatawa from everyLIFE Technologies about the practical realities of implementing standards, some of the current standards in adult social care and what the future may look like. There will be plenty of time for questions and comments, and we will finish by 1.30 p.m. At the latest. With that, I will hand over to Bharat to explain more about the work of the NHS Standards Directory.

Bharat Sharma

We can see you, we can hear you. I hope you can see me. Sorry, I just had a quick error message, but hopefully that's been overcome. Fantastic. Thank you very much. I'll just share my screen and I'll start Presenting. So Oh, okay, I'm sending a request to start sharing. I'm going to share my whole screen so hopefully Right, we can see that. Yeah, that's great. So let me just check. It is afternoon, actually, I suppose, just 12 o'clock. So good afternoon, everyone. My name is Bharat Sharma, and I'm the lead product manager at NHS England for the Standards Directory. To say my name is not pronounced as it's spelt, it's Burrat, which is a bit like how you would say... Instead of saying Stuart, you would say Stuart. So in a very similar vein, my name is Barrett. I won't be offended if you get it wrong I'm here today to talk about the adult social care standards directory. It's adultsocialcarestandards.nhs.uk. I personally have been in standards information architecture for around 15 to 16 years or so of my career.

And I had the opportunity to become a product manager of of this opportunity to bring, kind of, the web and standards together, so I'm very excited to show you what we've come up with And hopefully you'll have a good experience looking at the site. If I go to the next slide, I'll tell you a bit of the story of where we're coming from. So actually the work that started on the Standards Directory was when I started, well, it was around 2021. And really what we're trying to solve is a problem that there are many different sites, websites out there on the internet. With no official single source of truth around standards You've got different organisations, you've got different standards bodies, all providing information around standards, not necessarily in consistent ways. And it's really difficult to find where you need to go to actually get that definitive answer. What do I need to do? And what standards are relevant and related to me. So On that basis, we worked on the stand that we created the Standards Directory.

In terms of how we're going to be doing this, I have a sort of slide here that explains some of the thinking process behind what we're going to be showing you today But what we're doing really is trying to make standards something that originally was very complex Had a lot of bespoke buzzwords of difficult language and make it more accessible and understandable to everyone. So we're trying to provide that clarity as to

what do you need to do to fulfil a standard and what the benefits of that standard are. We're trying to make sure that we can support lots of rich content. So you shouldn't have to just see what is traditionally been Could be a 200-page PDF that says, go and read this document and figure out what you need to do. You know, we're going to try and make it really clear and support different types of audiences as well, using the best method possible. Context, so we want to be able to help you find standards that are related to the topic that you're interested in. Or particularly the challenge that you're facing. And give you a more personalised search. We were just talking about language a little bit before, in fact.

So you know there is and I was a person involved in social care glossary a number of years ago. You know There are regional differences between the language used, and it's really important that we try to capture that language and allow you to find standards in the language that you're used to. We've got compliance. So we want to make sure that you... It's really clear you know what you need to do And what steps you have to follow and how you can be tested and assured that you have done or passed the test in effect. Connections So Standards are all related to each other And one thing we found was actually it wasn't written down. So there's a lot of Perhaps people like me who've been in this space for a while, I kind of know the connections, but it wasn't clearly written that this standard actually requires these standards to be implemented first. Much like the software packages, you know, the standards have the same kind of complex relationships with each other. We do want to get social with conversations, so we do want to open up a space where we can talk around standards and find those conversations.

Not necessarily in a lockdown room, but we want to open that up so everyone can talk to each other and find out what the latest issues are and collaboration We want to matchmake, we want to, you know, support the co-design of standards. So it's not something that's done just as a... For a central body or a central team. It's the whole concept will give access to everyone to be able to get included in standards So in terms of the work around social care, in around 22-23 The Digitising Social Care website launched that tried to explain sort of the environment around social care standards. And recently we got involved in this piece of work to help actually move some of the standards material over to the Standards Directory So And the reason that this sort of catalogue of standards, this sort of website was created was to flagship the adult social care, Digitising Social Care record, minimum operational data standard. In a nutshell, MODS, as it's known affectionately known by.

And this was developed in 2022 to provide a really clear sort of data specification to the industry, to all the industries in social care to say, this is how you create, document, and then present a social care record. And the social care catalogue effectively was created to flagship that But the opportunity now exists to broadcast all different types of

standards around social care So as I said, we got involved. We built and user tested a new kind of homepage. The Standards Directory is a project was actually a website that covered standards from lots of different areas and domains. And we came in with the opportunity to create what we call a mini site So what that means is we can actually spin off additional websites from our core technology that allows us to have a dedicated site towards a topic. And social care, I'm very pleased to say, is our first pioneer and is live now. And when you use our site, you only see standards around social care, but we actually do have, and this is powered by the Standards Directory, you can also go to our parent website and see standards in a much broader scale.

Okay, so I'm going to go into the demo portion of this just to show a few slides first, and then I'll get straight into a live demo. But let me know if you have any problems seeing it, or you want me focus on a particular part. Excuse me So the technology behind the adult social care standards directory is via a company called MetadataWorks. They provide us a really intuitive piece of tooling that allows us to populate information around the standard And actually not just around the standard, but the knowledge that's connected to that standard. What you're seeing on the screen here is an interface for the MODS standard. So you can see actually on the screen immediately, you've got a few different sections here. So you've got the fact that it's live and it's got a version number. The fact In fact, it's public. And you can see this grid of different colours. So in the sections around the standard, you can see that some are green and some are I think it's a salmon pink. So basically it's indicating that there's data that's been filled in around the standard and there's data that's missing.

So there's opportunities, you know, by having this progress view that clearly tells us how much richness and additional knowledge we could be adding to the standard that isn't there currently. And as we go in, you actually get a form view. So rather than having some very complex tool, this is just a simple form. You can fill in information around the standard You can get some help. So it tells you exactly how and what you should fill in that box. And we have a full public wiki as well that helps you sort of guide you in that way. If you do something wrong, maybe you type it something that's too long, too short. Maybe in the future we're looking at, you know, if you type a complex word or uninclusive word, you'll actually get a message that guides you to say, you know, you've only a number of more characters can be entered and it gives you that that richness to help understand that the point of data entry that you're doing something good, or doing something bad If we go to this type box, you know, we've got lots of different input modules, so we've got a nice search box, and you can tick multiple things. For dates, you've got date pickers We're looking at a taxonomy as well.

So the tooling is really sort of simple to use and allows anyone to effectively onboard with us and populate information around their standard We want to encourage that self-service model One important point which I'm going to show before the demo, I won't be

able to live demo this portion of it When we have a standard, and some of you on the call may have had experience of this, MetadataWorks has an assurance platform And this is something that's quite, you know, that hasn't really been done before. So traditionally, you'd have to be an email exchange and you would be sending in spreadsheets to say This is the, this is how I've modified my system to support this particular standard, in this case MODS. This is actually a whole workflow tool. So as a supplier, you can log in You get a view of, for example, in this case, you get the different classes involved with the data model around the MODS standard And you can actually go in depth and field by field can provide evidence and have a discussion, and there's kind of a back and forth about whether, you know, this is the evidence that my system has now supported the addition of a middle name field, for example.

And here's the proof that we've kept to the exact criteria of the length, the structure, and we've used it in the correct way And here's the evidence of how it's actually implemented in the front end, where you know an editor using the social care software would be able to, you know, populate that. So this is a really rich sort of process, and I'll show you in a minute where we've been actually tracking that progress and presenting the progress of our suppliers towards the adult social care MODS standard. And I'm going to now just switch my screen to the demo But when I talk about rich knowledge The adult social care standards directory is trying to provide an easy way to find standards, but at the same time you get summaries that help you understand what that standard is I describe it as similar to, you know, you're going to the supermarket and you have a cereal box. You know, you're looking at the cereal and going Is this the one for me? So we're trying to produce a really good clear box that means you can read and be confident that before opening the packet or buying the product and going home, you know that this standard is the one for you and covers the needs that you have.

I'm going to provide useful links. So it's not just about NHS England as an organisation saying this is the definitive, this is just our sort of guidance. We're actually want to include guidance from other suppliers, other information sources, if there's case studies. We want to provide that richness that you can go and engage with the rest of the community, not just hear our word for it. We have a new feature which is actually And I'm personally quite excited, but maybe I'm a bit geekish in that way. We I haven't really seen this done before. The presentation of data specifications in an accessible way Traditionally, it's spreadsheets. Have a look at the spreadsheet and its thousands of rows long. We're providing an interface that lets you explore that data specification and lets you find it really easily. And we're aiming to meet the government digital service standard to prove that we can be a site that's good enough to sit alongside GOV.UK websites And same with documentation. No more PDFs So we want to get away from PDFs and we want to make sure that you can browse and that everyone can browse, no matter where what the accessibility challenges are.

They can view that content in a rich way And not compromise. They can still see those diagrams, they can still search and break down chapters and find the information they're looking for. So I'm going to switch over to the demo. If I bring up my browser here So, this is the MetadataWorks Exchange platform So as you can see, I showed you, I told you about that grid on the picture. So you can see here, you can go through and there's lots of rich data around standards. And I'll show you what they all mean as we go through. But let's talk about the adult social care standards directory. So This is the homepage, so please come visit it. We are looking to have, sort of, messages and sort of surveys that would pop up when, you know, you're looking at particular standards, so we're keen to get feedback, and there's a feedback link you'll find on the website, so please do visit And let us know what you think. We're also doing research as well, and I'll tell you a bit about the findings we had so far. But if you're interested in providing or being part of our journey We are a user-centered product. We constantly want to improve this The main purpose of the site is to find standards.

If I look at Qwikify, I know Khaled from Qwikify is on the call and will be joining the panel. Qwikify is listed here, and you can see a summary of the organisation, contact details and information that helps users compare suppliers in the market. Ultimately, users can see which standards each supplier complies with.

Can we help you to compare different solutions with each other, and to really get a rich universal sort of experience where you can... All suppliers can have an equal footing here and present their best foot forward as to how they fulfil standards and what their plans are. So I'm going to look for the MODS standards. I'm going to type in MODS, which as I said, is a nickname in a sense, but an acronym, but that doesn't matter. The site will find it. We support lots of alternative names. So if you have the language, we'll help you to find it. You have lots of filters, so you can say just show me the standards that are legally required. I have to do because of the law, because of the Health and Social Care Act, for example We can also focus on particular topics, and we're starting to tag and improve that sort of ability as well. If we go into the MODS standard This is our showroom. So in the showroom, you get a view of a summary of the standard that helps you understand everything about it in a basic way. We also have the data specification, but I'll quickly just browse down.

So you get, you know, a lot of information around when it was published, the version You've got help guidance that helps you understand the status, the type of standards of which These are only a few, but there are many different types. So we are looking to expand And broaden There's some guidance that takes you to different places around, you know, go have a look at this useful link and that useful link Who does it impact on? And we also have related standards that help you understand that you should really look at this information and that information, and they're all related. And we're going to try and make it visually make that a bit more richer later And we have a legal basis that

helps you understand, you know, again, why you need to do that standard under what law. It could be a contractual reason, could be the Equality Act, could be Section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act And we can provide YouTube videos and kind of a rich sort of tapestry of information that's required on the site. Debt specification, the thing I'm most excited about, and maybe everyone is more interested in. Is the MODS standard, the main artefact is actually present here.

You don't have to open a spreadsheet. You can download it as a JSON file for the techies in the webinar. You can browse through a parent-child sort of hierarchical list to understand the MODS standard, and you get descriptions If you want to understand what a particular standard or particular element is about, you can click on it And it will open up a bigger full screen view for you. So you can start to get a definition. It tells you whether this date particular one is used in different standards or not. Is it a must? Is it should? Is it a could? And you can also search as well. And I'll give you a quick example. We've got a religion here This is actually linked to the NHS data model and dictionary. The content is there. And And the actual dictionaries are present in the site, and we have integration that pulls in the dictionary values. We've also just recently introduced SNOMED integration. So if you have a SNOMED reference set that says this is the list of drop-down values you should support We actually pull that value in the list in and show it.

We even provide a list or a linkage to the term server, which is a more technical system and an API sort of address that lets you point and get the latest version at any time from our NHS England service. So really trying to provide that rich tapestry of these, this is the information, but you can browse through and navigate and explore the different parts of your data. Okay. Last thing I want to show you that we have implementation guidance. So as you go through, we're presenting what is traditionally been PDFs in a sort of really easy to use online document format So you can go through and browse and navigate through using the buttons. And these work with screen readers be really clear to make that sure to make that work We can support, you know, multiple chapters, and we've split things there, and we can support complex tables, which, you know, we've all experienced tables that are hundreds of columns long and deep. We've found ways to present that information clearly. And we can also support diagrams. This is a technology called Mermaid, which lets us provide diagrams in an accessible form that screen readers can read And can be zoomed in and out for clarity.

And we try to provide a AI generated description for every single diagram as well. So, we can really support all the social care standards content and really bring it to life rather than just be a straight lift and shift of, you know, a thick PDF or a sort of novel of information. Okay. Lastly, I'll show you that you know the kind of things we can do with this. We're looking to, for example, if I go to this standard here. We're not just providing the data specification. We're trying to provide an effective benefits library. So you can go

in and actually say, you know, these are the benefits of a standard and it's really clear. And we can do that, you know, we're looking to broaden that out. So you could say, show me standards that will effectively, that will improve person outcomes in social care. And you'll get your list, and it'll show you the different standards that you could use to fulfil that. And we have requirements. So again, these have been traditionally trapped inside large tables. So we've provided this now in a way that you can actually go in and say, you know, just tell me what I have to do, not what I could do, not what I should do.

Just tell me what is the minimum. Apply it, you get your specific requirements rather than having to navigate through a table. And you know we're working on other things. So we're trying to do warning messages and kind of timely messages. So it's really clear. So this is just an example I'm showing you an example page we have. We're providing ICA instructions that just tell you step by step what you need to do. So you don't have to go into the detail. It sort of guides you through that. We're doing multiple documents, so we're becoming a hosting site that can host that documentation. And with diagrams, we have a rich tap, you know, again, rich sort of selection of different diagrams. So we can do flowcharts, mind maps. We can provide roadmaps. So these are all, again, you can see the text is selectable and readable by search engines, sorry, by screen readers. And NT, we can do data model diagrams, as we've shown with the MODS standard as well. So we're really... We're set out to present standards in the most inclusive and accessible way that we can. So I'm going to stop there and go back to the... Just a little bit of the presentation. Let me just go there.

It's kind of reaching the end, but actually, so we have done research and we've done sort of got feedback from lots of our users. That have said, you know, they appreciated the fact that we could tailor to social care users. We are looking at what topics around social care we should present on the site and how we can allow people to focus on those. You know, we did develop the standards directory for standard as a whole. We're really keen to understand the topics that matter to you. So get in touch, let us know. We can produce, you know, a taxonomy that helps you focus and filter standards in the way that you need to. And we can apply those tags to the standards. By doing that also, we speak to our search engines like Google and Bing, and we also speak to AI like ChatGPT. So by tagging this information, we're basically helping people to find those standards, you know, based on the categorizations they're looking for. And we're aware that MODS is now at the moment the flagship. So we're going to kind of maybe put that as the headline effectively. But there are other standards.

You can see around 60 on this screenshot here. So we think we've satisfied user expectations at this point from our initial research, but let us know. And there will be opportunities to take part in research. And we're really keen, if you want to come onto our list, just let us know, and there'll be information in a minute I will show you. Just

checking for time that we're okay. Yeah. So Let's have a look. I talked about SNOMED. So we're bringing in SNOMED information, and we're very aware that this all can be very intimidating. Standards is a niche topic. So we're trying to have a balance between showing you too much information and showing you just the information you need. And we're, you know, making strides in that, trying to make it better and better. Yeah, this is just an interesting sort of part of the findings I think, and it's a testament obviously to the digital social care team, the engagement they've had hopefully with all of yourselves. But I think a lot of people have got used to being able to, you know ring up or contact the team and get those answers With the Assurance platform having that kind of that dialogue.

But yeah, of course, you know, some standards aren't like that. There are some standards which have been out for a while and those teams have disbanded. So we're trying to collect that knowledge and really provide, again, clear implementation guidance that will be findable you know, years later And we will still put contact details and so on, but you know and we're looking to have a sort of link it with our help desk in the future, perhaps. But we're looking to make sure that you can access the knowledge you need and it doesn't get lost in time. So I'm reaching the end of the presentation now. In terms of the Standards Directory and our future So as a team, we've started the journey. So we have now produced the Standards Directory and we've now demonstrated that we can make mini sites and we've done it for social care. We're now looking to the next steps, so we're looking at producing a Standards Finder that helps you Come in with a specific kind of exploration hat on that says I'm this type of role, I'm looking for this type of topic area, let's say artificial intelligence. Show me the standards that apply to me And show me the standards I have to do to meet law.

So we're helping to sort of produce that experience and incorporate that into the site. Any benefits that we produce for the Standards Directory in effect automatically is available for the adult social care standards directory, and the 2 will improve over time together. We're looking into other areas, so we're looking to introduce an AI knowledge engine as well, which will help with search, but would also mean that when you ask a question, it will start to look at standards and look inside the data models and inside the guidance and give you the result that you're looking for. Take you straight to the answer that's found in that. We're wanting to explore again the relationships between standards all those different assets. If you've done an experiment or you've got a future where if you produced a prototype of your software, you know, that's related to a standard, we want to be able to signpost to it. Maybe even host some of it in the future. So we're looking towards that kind of future. We want to act as a concierge. So come to our site and we'll help you. We'll hold your hand, we'll take you through.

Help you understand what standards are and help you understand the standards that are relevant and needed for you, and why they're so important as well to the education

aspect. Collaboration. So again, you know, we want to make a portal where you can come in. If you're creating a standard from scratch, we can help you. We'll give you the tools, we'll give you that oversight and support. I would love to see that be a thing that we can offer. And a forum where we again where we can sort of allow you to talk about standards in an open place. And lastly, a future Standards Roadmap. So we know from our research that it's helpful, especially from a supplier point of view. You want to know and get your business cases done, because you need to fill a standard in two years, maybe. We're gonna try and do our best to get that information transparent and open, so you know that a standard is coming, and you'll be able to see it's, you know the progress from conception all the way to the actual publication of that standard and get involved as well at multiple areas. And we want to connect with different standards partners. So we want to bring in ISO.

We've got PRSB Professional Records Standards Body Standards in the site now. We want to build partnerships. So if you've got standards that you think are relevant to health and social care, we'd love to talk about incorporating them. We have an open model for the knowledge that we capture. We can share this model. It's not health specific. So if you want to create your own Standards catalogue, use that same model, then we can interchange, we can exchange and federate between us. So that's a really exciting sort of way where all the standards that exist can be connected and be more consistent. And that's the end. So if you'd love to be part of the community that we've got on future NHS, we've got a link there in future's Standards interoperability. But one thing we've got is a bulletin. So if you want to sign up, we are doing a monthly bulletin around information standards. So this will help you keep in touch with what standards are coming out. And we're looking to maybe incorporate the site a bit more richer into that, that the site will be that source of knowledge and the single source of truth that will present in an email, or let you subscribe via RSS or different means.

Bharat Sharma

So we're really looking and keen to present that knowledge to you. So I'm going to stop there. Maybe that'll give a few minutes for questions if there's any questions in the chat.

Katie Thorn

There are definitely questions. That was an excellent and very helpful presentation, and it was useful to hear about the future developments. I'm particularly excited about moving away from PDFs, as someone who spends a lot of time working through them.

Katie Thorn

One was around some of the descriptions, which talk about the benefits of the different standards and just a question on whether those are AI generated or if you're using AI to generate any of the information and how that's marked in the directory, if it is.

Bharat Sharma

So we're not using AI at the moment to generate any benefits. The only place to use the AI is currently to make those diagrams and to kind of give an explainer, which is literally if you have a diagram that's like a complex tree, it would say A is connected to B, and you know that kind of language, we would be using that, and we're going to mark that in accessibility statement as well. We haven't used AI for anything else. The benefits is an interesting topic because we have developed a really good capability. So right now you can write a sentence on benefits and often when people create a standard, they do publish the benefits, but there isn't a consistent sort of format. While we have the ability to provide those sentences, and then you have to sort of we have tagging, so you can actually say, and we have a little category model as well, which is interesting.

Bharat Sharma

That's been done in partnership with the university, some work that they've done previously with NHS England. We've categorised those benefits, so you can take advantage of categorizing them. I also provide a benefits model that actually says it's almost like a word build, a sentence builder. So it says, you know. For this type of user, we will. And the benefit improve like a measurable sort of a verb, like, will improve or make better. This information to produce this outcome. So we actually have created that sort of capability, but we have to obviously work with standards developers to write benefits in that way. So yeah, we currently haven't used AI for benefits. I do... I wonder if we do think about that, but at the moment, we're trying to sort of get that information written and, you know, in a really structured, consistent way from developers themselves.

Katie Thorn

Great, thank you. Really helpful. And then obviously sort of you mentioned at the very beginning of your presentation that there is a lot of different websites and areas which hold information about standards that have FAQs, that have implementation guidance. Yes.

Katie Thorn

So is the ultimate goal that all of these things would be brought together to sit on the Standards Directory, so that'd be a single source of truth, and or would there still be sort of signposting out to other websites, or is that not certain yet?

Bharat Sharma

Okay. So the site launched as a signposting site and will continue to be that. But because of actually the pioneering work with the MODS standard in adult social care. That was our first experiment actually hosting a standard in all its richness in the site itself. So we actually have a dual model that we can signpost and we're very happy to

signpost out. At the same time, we can start to host some content like the data models, like the documentation and the summaries that you've seen MetadataWorks that we're using is also very rich system. It can support lots of APIs and connections and can pull in information as if it was its own. So that's the concept of federation. So again, as long as we're starting to speak some of the same language or you've released your information in a way that can be plugged into our system, we can also pull that data straight in and users will get that seamless experience.

Katie Thorn

Then a question from Al Hawkins, which is really interesting as well, which is, do you remove standards information from your search engine as they replaced become obsolete and how do you keep search engine, I guess, AI results as well up to date?

Bharat Sharma

Yes, this is really good. So the model that we're using, in fact, there's a picture that, well, it's a picture of a book, but the model we're using that's got all the different fields in that you fill in that that you saw in that form. That's a model that we're constantly keeping up to date And that model is actually mapped and already using ISO standards for metadata. It is mapped to DCAT It is mapped to Dublin Core. It's mapped to schema.org. And if I'm speaking gobbledygook to some people, do look it up. This is all very interesting stuff. This is all about the semantic web, which is Treating systems as users. So when we publish knowledge, we have to speak in the language of those systems and those search engines and AI And because we've already mapped a lot of our content, systems can actually go in and understand the context of our information so they know that that's the title.

They know that that alternative title is an alternative title. They don't have to guess So by doing that, and if you go on our website, there are certain tools that can look at what's called markup behind our site All that information is actually there. And, you know, again, Google, Bing, etc. All the big search engines, they read that information and understand clearly what the information is. And we've I'll give example. Google have a tool called a data Google dataset search, which is mostly used by academics. So when people write journals and publications They can cite different sources. So our website is already seamlessly pulled into that And same way with different sort of AIs and things like ChatGPT. So we use a variety of tools to speak in that language and make sure we've mapped all the different fields into the way and language that, you know the rest of the industries expect. So As a standard site, we try to use standards. It became quite an important thing. So, and that's really provided that benefit.

Katie Thorn

Okay, it's all right And there's a new question which I think has followed on straight from that and we're beyond my technical capacity here, so apologies if it's not, but I think they're linked. Which is, does that mean that people can build AI agents that use the Standards Directory as a tool to look up standards information.

Bharat Sharma

Yeah, I don't see why not. I mean, we have an API, so we have something we haven't made openly available yet, but we could Which means you could plug in and then pull the data. If you were to again look at that markdown markup, which is behind the site, it's actually sitting in the HTML of the site. Als can read that And effectively, they could produce a spreadsheet of that information or pull it into their tooling. That's not a problem. It's, you know, the site provides every standard and the summary of that in that form So yeah, I mean, and we're also looking at just other ways that are simpler.

Bharat Sharma

So, you know, again, a JSON file button that gives you a complex, you know JSON file with all the data We're looking at Excel spreadsheets, you press a button, you get an Excel sheet out instantly, and we're just... We've got that in our one of our sprints we're just working on to be released soon Right? So we're catering for different yeah for AI and also for our users. So you know, yeah, basically the answer is yes. And yeah, we'll give more information about the API soon once we've got that in a that feature ready.

Katie Thorn

And there have been a couple of questions which have come through from Miss Mush and from Tana automatically incorporate these standards within software. We'll come on to that on the panel. Both of you, I'm not ignoring your questions, but that is exactly what Taffy and Khaled are going to talk about as social care software suppliers who have been incorporating this standard One from Keshron inquiring who can have access to this software. Everything here is open source and is accessible through the website.

Katie Thorn

Isn't that right?

Bharat Sharma

So the way the architecture works of this site is the interface that you're seeing, the sort of the front end that displays this information is all, well, it's supposed to be open source But currently, NHS England, you may have seen the news is I don't know if it's a temporary, I'm hoping it's temporary, has closed, I think it was in reaction to a cyber Some of the sort of AI that could basically pose a cyber risk. They're currently closed all our GitHubs, but we're hoping to open that up soon again and get an exemption so we the code will be available The way it works is it connects with MetadataWorks, so it

basically uses a... It's not a proprietary API, but it's... There's an API that provides that information, like a pipeline And as soon as you have that information plugged into our open source, just with a sentence of this is the address, the website populates. So really keen to make it something that everyone can use. And again, also that we can share that model We were keen to make that available as well, so everyone can. And that model could grow. And again, if you publish with that model, we're speaking the same language.

Bharat Sharma

Your standards can be on our site, our standards can be on your side.

Katie Thorn

Okay Great. Thank you so much. There are a couple more questions which have come through which are brilliant, particularly from Jason and Varun. Thank you. I'm going to put those to the panel in just a moment to make sure I have time so those questions will be picked up. Brilliant. But Barrett, well, there's somebody has shared a link to their own work on the evolution of regional information infrastructures, which is a link in the chat, which you may well find very interesting.

Bharat Sharma

That would be very useful, particularly so we've got great ambitions for this. I say my ambitions are also a bit scary to some of my organisation because I'm like, well There's regional stuff going on. People are making regional standards and collecting best practice and, you know, border, you know, there's work across borders.

Bharat Sharma

We're just coming in from a national point of view in England, but we're keen to make this available to other areas, and we're keen to sort of be able to Maybe produce or at least empower regions to do that, and then those standards could even be promoted in the future and assessed and become national, you know, so yeah, really keen to, you know be something that helps with that journey. So yeah, excellent. I'll have a look at that. Thank you.

Katie Thorn

Brilliant, and I'll make sure we get that saved as well to send over to you in case you miss it in the chat. Thank you so much. That was really, really informative. I would really encourage everybody who's listening today, whether you're a software supplier or an adult social care organisation, do take a look at the directory, sign up as well for the information bulletin. I am maybe also a bit of a nerd in this area, but I find that really useful to have.

Katie Thorn

We'll get all of those links sent out to everybody who's joined us today. And still, if you do have questions which come up throughout, let us know. We'll move on now to our panel discussion. If I could ask Taffy and Khaled to turn on And we will sort of then run through some of the practical realities of standards. So what it means for a care We've had a couple of care homes already in the chat who've asked about what it means for their software suppliers to embed this. There's at least one person who's about to purchase a new digital care record and is so interested in standards. So just to in case you missed them in the chat, both that might help you with sort of contextualising some of your answers here. But thank you for joining me. First of all, it'd be great if you could introduce yourself. So Taffy, would you like to go first?

Taffy Gatawa

Thank you, Katie, and thank you for inviting me to join this interesting session about information standards. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm the Chief Information Officer at everyLIFE Technologies, which provides a digital social care record used in home care.

Katie Thorn

Okay, and Khaled.

Khaled Gamiet

My main role is as CEO of a family-owned nursing home business in Buckinghamshire. We have been operating for a little over 40 years, and I have been involved for more than 20 years. For the past 10 years or so, we have been developing our own digital care records platform, Qwikify. It was developed internally for our own use and is primarily aimed at care homes. We have also gone through the NHS assurance process for standards including MODS.

Katie Thorn

Great, thank you both. That means we can talk about both home care and care homes today. For anyone who was not here at the beginning, my name is Katie Thorn. I'm the Director of Innovation at the Digital Care Hub, and I'm chairing today's session. I have also previously been involved in Department of Health and Social Care standards work, and my background is in nursing homes.

So I have grabbed a definition for anybody who's not completely clear from NHS England from the Standards Directory that basically information standards are legal requirements that health and care data can be captured consistently and exchanged digitally. So there's lots more information about what that means, but this might cover technical requirements. It might involve the specific data fields, and it also might talk about the data governance, depending on the standard. So we'll touch on all of those today. But if any of the language in this conversation gets too technical. Call us out in the chat. We'll make sure we define things which explanation set. This is meant to be

something where we can really contextualise why standards are something we should be thinking about within adult social care. So to start, I thought it might be useful. We have just had an overview a little bit about the Assured Suppliers list and what that looks like But I think Taffy, Khalid, you obviously have gone through the assurance process for DSCRs.

Katie Thorn

I was wondering if you wanted to comment a little bit about an overview of the capabilities required for digital social care records now and the standards you need to meet and what that looks like.

Taffy Gatawa

So for the assured supplier list There is a number of prescribed standards that as a software supplier you need to comply with. Some of those are very much about the software itself and some of those are more organisational type standards, if you like. So thinking about How it is your organisation handles things like disaster recovery and business continuity, both in and out with the product that you are providing. So it's really assessing capability and resilience Which we know has become increasingly important across the globe, but certainly in our sector because of the changing landscape we find ourselves in, and also increasing threats But also just that resilience. We know how disruptive it is if suddenly a provider who's here today is no longer there. What that means ultimately for people who rely on that service.

So this is a way of ensuring that a software suppliers, we are thinking about this and having systems in place that In the event of something unfortunate that does disrupt that business continuity, we've given some thought to how we can minimise that impact and that disruption alongside then the technical standards, like maybe thinking about how we can enable a view of a GP record, for example. So GP Connect, which is a standard all about bringing in GP information into the digital social care record is one of the standards that you would go through, and there are a number of those. So there is a conformance process that you go through, and what that means is that as you work through the various standards. Now, I cannot remember, is there 12? Got it Or thereabouts. But as you work through each standard, you submit your evidence, if you like, your evidence of conformance.

Taffy Gatawa

That's independently assessed And then you either need to do a bit more work or provide more evidence, perhaps maybe if the evidence is not clear, and then you work with the assessing team to make sure that you get to that place where There is assurance that you are meeting the standard and then you would do that across the

various standards. Khaled, did you want to add anything on that side or did you want to talk more on the more recent MODS conformance proofness.

Khaled Gamiet

Yeah, so thanks for that, Taffy. So the only thing that I would add to that is just to kind of maybe just help people with a bit of terminology and so on. So the NHS DSCR, they call them the standards and capabilities. So the capabilities are really, you could think of them as features. So there's a list and they're not part of the 14 standards. So you can think of those as and so there were certain features. There's a certain feature set that every DSCR assured supplier has to cover. And it's the obvious things that you would think about.

So then you need to be able to create a care plan and review a care plan. You need to be able to create and review assessments, but there are other capabilities in there as well, so things like being able to do task management and certain types of reporting and so on. So you've got the capabilities which you can think of as features. It's like a minimum feature set that every that every DSCR solution has to comply with. And obviously with standards, you need to write them in such a way that you're not making every solution exactly the same, because a care plan and an assessment in Domcare will be quite different for one in care home sort of thing. So But they're quite high level standards about what capabilities need to be included, but they don't necessarily specify exactly how it needs to be implemented. And then you've got the 14 standards, which are cross-cutting. Like Taffy says, they cover things both in terms organisational standards like business continuity and so on, but they also cover things like security and information governance, you know, privacy, things like accessibility.

So there are accessibility standards that you need to meet, and so on. In terms of making the solutions accessible to different types of users, and they're quite cross-cutting. And then, as part of those 14 standards, I suppose the one that we're probably mostly talk about today is MODS, which is just one of the 14 standards, which is a data standard. And that really I think there's about 1,200-ish data items within MODS, and what MODS is trying to achieve is the first steps to trying to achieve some level of interoperability between systems. Effectively, Data Standards is saying, we would like you to be able to store this data in the same formats across the different systems. So that at some point in the future we can we can share this data. So MODS would cover, like I said, about 1,200 data items. It would cover things, for example, you know, the basic things like what format with a service user, their first name and last name should be in. It needs to be in a text format, you know, how many characters long. What the date format for their date of birth, the address format, and so on, right down to some, you know, to covering things like care plans and assessments and so on.

What, you know, what format, you know, what data format they need to be implemented in, things like About Me and so on So that at some point in the future, hopefully, these systems will be able to talk to each other and share the data in a common format. And it's called MODS, Minimal Operational dataset, because it doesn't cover everything. But it's a minimum dataset that, you know, has been created to, you know. To share information. And I think, you know, to be fair, to be honest, it's a really good start. I think it's... You know, the challenges that you've all got with any kind of standards is that you want to standardise things, but then again, providers are very different, organisations are very different, and So you don't want to over-standardise things to make things need to be flexible enough to be able to be adapted for different environments. But, you know, that's... I think that's, you know, my overview of the standards process. I think the one thing I would say is that it's quite a rigorous process. I don't know if you'd agree with that, Taffy. It's quite I mean, it's taken quite a long time to get through I certainly don't think 1, 100 data lines is a minimum Yeah.

It doesn't feel minimal to me. The overall assurance process is rigorous and time-consuming. For example, GP Connect—the ability to view someone's GP record—took us more than a year to complete. Building the feature itself was fairly quick, but the assurance checks, security requirements and approval needed to access a GP record took much longer. Standards therefore need to balance the benefits with the time and cost for suppliers to implement them and for the assurance teams to assess them.

Katie Thorn

And I think it's probably worth being quite clear for the care homes, home care companies who are on this call that just because there's 1, 200 data lines in MODS doesn't mean that you are required as a care home or a home care company to complete every single one of those 1200 items of data. The software just needs to have the capability To record it, if you need to record it, is that right?

Khaled Gamiet

Yeah, absolutely. Bro, that's also actually a really good question. I'm trying to find it now in the chat.

Katie Thorn

Touching on so in adult social care, we obviously do have sort of structured data. You touched on some of their around people's names or the specific medication, but we also have quite a lot of sort of unstructured information which is not necessarily recorded in the same way. And does MODS sort of have capacity for that and sort of to help around some of the more sort of informal kind of records that we keep or is it just around the really specific structured data sets?

Taffy Gatawa

Mark covers both There are elements of So that's happening.

Katie Thorn

Sorry, did you want to come in first lead?

Khaled Gamiet

No, you go, you go.

Taffy Gatawa

I was just going to say there are elements of the data standard that allows for free text So I think Khalid referenced that it's quite specific in how certain information should be captured, whether that's text or coded or, you know, but there are elements where There are some free text fields where you can add additional data. I would say it's quite specific to the standard So Probably that we will find as we start to see adoption that there will be limitations dependable on what I haven't seen that question, so I haven't got the full context, but I suspect that there will be some limitations In aligning some of that free text to MODS because the standard is quite prescriptive.

Khaled Gamiet

MODS covers both structured and unstructured information. It contains around 1, 100 to 1, 200 data items, but they are not all required. MODS identifies must, should and could items, so suppliers only have to implement the required subset. In some areas, suppliers can choose how to capture the information.

Khaled Gamiet

So, you know, so I'm trying to think of an example, but Off the top of my head, so say, for example, you were doing, like, an admission record, and on some of the data items, you have the choice between providing a dropdown list And providing a text field. And the easiest way often to be able to, you know, for the model compliance is just to give the... It's just to implement a text field. But if you decide to do a drop-down list once might then say, well, if you're going to implement, you know, like, not a text field, a drop-down list, then it must be from the SNOMED codes, or it must be from this NHS data dictionary. So the supplier has a choice between providing a text field, an unstructured record to meet the model's requirement, but if it does a drop-down list, it's quite prescriptive about what that list needs to be. In most cases Yeah, yeah, yeah That applies only in some areas, though. It's not always as straightforward you have a choice. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah It depends on the area of the of the standard.

Katie Thorn

Thank you for that.

I think it's just sort of helpful for people wrapping their heads around it to sort of understand sort of some of the benefits, but also some of the limitations of standards in this way. And I wonder you obviously, Taffy from a software supplier's perspective, but colored from both provider's perspective. So what do you see as, like, the real benefits of implementing standards, but also are there sort of some cons, slight limitations that you would sort of flag to people to be aware of with this process? I don't Okay.

Khaled Gamiet

I think if I answer that in two ways. From the benefits point of view, I think like it can be, you know, like it can be frustrating to implement standards because you just want to kind of get on with things and implement your features and build your software and so on. I can say without a shadow of a doubt that having gone through this assurance process that we've got a better product as a result of Going through this our product is more secure, it's more stable, it's kind of having gone through the standards process. I think... So that's one benefit.

I think you get a better quality software solution, we, you know, having gone through the Standards process I think specifically in terms of the data standards, the big win for data standards is being able to is interoperability. And we're not quite there yet because MODS is kind of there's a lot of terminology at the moment, but MODS is the forerunner to SCIP, which ultimately will allow data to be able to be shared between digital care record systems and other DSCRs and with, you know, other external systems, so being able to share information with, you know, hospitals and so on sort of thing. So MODS is laying the groundwork for that, so I think that would be Interoperability is really the you know the you know like the the big the big benefit for, you know, for the data standards and so on. In terms of the cost, I think I've already mentioned them. It's that, you know, standardization. I mean, MODS is a good start, but there are still some places where you can still see that MODS, it's quite clear that it was based on Very medical and doesn't quite fit, you know, social care, but hopefully that can be addressed in future revisions.

Khaled Gamiet

Taffy and I spoke about this a few days ago, is that some aspects of MODS lean towards residential care and don't quite fit home care sort of things, so You know, because if there's, you know, there are standards in there for admissions and discharges which very much the residential care model and don't fit, you know, fit Domcare. So, so you need to be careful when you create standards to make sure that you're not overstandardizing, and that you make sure that it's flexible enough to adapt to different types of care settings, and so on as well. So so those are the sums not necessarily negatives, but some of the things that obviously needs to be addressed as part of the standards process. And that's why this needs to be a, you know, an ongoing process, I

think, of, you know, updating standards and making sure that they're, you know, they're fit for purpose.

Katie Thorn

Taffy would you like to add anything to that.

Taffy Gatawa

I think a lot of what I would have said is covered.

I think I would say on the benefits front, certainly from a provider and people receiving or being supported within social care. One of the key benefits as I see it beyond the product is more around the experience of the person receiving care. So that ability to capture information consistently just hopefully can ensure that people have a better experience and they don't have to keep repeating themselves, which we know sometimes is a challenge when there isn't that standardisation across how information is captured and that ability to share it. And then the other thing I would say is that From a care provider point of view, working with information standards can be a really good way of demonstrating care quality. So I know we don't have Claire today, but across the PRSB they have some really specific standards around certain conditions as well as more generic admin standards like the core information standards. So if we think of an example, like maybe diabetes, for example, you know, that can be a really way of demonstrating that you are providing high quality care from a provider's perspective. And then I think I would echo what's already been said in terms of limitations.

Taffy Gatawa

I think If standards are developed in a way that doesn't reflect the way people work, that can be a real limitation and can really have a big impact in their onward use and adoption if they don't reflect the way people work.

Katie Thorn

Yeah, thank you both. And I think that actually sort of has really helpfully answered the question which has come through from Stephen in the chat about how much of the MODS standard was created with the help of home care providers and residential providers rather than software product houses in the NHS. I think all three of us were involved in the development of that standard and the consultation process early doors. And from my experience There were care homes and home care companies involved, but it was a real struggle. We put in quite a lot of work at Digital Care Hub. I know both of you guys did as well with your organisations to recruit people to take part in that consultation and engagement process, as did NHS England, to be better than the department. But it's not a particularly interesting subject for many people.

So that's why we're really keen through this webinar and also throughout this entire month, we're really spotlighting standards to encourage people to get involved in consultation and engagement, both around MODS, which has already been developed, but may well iterate in the future, but also there are more standards which are coming down, the Standards Roadmap is available online and is publicly been listed already into the chat, so people can see that This is sort of, I guess, a plea from the adult social care sector to the adult social care sector to say, we promise standards are very interesting and very useful. Please do get involved in consultation around these things. And okay, we've just done that topic. I know we've spoken about this before, and I think what people, you know, the process by which the standards goes into consultation and then actually gets implemented in the software, you're probably talking about two or three years because not only do you need time to consult on it and then formalize the standard, but then you need to give the software suppliers time to implement it as well.

And currently with the contract with You know, like the agreement that the software suppliers have with the assurance team is that I think it's about 15 months between, you know, for implementation time for when a standard is finalized. So, I think that it's really important that CAP providers engage in consultation early because some of these standards are fundamentally, you know, dictate how we use software and how, you know, you write care plans and how you kind of deliver care. And if Like you said, it can be seen like a very boring subject and so on, but, it, you know, it does change, it will change the way that we, you know, we deliver care and, and therefore it's really important to make sure that the people who are going to be, you know, working with those standards and working with these, you know, this software and so on, you know, engage on these standards early on to be able to affect the outcome Yeah, exactly. Agreed. And it would be talked about mentioned SCIP a couple of times in Social Care Interop platform. I don't know for people who may not be as familiar on the call with what that is or what the future plans are.

Katie Thorn

I don't know if there's anything either of you would like to share about sort of the social care intro platform, what we know so far, to be very clear, this is all very much in discovery. It's coming from the Department of Health and Social Care. We're not entirely certain what it would be, but sort of from what's publicly available information.

Taffy Gatawa

Sure, I can kick us off on that. So, the intention with that whole piece of work is around enabling better sharing of information between social care providers and also between health and social care So the idea is to have, as Katie says, currently termed the social care interoperability Platform, an exchange where we can facilitate that information sharing with all of the Information governance aspects, taken care of and the

appropriate standards in terms of who is able to access information through that interoperability platform, thinking about that So as a lead up to that, all of what we have spoken about has been leading towards that.

So by having the standards implemented by software suppliers, it means, as I think my colleague Khaled has already said We're capturing information, we're collecting the same kind of information, capturing it in the same way. And then that means we can ensure that we can share that information with relevant systems. And that does rely on some of those similarities being in place. So I think there was a reference about language that sometimes doesn't align. And so part of those consultation discussions has been about, well This doesn't have meaning, or this isn't relevant, but how do we get that middle ground so that the systems, and I think it was Bharat who talked about that semantic interoperability, can talk to each other, and then we think about the other layer, which is the workflows that people are actually engaging as part of delivering care or health services align with that so that both the systems and actually people using those systems can actually meaningfully share information and it's useful to the receiving end as much as it is to those people that are capturing that information So the goal is that we would have a means by which social care can share information with.

Health, which we know currently is challenging. It's challenging even between social care suppliers right now, you know, or providers right now, and it's definitely challenging between social care and health, you know, getting a discharge summary, you know, is difficult. We know this, but there is infrastructure, central infrastructure that's ready That can facilitate this and so this whole program of work is about how can we Using existing infrastructure starts to put in the fundamental infrastructure to enable that information to move across the whole health and care system. So what's happened to date, I guess, is we've done the piece of work that we've talked about, some MODS.

There's an assured supplier list of capable systems that have gone through that process And there is a chosen supplier who is helping the government, NHS England to build the platform and they've engaged with some of those suppliers that were referenced earlier who are on that Assured Solutions list To test out this MODS standard, can you actually move it between yourselves? Can you actually connect to a central system? And that was an activity called a hackathon, which essentially is just like an environment in which Technical people can test out the data standard and see what's needed to enable that flow of information. I think the team are away working on further developing on the learnings from that. But that's as much as we know. But I think as a community of suppliers We're all very bought into that vision. We can see all of the benefits that can be realised by having that exchange of information because both myself, Katie, Khaled, we're all talking to care providers on a daily basis And we hear that data sharing is one of the key pain points.

Operationally, this is also a high-risk area because missing information can cause avoidable harm to people receiving care. Suppliers are committed to improving information sharing so that people who need the information can access it at the right time.

Katie Thorn

And so now we're trying to kind of problem solve so that we can do that with help as well as within the social care sector, so it's a big one. It's a big one.

Khaled Gamiet

Yeah, we said standards can be a bit boring, but I think for me, SCIP could be the most exciting thing to happen in care technology since the digital care records were created. I mean, SCIP has got a huge amount of potential because what it effectively does is that it gives a, it could potentially provide a platform To be able to share data with any system from your digital care record. And that could mean facilitating things like hospital admissions, being able to share data with your GP or your hospital and so on. But it could really... I think it's got the potential really to unlock a lot of innovation within care providers themselves So you could imagine that you might have your digital care record system, but if you wanted to be able to do some innovation, you know, create some tools of yourself, for yourself, create your own dashboards, create your own, you know, digital tools yourself, but you wanted to integrate with your own digital care record system, SCIP could be the platform that allows you to do that.

So it could unlock a lot of innovation from providers to do things themselves without having to build an entire platform themselves. They'd be able to hook into and talk to other systems and so on, and as long as they're compliant with the SCIP standard and can share data with MODS and so on They can do it themselves. So I think... I think it really, you know, and that then allows people to be able to customise solutions to their own requirements. So they could take an off-the-shelf solution, which is providing their core digital care records platform, and all the capabilities that those solutions provide. But they'd be able to customise. And so and there's a lot of other areas as well. So SCIP could be the way that you could communicate with EMAR systems, with external HR systems, with sensors and, you know, different devices within the care home, being able to talk to your digital care record system. So I think it's It's got, it's got a big exciting potential. And I think, really, you know, it's very much at the discussion point.

Khaled Gamiet

So this is one of the areas whereby providers, care providers can now should really be engaging in any consultation around SCIP to say, what are the priorities that care providers feel should, you know. The SCIP should address because The roadmap isn't established yet, and we have to, you know, establish what the early use cases are, and I

think this is one of those areas where care providers should really be looking to engage and shape the direction of where it goes.

Katie Thorn

Exactly. And we will obviously share some of links in the follow up to the session as well about how people can get involved, like things to sign up for to get more information, where you can get updates on all of this as it goes along. But I think that's a really exciting sort of vision for future. So maybe just as a sort of final question to round things up and thank you as well to Jason in the chat, who's been very patient because he asked this question earlier AI in social care. So obviously, Jason pointed out earlier that MHRA has called for more legislation around AI and healthcare We know there's not a lot around AI in social care as yet and that social care is explicitly out of the MHRA AI commission.

Katie Thorn

I just wondered if you guys both had any thoughts around sort of standards around AI in social care and what that might mean.

Taffy Gatawa

Sure. So through the work we do with CASPA, we know that there are some standards that are in development for, ambient voice technology So obviously we know that people are already using that technology now. So I think like many things, sometimes the and it's true for DSCRs, people were using DSCRs before all of these standards were then introduced. But there is that recognition that there now needs to be some standards and some guardrails around this type of technology, and I think we will start to see that across other areas where AI is being used. I think what will be interesting is the way in which over a very short period of time, AI has been adopted both in people Day to day as well as across the sector, and I think 12 months ago I was talking to Katie about the concern around people just using AI without really thinking through both around the compliance, but also the security considerations in doing so.

So obviously, you know, we're all processing very sensitive personal information, so we've got to think about Compliance in that regard, but also we have to think about the security of that information. And, you know, people were excited, quite rightly, about, you know, a technology that can either help them achieve huge efficiency gains, which we know time is really a key current In our industry. So I think we'll see that. But what we're also seeing, and I think this will come as no surprise to anybody, is that even at a global level, general regulation, which then translates to standards, is a bit behind When it comes to AI. So I would say it's a moving dynamic picture, but certainly we are very aware of some guardrails. And I think most suppliers are in the absence of that clarity in terms of a framework for standards, and you know regulations still catching up. Most

suppliers are thinking about how it is they can incorporate AI in a safe and secure way within their systems, because, you know, providers are telling us You know, they want to be able to achieve those gains, but we are trying to be responsible in how we approach that. Yeah.

Khaled Gamiet

Yeah, so AI and social care, I think that I can understand that, you know, like the desire to kind of like standardise, but I think we just need to be again keeping it balanced and be a bit cautious, because there there is actually a lot of standards and a lot of laws already in place which would govern AI in both healthcare and social care. There was a... I can't remember, it was a year or two ago, where I think the NHS Standards team, they were looking at a draft standard for AI within use within DSCRs in social care The problem that they... The way that that standard was originally drafted, it was based on some other standards, and it became out of date very quickly, because the standard was based on the assumption that care providers and people using AI would be training their own models So the standards was a lot around kind of like, you know, dealing with bias and so on, you know, training your own machine learning models. And actually, that's not how many people are now implementing AI. Many people are now taking off the shelf AI models, not training them And it's really around, you know, prompting and building agents which are which are using off-the-shelf models.

So I think before we start standardising, I think we probably need to let things mature a little bit, because otherwise you end up writing standards for technology that's moving so fast, and the standards become out of date before You know, before they can actually be implemented. Having said that, there is actually quite a lot of regulation and standards that probably would apply to anybody using AI anyway. So It doesn't really apply to us, but the EU have an AI act which is coming into effect. So one thing that people obviously, you know, the UK is probably in the top 2 or 3 countries at the moment in terms of you know AI innovation, probably just behind America and China The EU has actually seen to be falling behind because they seem to be over-regulating AI. So they've produced this AI act.

So even any software supplier who's providing software even to, I think, to Ireland and so on, any EU country would have to comply with that There are some AI standards and ISO standards around looking at AI risks and accountability and around bias and so on, which are they're not mandatory, but any AI technologies supplier Can, you know, voluntarily, you know, comply with that standard if they want to. If you're doing... If you're doing anything that involves, you know, getting into classifying your AI as a medical device, so... And some social care systems are getting very close to that. So If you were to be building an AI system that automatically wrote a risk assessment or a care plan, I would argue that you're already moving into a medical device and that has got implications around, you know, medical device registration and testing and so on as

well. So you know, that would automatically be covered by software as a medical device regulations and so on. And also any NHS assured DSCR supplier has to comply with the testing clinical safety information governance requirements that cover all the DSCR solutions, and that would that would that would apply to their AI features as well.

So any DSCR solution at the moment, any feature that we implement within our solution, there's a clinical safety standard, which is one of the ones we haven't talked about That that actually requires that all the DSCR suppliers to go through a clinical safety testing process for any features that might impact service user care or health or risk and so on. So we have to create a hazard log, a clinical safety hazard log. We have to look at mitigations around How those features can impact service user safety and so on. And that includes both AI and non-AI features. So I think before we start, you know, jumping into, say, we need to regulate AI, I think we also need to be aware that there's actually quite a lot in place already Certainly for NHS, short DSCR supplies, we have to do clinical safety testing and monitoring and so on as well. And like I said, some of these things are moving into where moving into the realm of where it would be classified as a medical device, which has its own standards and requirements and so on as well.

Khaled Gamiet

So So I think my own view is that we probably need to let some of this stuff mature properly so that the standards actually reflect, you know what's actually being used, and probably just use a lot of the regulations, the standards that we already have in place, you know, to Before we start, you know, creating new standards and regulations, but that's just my personal point of view.

Katie Thorn

Thank you very much for that both. I appreciate it's a bit of a meaty topic to come to at the end of a fairly long session. I've also popped a link in the chat to CQC's statement about how they're going to be approaching inspection regarding AI. They've actually fairly quick, I think, at pushing out sort of how it's going to impact their inspection regime. So if you're a care organisation who hasn't seen that, I would look at sort of what CQC will be asking you about your own use of AI, and also a reminder as well from care organisation perspective, we have very specific data protection requirements already, which still stay in place if you are using AI tools.

Katie Thorn

So Do make sure you are sort of doing your minimums around data protection impact assessments in exactly sort of as like Hala was just saying, there are already legislation that we need to be meeting. They don't get to get one side because there's new technologies So thank you very much all. I'm just going to launch a sort of feedback poll, which will be very grateful if people will be able to provide some responses to

about how you found the session today. It just really helps us with understanding if people find the topics helpful and if we can run these again, or if there's more information. Hopefully, that is there on your screens now. I also would just like to say a huge thank you to all of the people who've taken part today, to Barrett, to Taffy, to Khaled. This has been really, really in-depth, really, really thorough. We will share all of the links which will be mentioned today with everybody And we will also make sure everybody is aware, sort of from a software perspective, which are the sites you should be looking at in the links, and if you're a care organisation, which are the things you should be asking your software suppliers about.

So, hopefully, all of the materials you'll receive after the session will also help you with your understanding around standards. Thank you very much, everybody, and we hope you have a really lovely rest of your day. Thank you. Okay. Thank you very much.