



Making IT  
good for society

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Keith McNeil  
Chief Clinical Information Officer  
NHS England

By e-mail  
[keith.mcneil@nhs.net](mailto:keith.mcneil@nhs.net)

30 September 2016

Dear Keith,

**British Computer Society (BCS):  
The contribution we can make to the Paperless2020 agenda**

Our purpose at the BCS is to 'make IT good for society'. Health and care is one of the four challenges (alongside capability, education, and personal data) that the BCS is championing. We have a vibrant and committed health and care community, and are helping to lead the professionalisation of the 60,000 strong Informatics (non-clinical) workforce as a movement focussed on outcomes for the citizen and society as a whole.

We believe 2016 is a seminal year in the digital health and care story. It is proving to be the year in which we are 'ending the past and beginning the future', by which we mean, we are collectively putting to bed the negative legacy created by some of the failed history of the health informatics past, and beginning to define and jointly deliver a new future.

NHS Expo was critical to this seminal year; Jeremy Hunt, Matthew Swindells and you describing this opportunity; Bob Wachter launching his excellent review and the announcements on the NHS Digital Academy & Global Digital Exemplars.

Accordingly, as we reflect on NHS Expo, we wanted to outline the contribution the BCS can make to ensure the successful delivery of the Paperless2020 agenda, and the wider digital health and care story.

**Wachter Review**

We contributed to Bobs review – hosting an early engagement for him on the 1st February 2016; a dinner at The Royal Society of Medicine; and provided constructive written input to his review.

The BCS formally endorses all 10 of the Wachter Recommendations. We warmly welcome and support your appointment as the health and care systems first Chief Clinical Information Officer, and that of Will Smart the NHS CIO. We believe clinical and technical leadership is essential, in partnership breaking down the barriers between groups to convene around a goal or a problem as a single team. Our members can contribute through their behaviours and actions in the achievement of all his recommendations, but linking to our core capabilities, in particular we can contribute to:

- **Recommendation 3** - Develop a Workforce of Trained Clinician-Informaticists at the Trusts, and Give Them Appropriate Resources and Authority;
- **Recommendation 4** - Strengthen and Grow the CCIO Field, Others Trained in Clinical Care and Informatics, and Health IT Professionals More Generally; and,
- **Recommendation 8** - Organise Local/Regional Learning Networks to Support Implementation and Improvement.

***Our offers:***

***1) We would like to be members of the Building a Digital Ready Workforce Programme Board so we can bring our expertise to drive professionalisation;***

***2) We would be delighted to nominate yourself, and Will Smart, into the process for Fellowship of the BCS – so you can co-lead professionalism of the Informatics workforce with us.***

### **NHS Digital Academy**

The BCS is in partnership discussions with CHIME (the US College of Health Information Managers and Executives) to pilot the creation of a proven health qualification, the Certified Health CIO (CHCIO) programme, for NHS CIOs. The BCS is also pushing forward the professionalism agenda by re-energising the Federation of Informatics Professionals. There is a clear link between the proposed NHS Digital Academy, the Federation, CHIME, and BCS Fellowship . Harpreet Sood will shortly join the BCS Health & Care Executive as the Vice Chair – Medical so further strengthening the links between the BCS and Digital Academy agenda

***Our offer: We would welcome helping design the NHS Digital Academy, and will step-up our contribution accordingly. Please note our involvement would be volunteer-led, ensuring separation from the BCS's Learning and Development commercial subsidiary.***

### **Risk of widening the digital poverty gap**

As you know I, as BCS Health & Care Executive Chair and jobbing NHS CIO, was a member of the international selection panel for the Global Digital Exemplars. You kindly responded to the feedback provided 'mid-flight' in the process, and I believe it improved the final outcome. However recognising the wider challenge in the health and care system, there is a risk that focusing on the Exemplars widens the digital poverty gap. We recommend that you quickly follow through the Exemplars work, with an approach for the digital 'strivers and strugglers'.

We are also keen that we extend the definition of an 'exemplar' from an organisation level to a city/region level. When one looks around the world at the digital health success stories the striking trend over recent years has been the move away from the organisational level to focus on the achievement of city regions that have created a digitally integrated system. Valencia, Christchurch and Chicago are amongst the highest profile. I am firmly of the view that we have city regions in England who could be on this list very soon.

***Our offer: We would like to help test the approach for the remainder of the providers, via convening a focus group jointly with the CIOs Network (on whose CIO Advisory Panel I am an elected member), to ensure we maximise the benefit of the investment.***

### **BCS Health and Care, and Associate Vice Chairs**

Following discussion with BCS members and to reflect the needs of the system going through the STP process and to ensure we are promoting inclusion of social care colleagues, we are now renamed to be BCS Health *and Care*. To reflect this broader focus, we have recently appointed 30 voluntary 'Associate Vice Chairs', each working as part of a Vice Chair led team on areas such as: policy and strategy, professionalism, standards, events, publications and communications, care and wellbeing, equality and diversity. We are a broader church, and in time will be able to amplify our positive impact alongside and with you and our other partners in the health and care system.

***Our offer: This extended BCS Health & Care network are some of the 'movement' who will drive the change. We would like to invite you to join the kick-off event on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in London.***

### **BCS and the Digital Health 'Social Movement'**

The last few years have been characterised by an emerging digital health & care 'social movement'. Individuals who have sought a brighter digital future have reached out, connected through common purpose and energy and created a powerful 'force for good'. The formation and growth of the CCIO and CIO Networks are tangible evidence of this movement, but the emergence of specialist groups (eg. HealthTech Women) is also evidence of the enthusiasm for a bright future.

Our collective challenge is to ensure we create an environment for delivery led by professionals, managing structured programmes in a controlled fashion, whilst retaining the independent spirit and 'fleet of foot' innovation that feeds the energy and enthusiasm. We are already seeing examples of how this can happen as demonstrated by the vibrant Interoperability Code4Health Community, who are driving forwards standards on interoperability led by a Board including representatives from NHS England, NHS Digital, CIO and CCIO networks, SOCITM and TechUK / INTEROpen (for industry) . It is a unique model but one which should be encouraged and developed in other areas.

***Our offer: BCS would like to work with the CCIO & CIO Networks and other members of the 'social movement' to help design new 'vehicles' for digital health and care delivery that build on the inherent energy within the movement***

## **BCS role at the National Information Board**

We welcome the formation of the Digital Delivery Board, however the BCS would welcome to contribute to the strategic agenda of the National Information Board, to ensure the view of the Informatics profession is heard and to ensure their continual alignment.

***Our ask: We would welcome the BCS being offered a seat at the National Information Board.***

2016 will be a seminal year in the digital health and care story, and lay the foundation for future years. BCS Health and Care was to support a successful ending.

Yours sincerely



**Andy Kinnear, Chair**

**BCS Health and Care Executive**

Cc:

- Harpreet Sood, Senior Fellow, to the Chairman and Chief Executive's Office, NHS England
- Will Smart, NHS CIO
- Joe McDonald – Chair, CCIO Network
- Adrian Byrne – Chair, CIO Network
- BCS Health and Care members
- Jonathan Jeffery, Health Programme Manager, BCS