

Adult Social Care Reform: The Cost of Inaction
Written evidence submission by Dedalus

Introduction

This submission is provided by [Dedalus](#), a world leading European healthcare company, empowering healthcare professionals across the UK and beyond with ground-breaking technology to deliver the best care to communities. Dedalus has been central to the digital transformation of over 6,300 healthcare organisations and 5,700 labs and diagnostic centres worldwide, serving over 540 million people. Dedalus employs over 7,700 highly-skilled resources; it has the largest R&D software team in the sector in Europe.

Dedalus' technology brings hospitals to the 21st century, freeing up clinicians' time and contributing to reduced waiting lists – a key priority for the NHS. Dedalus' unique offering streamlines and improves digital efficiency across the entire healthcare spectrum, from start to end of life care. In addition to being a world leader in EPR, Dedalus supports the NHS and hospitals across Europe to develop an integrated digital workplace, equip paramedics with the lifesaving patient data they require, manage pharmacy stock and laboratories, deliver high quality scientific research and perhaps most crucially manage the shift towards community-led care.

Through the use of artificial intelligence technologies, Dedalus can also ensure safer, more effective and personalised care, boosting the benefits of AI to patients, clinicians and the healthcare system while ensuring effective regulation and data protection in line with European standards. Dedalus is delighted to count 75% of NHS Trusts as partners across our variety of offerings, which are considered to be key components of the digital transformation being undertaken at local trust level.

Executive Summary

- Digital healthcare has the potential to transform the way people receive healthcare, lead to better tailored services, more targeted and community-led care, to improve overall patient outcomes. In order for both the NHS and its patients to receive the benefits of digital healthcare, Government must work closely with industry to drive digitalization and champion new and innovative technologies.
- Digital technologies and the Electronic Patient Record (EPR) represent the future of more efficient and effective healthcare on the continuum of care. Technology providers such as Dedalus are committed to providing a suite of innovative solutions designed to facilitate efficient care coordination and equipping patients with intuitive digital tools for their healthcare journey, but face in a number of barriers to delivery.

- **These barriers include: the slow NHS procurement process which is hindering innovation, issues around interoperability which is failing to deliver integrated health systems and the need to boost the benefits of AI.**
- **Dedalus stands ready to support the UK Government to enable a seamless and integrated adult social care system which places patients in the community at its beating heart and relieves pressure on the NHS.**

Dedalus Evidence Submission

Background

As the Health and Social Care Committee has rightly recognised, successive governments have failed to implement an effective plan to reform the adult social care system in the UK. The adult social care sector faces extensive challenges, including an ongoing workforce crisis, rising costs of providing services and pressure on local authorities and local trusts. Demand for adult social care is also expected to rise due to an ageing population with associated complex needs, meaning efficient and a long term implementation plan for care is more important than ever, and it is our view that quick access to reliable data is essential to this.

According to the NHS' Adult Social Care statistics in England, published earlier this year, the adult social care sector is not as well supported by data as the health sector, and it is very difficult to understand how the two overlap or integrate, using existing data sources.¹ This was brought to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will take significant investment, both from the private and public sector, and a long time to address the data gaps fully. There are approximately 2 million requests for support with social care services for new clients each year. This demand will continue on an upwards trajectory as the population increases, however significantly in the last five years, requests have increased among 18-64 year olds.²

However, despite these increases, continued pressures facing the NHS and care providers are making meeting this demand increasingly challenging. A review published by the NHS Transformation Unit in 2021 found that the potential for digital technology in delivering care and support was not being fully realised.³ Access to and use of technology was lower among care workers than other groups in the workforce. Furthermore, a range of digital technology was used to deliver care, but awareness and knowledge of care specific digital technology was variable among the workforce and care providers, and even lower low among people with care and support needs.

¹ <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-statistics-in-england/an-overview/introduction>

² Ibid

³ <https://transform.england.nhs.uk/key-tools-and-info/adult-social-care-digital-transformation/adult-social-care-technology-innovation-and-digital-skills-reviews>

Digital innovations, whether that be streamlining data systems, tackling waiting lists, and identifying those in need of care, are increasingly essential to delivering high-quality and effective social care provision across England.

Digital healthcare has the potential to transform the way people receive healthcare, lead to better tailored services, more targeted and community-led care, to improve overall patient outcomes. Yet, in order for both the NHS and its patients to receive the benefits of digital healthcare, Government must work closely with industry to drive digitalization and champion new and innovative technologies.

How technology can transform England's digital social care provision

Digital technologies and the Electronic Patient Record (EPR), in particular, represent the future of more efficient and effective healthcare on the continuum of care. Care for an individual is provided across multiple organisations and settings, often at the same time. No care provider is an island and their EPR must enable collaboration with partners in the health ecosystem – not create data silos and barriers. The next generation of EPRs must intelligently connect systems, data and people to enable the creation of new care ecosystems that are greater than the sum of their parts.

Through the transformation of care models and the integration of cutting-edge systems, together with coordinated care initiatives offering tailored coaching and advanced intervention capabilities, new digital technologies can empower medical decision-making and deliver personalised healthcare services across the care spectrum. Concurrently, interconnected health ecosystem serve as a channel for monitoring and supporting individuals through personal health systems in their daily lives.

Technology providers such as Dedalus are committed to providing a suite of innovative solutions designed to facilitate efficient care coordination and equipping patients with intuitive digital tools for their healthcare journey, but face in a number of barriers to delivery.

Developing a comprehensive innovation and adoption strategy for adult social care provision

With the Health Secretary committed to developing a comprehensive innovation and adoption strategy for the NHS, it is essential that driving new and digital health technologies in adult social care is essential to this.

As a European heritage company, we bring significant added value to the UK. By providing opportunities for the UK to learn and adopt best digital practices from comparative European healthcare systems, we can help the country maximise patient outcomes, support clinicians, drive efficiency gains and reduce overall costs while not undermining standards. Given this we make the following recommendations to Government to ensure successful transformation of digital health provision across England:

- Like all suppliers, Dedalus is being impacted by the bureaucratic and slower transformative nature of NHS procurement. It is essential that reforms to NHS procurement prioritise innovation and ensure ICB digital foundations are robust**

and equip them with the necessary support and guidance to keep a pace with new and emerging technologies.

- Over the last few years NHS trusts have struggled to meet targets for digitalisation. Last year it was estimated that only 20% of NHS Trusts in England currently have the required level of digital maturity. It is therefore essential that Trusts across England have access to the required long-term funding and prioritise interoperability, which is currently a major barrier to delivering innovation and integrated social services to local communities.
- Drive the use of proven artificial intelligence technologies within digital provision to ensure safer, more effective and personalised social care provision. Boosting the benefits of AI to patients, clinicians and the healthcare system while streamlining data processes for care providers, whilst ensuring data protection remains in line with European standards.

Dedalus stands ready to support the UK Government to enable a seamless and integrated adult social care system which places patients in the community at its beating heart and relieves pressure on the NHS.

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