£40 million investment to reduce NHS staff login times

The government will provide £40 million to transform slow login times, one of the main technology frustrations facing NHS staff.

NHS staff currently have to log in to multiple computer programmes when tending to a patient, with each programme requiring its own login details. Some staff need to log into as many as 15 different systems.

This can be time consuming, and also requires staff to remember multiple complex passwords or use the same one on multiple systems, which is potentially a cybersecurity risk.

The investment will ease the administrative burden on NHS staff, freeing up time for more one-to-one patient care.

The investment will support projects similar to that seen at Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool, which implemented single sign-on technology and reduced time spent logging into multiple computer systems from 1 minute 45 seconds to just 10 seconds.

With almost 5,000 logins a day, it saved over 130 hours of staff time and freed up their time to focus on patient care.

The 'logins project' will focus on 3 main areas:

1. working with IT system suppliers to standardise logins and provide multi-factor logins, like finger print access, rather than password-led logins
2. ensuring trusts update their processes to give staff appropriate access permissions for the systems they need to treat patients
3. integrating local and national systems so staff can access the full range of clinical and workforce systems to support their needs

To bridge the technology gap between the NHS and social care, a further £4.5 million will be given to local authorities to develop digital adult social care projects to support the most vulnerable in society to live independently for longer and improve information sharing across the NHS and social care.

Examples of initiatives the money could fund include:

- artificial intelligence with assistive technology: using sensors to establish normal behaviour for individuals, for example sleep patterns, use of kettles and walking routes, and alerting carers where there are variances
- creating shared care records which combine both medical and social care information, with NHS and care staff able to access the record
- allowing information held by the care home to smoothly integrate into hospital IT systems as a person is admitted to hospital

To further improve the digital capbility of NHS trusts, a new 'digital aspirant' programme will be set up. This will provide funding over several years to assist with digital transformation projects so that trusts can provide safe, high-quality and efficient care.

The programme will aim to raise the bar across the NHS by making sure organisations have a core set of capabilities in place.

The Health and Social Care Secretary will also commit to designing a model of what excellence looks like, so that every provider – from mental health trusts to care homes – knows what they need to do to be outstanding on technology in the 2020s.

This will be assessed as part of the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) inspection regime, with trusts expected to meet minimum technology standards.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

> I want to harness the best digital technology to improve care for patients and ease the burden on our staff. And to do that, we need to get the basics right. Too often, outdated technology slows down and frustrates staff, and prevents them from giving patients their full attention and the care they deserve.
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> It is frankly ridiculous how much time our doctors and nurses waste logging on to multiple systems. As I visit hospitals and GP practices around the country, I've lost count of the amount of times staff complain about this. It's no good in the 21st century having 20th century technology at work. This investment is committed to driving forward the most basic frontline technology upgrades, so treatment can be delivered more effectively and we can keep pace with the growing demand on the NHS.

Chief Executive of NHSX, Matthew Gould, said:

> If you work in the NHS, the tech should not be getting in the way of your ability to do your job. Tech should be something you rarely think about because it just works. Today's announcements mean we can start to tackle one of the biggest gripes staff have with their tech. It will allow staff across the NHS to spend more time with their patients and less time fighting their computers.