NHS
Counter Fraud Authority

Digital Strategy

2020-23

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the Digital Strategy is to set the scene for the future direction of digital services within the NHSCFA while recognising that we will continue to adapt and evolve to align with the latest advances in digital technology. We will seek to focus our limited resources on achieving the best digital outcomes across the organisation and satisfy the growing demand for digital services. Information Technology underpins every undertaking across the organisation, including the services we provide to external partners, and we need to ensure it is used effectively, efficiently and securely to support improved outcomes, reduce costs and to make the lives of our users easier.

However, data and technology are enablers rather than an end goal in themselves; the goal is the delivery of the organisational plan. The primary objective of a digital strategy is to ensure that the organisation strategy can be realised through technology and that technology investments are aligned with business needs. To fulfil our ambition for our organisation we required an integrated strategic approach. This will ensure that all our strategies around estates, finances, data, digital, service provision, business planning and workforce are aligned and support our organisational strategy.

We know that digital technology can help us to achieve cost reductions through increased efficiency, automation, and effectiveness. We can use technology to increase productivity through flexible and agile working. We can also use the opportunity of digitalisation to completely rethink the way that we deliver services rather than just computerising them. We need to focus on designing digital processes and solutions with a strong emphasis on user experience and ease of use.

Rapid change and increasing reliance on technology require that our Digital strategy anticipates and responds to the NHSCFA's evolving needs. These needs are determined by regular Digital Strategy Group (DSG) meetings involving all areas of the business. The NHSCFA IT teams will develop a plan, alongside the rest of the business to implement the strategy, with regular reviews scheduled to incorporate the rapidly changing landscape.

We will continue to develop and improve corporate services so that internal and external users find them easy to access, simple to understand, timely and high quality.

Of course, there will be challenges in delivering the digital strategy including budget constraints and an operating model where a number of IT services are outsourced to external suppliers. We also need to overcome the historical cultural divide that has existed between

the IT teams and the rest of the business. The business has seen security on IT systems impacting their ability to do their jobs effectively and a lack of early engagement with IT teams from the business has caused resourcing issues and implementation delays. We will seek new and innovative methods to overcome these challenges wherever possible

2. Vision
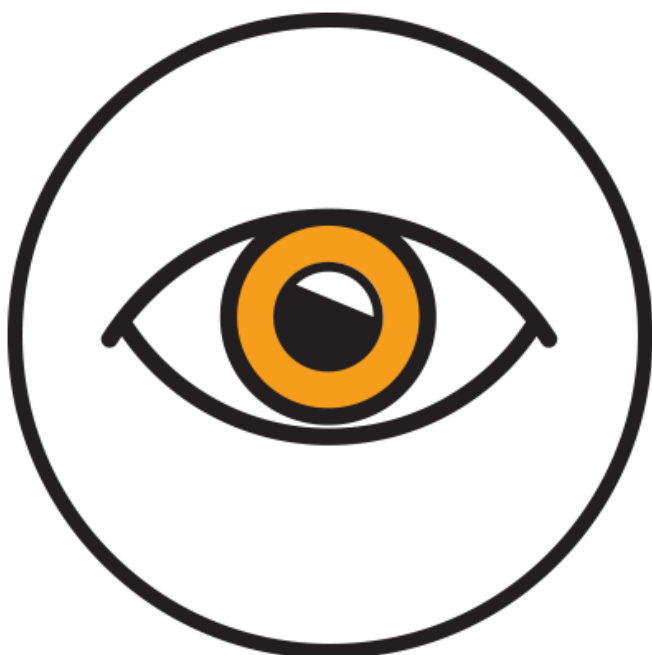
Digital Vision

Our vision is an empowered organisation whose people can use technology to maximise knowledge, productivity and innovation in the fight against NHS fraud. This technology will be reliable, modern and accessible, irrespective of location.

Digital Mission

Our mission is to provide our people with competitive, reliable, innovative, and sustainable technology to support the understanding, discovery, prevention, and response to fraud in the NHS.

1. Support the organisation's strategies

Technology progresses all the time and we need to constantly monitor and change to keep up with the developments. We have therefore identified six broad aims as core ambitions for our digital strategy.

The primary objective of a digital strategy is to ensure that the organisation strategy can be realised through technology and that technology investments are aligned with business needs. We will embed the effective use of digital technology into the way we deliver, monitor, and evaluate organisational objectives. Aligning the technology to the delivery of NHSCFA strategic objectives, will enable us to get the best out of resources and effectively manage, measure and report on risk and performance

Everything within the NHSCFA strategy is underpinned by our digital strategy and infrastructure. The organisational strategy has 4 strategic objectives and examples of how the digital strategy aligns to each of these are given below:

Lead and influence by:

Improving awareness through digital assets
Supporting local counter fraud activity via the extranet (Ngage)
Increasing and improving the quality of fraud reporting by enhancing the Fraud Reporting System (FCROL)

Reducing fraud losses

NHSCFA will make good use of data to deliver its strategy. This will require improvements in the availability, quality and use of data in ways made possible by better digital technology. Making better use of data to inform delivery will drive better decision making in our programmes and operations and strengthen our accountability and transparency. Providing the infrastructure to improve our data analytic capability and enable the introduction of innovative approaches within the counter fraud area including machine learning

Support and empower our people

Develop and invest in a robust IT infrastructure to enable our people to succeed
An ongoing programme of service and security improvements is in place and will link very closely to the NHSCFA's smarter working programme which will see more people utilising flexible working opportunities and supporting the well-being of our people.

Effective use of our resources

A greater use of technology will allow us to use our resources more effectively, helping NHSCFA to identify and pursue opportunities for growth and innovation, while delivering a reduction in operating costs

Examples of the service improvements already made include:

The new 2 in 1 laptops we have introduced which can be used as a touch screen tablet as well as a traditional laptop. This makes them more versatile and accessible to use in meetings and when users are away from a desk. Alongside this we have enabled the WiFi facility on the laptops to make it easier for our people to connect to our systems when they are working remotely.

A new type of telephony system which allows our people to use their computer as a phone. This gives greater flexibility and mobility.

Microsoft TEAMs, which has also recently been introduced, provides another mechanism for working together, offering new communication methods such as video and conference calling as well as instant messaging and functionality for sharing and collaborating on documents.

Support our commitment to sustainability

Our organisation has a commitment to maximising its positive impact on the environment and driving resource efficiency. People have been encouraged to reduce travel wherever possible to protect the environment and the introduction of TEAMs and Webex as well as improved video conferencing systems will support this.

We will continue to consider environmental impact when we procure and dispose of equipment and we will endeavour to support any future green initiatives.

For example, new larger monitors and new technologies have made it easier to read, send

and manage documents digitally, reducing the need to print. When we do need to print, the recently procured energy efficient printers in all our offices have far less impact than those they replace. The printers also require a PIN / Password to be input on the printer before printing commences. This will reduce the amount of unnecessary printing and waste.

Support our communication strategy

The NHSCFA IT teams will support the communication strategy by

Delivering and contributing high quality visual communication across NHSCFA and externally by working with the communications team to develop photographic, video and other display materials which support the NHSCFA's corporate message and communications plans.

Developing and maintaining the NHSCFA's web and digital applications that are used as part of communications and engagement activity

Support our data strategy

The NHSCFA IT teams will support the data strategy through close collaboration with the Information Analytics team and supporting their technology needs, specially:

- providing an up-to-date technological infrastructure and applications in accordance with the analytics team's technology direction and skillsets

- maintaining a flexible approach to cater for the future data and information needs of the organisation

- ensuring that the most technically advanced and appropriate ways of storing and processing large datasets are available to the NHSCFA

- ensuring that the information held within the data hub is done so in accordance to organisation and statutory data processing and storage rules, such as GDPR, FOI, etc.

- ensuring that the information held within the data hub is secure and reliable by maintaining its confidentiality, integrity, and accessibility

- Working with the analytics team to continually improve the operation and functionality of the data hub

2. Become a user centric organisation

When designing our digital solutions, we will ensure that user need, and experience are considered from the outset. NHSCFA IT teams want to change the way we design, procure, and build digital systems to make technology an asset for the business and its partners, creating a better everyday life for people. Suppliers will be challenged to offer functionality rich digital solutions with a focus on user experience, integration, adaptability, and accessibility. Solutions will look to follow the NHS Service standards for digital services (https://service-manual.nhs.uk/).

Technology used in the NHSCFA should be fit for purpose, making tasks simpler, faster, or better. Smarter working has been enabled by digital solutions, and we will continue to consider this new way of working in all new technologies that we introduce.

Not all our users are internal, and we need to consider technologies and solutions which enable collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst people both inside and outside the NHSCFA. We need to balance the needs of all users and not create any additional work without any obvious benefit.

NHSCFA IT teams need to be embedded into the business planning process so they can support the business's needs and suggest a range of possibilities on how technology can enable the desired outcome.

The IT teams will engage widely with people across NHSCFA to communicate the opportunity and potential of digital approaches and build collective ownership for the implementation of the digital strategy.

On-going engagement across the organisation and the introduction of a commissioning approach to digital requests will ensure the digital strategy and delivery remain aligned to corporate objectives and user needs.

3. Protect the organisation against cyber threats and resulting financial and reputational loss

Cyber threats are always present, when one vulnerability is shut down, criminals seek others. The NHSCFA has a responsibility to manage and protect a wide range of digital information to ensure that it remains confidential and preserves its integrity and availability. We must be vigilant towards cyber attacks, constantly monitoring activity on networks and responding quickly to any threats to the organisation. The NHSCFA have a number of tools to help protect against cyber threats which will be regularly reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and that all functionality is exploited to the full. We will continue to develop our security capability to build the appropriate cyber and information safeguards into design and delivery of our infrastructure, platforms, applications, and processes.

We have implemented a comprehensive Information Security Management System (ISMS) aligned to and accredited against the international best practice standard ISO 270001. This will ensure that the NHSCFA has robust, proportionate, and compliant information security measures in place so that the organisation is protected against threats from unauthorised

or unintended access, destruction, disclosure, or tampering. Our accreditation will give confidence to those who provide or share personal data with us, that their information will be handled and managed appropriately.

We support the NHSCFA Information Governance strategy by protecting privacy, delivering robust information, data, and cyber security, and investing in delivering digital resilience so that our online services can be trusted to be safe and reliable.

We will support our people by ensuring that information security policies and processes are clear and easy to understand, and that support, and guidance are available when needed. We will continue to develop the organisations knowledge of IT security and provide appropriate training and real-life scenario campaigns to educate and minimise the risk of human error.

There will be a security assurance function and process which will ensure that all technology developments and procurements, including those of our external partners, meet NHSCFA Information Security requirements, whether those requirements are internal or necessary to meet the needs of external accreditations.
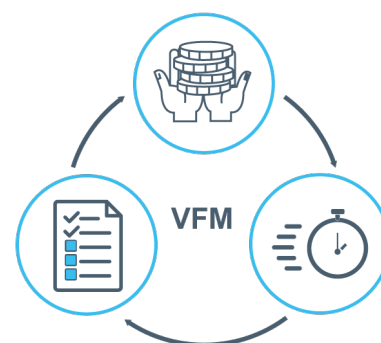
4. Deliver Value for Money (VFM)

We will strive to deliver best value both within the IT teams and across the organisation by implementing technical solutions to achieve efficiencies.

There are 3 factors which determine value for money:

Economy – minimising the cost of resources

Efficiency – accomplishing a task with least waste

Effectiveness – the relationship between the actual and intended results

The IT teams will seek to deliver value for money both in the procurement of IT goods and services and by supporting the rest of the organisation to explore process efficiencies and encouraging greater digitisation.

A greater use of technology and a more digital approach will improve our work processes, people experience and stakeholder satisfaction while delivering efficiency savings.

To achieve good VFM, we seek:

- To integrate technical solutions within existing planning and review processes and embed the pursuit of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within operational management through digitisation.
- To embed a culture of continuous improvement.
- To use technology to simplify wherever possible and avoid duplication of effort.
- To use technology to obtain and hold 'single source of truth' for data.

Digitalisation provides the opportunity to deliver vastly improved and accessible data that can be used to determine our priorities and decide where to devote resources and spend money. Data can be used in new and innovative ways to support the ambitions of the organisation.

Examples of how we will seek to achieve VFM include:

- Ensuring offices are enabled for smarter working for example by ensuring all spaces are WIFI enabled.
- Exploring automation of processes by using existing Microsoft products.
- Maximising applications included within our Microsoft 365 licensing.
- Introducing some self-service activities eg password resets – saving time for users and freeing up the service desk for more complex calls.

We will explore opportunities, including NHS and Government wide agreements to save money when procuring goods and services. For example, we have taken advantage of a new NHS wide Microsoft 365 agreement which will save us a further 11% per annum beyond the current discounted rate.

VFM means delivering the right service at the right time for the right cost. The balance can change over time as user priorities change and new technologies emerge, so we aim to keep VFM under constant review.

5. Enable our people to use technology

We will aim to design services around the needs of all our users. This will result in more open, engaging, and responsive interactions.

We also need to ensure that our employees at every level of the organisation have the digital skills, confidence, and commitment to adopt a digital first approach to working collaboratively across boundaries to deliver services and meet the organisation needs. This means developing a clear vision and expectation of digital standards and addressing gaps through training.

The use of digital tools, techniques and technologies will be mainstreamed within CFA activities and programmes. Our people will be intelligent digital consumers meaning they will have more capability and confidence in commissioning and managing programmes that incorporate digital technologies.

We will help both internal and external users to get the most out of our technology, considering the need to support adoption and behavioural change at the outset of new initiatives.

We will agree an approach to minimum IT skills expectations for new recruits and work with existing people to ensure that they meet the skills expectation. This will be a continuous programme of activities as NHSCFA continues to adapt and evolve to align with the latest advances in digital technology.

It is essential that our IT teams remain up to date with technology developments and are trained in the digital skills necessary to support the organisation.

6. Ensure the organisation is conforming to technology standards and codes of practice

NHSCFA IT Teams conform to several technology standards and codes of practice as well as adhering to relevant legislation. The main frameworks are:

- Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- ISO 27001 (Information Security)
- ISO 20000 (Information Technology Service Management)
- Government Digital Services (GDS) Technology Codes of Practice

These will continue to guide our strategy and the way that we work with other parts of the business.

All our digital services need to be accessible by law (2010 Equality Act). New accessibility regulations state that public sector websites must meet accessibility standards and publish an accessibility statement. Services offered internally as well as our external services need to meet these accessibility requirements. We must also ensure that external suppliers we may contract to deliver services meet the accessibility requirements.

ISO 27001 is the international standard on information security management. The NHSCFA is accredited to this standard. The certification assures other organisations that we maintain appropriate security controls and they can be confident that any data shared with us will be adequately protected to an assured standard and in accordance with GDPR legislation.

ISO 20000 is the International standard for IT service management covering the activities that are performed to design, plan, deliver, operate, and control the IT services offered to users. The NHSCFA is accredited to this standard, providing confidence to our users, customers, and stakeholders that we will provide them with appropriate and effective Service Management and support.

Following the GDS Technology Code of Practice will help the NHSCFA introduce or update technology so that it:

- Meets user needs, based on research with your users
- Is easier to share across government
- Is easy to maintain
- Scales for future use
- Is less dependent on single third-party suppliers
- Provides better value for money

There are 12 points within the technology code of practice:

- Define user needs – understand your users and their needs. Develop knowledge of your users and what that means for your technology project or programme.
- Make things accessible and inclusive - Make sure your technology, infrastructure and systems are accessible and inclusive for all users.
- Be open and use open source - Publish your code and use open source software to improve transparency, flexibility, and accountability.
- Make use of open standards - Build technology that uses open standards to ensure your technology works and communicates with other technology and can easily be upgraded and expanded.
- Use Cloud First - Consider using public cloud solutions first as stated in the Cloud First policy.
- Make things secure - Keep systems and data safe with the appropriate level of security.
- Make Privacy Integral - Make sure users rights are protected by integrating privacy as an essential part of your system.
- Share, reuse and collaborate - Avoid duplicating effort and unnecessary costs by collaborating across government and sharing and reusing technology, data, and services.
- Integrate and adapt technology - Your technology should work with existing technologies, processes, and infrastructure in your organisation, and adapt to future demands.
- Make better use of data - Use data more effectively by improving your technology, infrastructure, and processes.
- Define your purchasing strategy - Your purchasing strategy must show you've considered commercial and technology aspects, and contractual limitations.
- Meet the service standard - If you're building a service as part of your technology project or programme you will also need to meet the Service Standard.

Further information on service standards is available at:
https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/service-standard

The following details the above standard in an NHS setting:
https://service-manual.nhs.uk/service-standard

Cloud migration is a big part of our future strategy and has not been discussed elsewhere in this document. The Government has a cloud first policy which states that we should consider cloud computing before any other options. Cloud computing is a way of storing and retrieving data and software over the internet without needing to host your infrastructure in a local on-premise NHSCFA Data Centre / Server Room. There are many benefits to cloud computing including the potential to lower costs as you only pay for the server space that you use, greater resilience, more agility to increase and decrease server space when necessary, reduced risk as the "cloud" will have 24/7 support and reduced estate costs as we will no longer have to host the servers on site. Local facility concerns such as air conditioning and power, (both major sources of outages), will be the responsibility of the cloud provider with appropriate resilience being in place. Cloud computing is also more environmentally friendly. Cloud infrastructure may not be appropriate for all our existing hardware and required working practices, but it is likely that a large amount of our current infrastructure can be moved to the cloud. NHSCFA IT teams are working with our outsourced suppliers to identify services that can be moved and plan a migration programme.

The GDS Technology code of practice also advocates making better use of data and covers areas including:

- The right tools to capture and store the data
- Secure data collection
- Efficient data collection
- Storage capacity and scalability
- Data retention and deletion

As the organisation becomes more data driven, we will be working with the business and external partners to provide robust, scalable, and sustainable technology to ensure NHSCFA's ability to handle and support the analytics function.

Challenges

The three main challenges we face are budget constraints particularly in light of a change in service delivery model, our supplier model, and our relationship with the business.

- Our revenue budget is limited which restricts the digital support we can provide to the organisation, but the demand for technology is continually increasing. The capital budget enables us to invest in new technology, but this often comes with associated revenue costs, which limits what we can do. Maintenance and support costs for our existing technology continues to increase, putting a greater strain on the revenue budget. The Government supports a "cloud first" approach but with cloud services being a revenue cost, this is challenging to implement.

- NHSCFA is a small organisation with limited IT resources to support the organisation. We have, therefore, outsourced some of the IT tasks through an MOU with the NHSBSA. Previously these have been outsourced to one external supplier, but a recent change has meant thar support for different tasks has been outsourced to different suppliers. The contract has changed, and the boundary of responsibilities is not clear between the different parties and NHSCFA. Consequently, supplier management has become a more significant task than previously. Now that the new arrangements have had some time to bed in, the relationship has begun to run more smoothly than previously. There are also opportunities arising from the new arrangement and NHSCFA have been able to access skills and expertise that are not available to us in house.

- Historically there has been a cultural divide between the IT teams and the business. The main issues have been:
    - A lack of early engagement with the IT teams during the business planning process.
    - The business proposing solutions rather than defining requirements.
    - IT teams having to implement systems that are not always user friendly or fully fit for purpose (largely due to our supplier model).
    - Security on IT systems restricting the business's ability to do their jobs.
    - Business not having time/resources to dedicate to IT projects.

Progress has been made over the past year to address these issues with the correct mechanisms in place to allow full and proper engagement with IT and our suppliers. There is still work to be done to overcome these challenges and our IT teams continue to explore all options in the pursuit of providing the very best tools and service available within our budgetary constraints (providing best VFM).

Conclusion

This strategy sets out a vision and approach for the NHSCFA in an increasingly digitised world. It seeks to establish how the NHSCFA will introduce digital solutions to support its fight against fraud. The NHS IT teams will develop a plan, alongside the rest of the business to implement the strategy with regular reviews scheduled to incorporate the rapidly changing IT landscape.