An Informatics Strategy for Oxfordshire
- Improving care for patients -

What is the Informatics Strategy?
Health and social care are working together to ensure high quality sustainable services for the future. As society changes, health and social care information systems also need to change to continue to improve care for patients, respond to increasing demand and to benefit from advances in technology and medicines.

The aim of the Informatics Strategy is to enable the current, fragmented state of many information systems in health and social care in Oxfordshire to move proactively towards this vision by the end of 2013.

The local situation – why do we need an Informatics Strategy?

- Oxfordshire’s health and social care services are currently fragmented and use many different systems, each holding information on patients and their treatment in that particular place
- Communication between these services and the links between these separate systems is currently limited; often by post, in the form of letters, or faxes
- Care can therefore be inefficient and inconvenient as detailed health information on a patient can be held in many different places and not shared between services, resulting in patients having to explain their history or condition many times
- Hospital admissions and ill-health could be reduced in Oxfordshire by giving patients access to information to help themselves and manage their own health
- Some patients are currently visiting hospital when they could potentially receive care closer to home if the information systems were there to support them
The Vision and Goals

**Information technology will be a critical enabler of service change and improvement in Oxfordshire’s health and social care system, and we aim to increasingly realise the following goals over the next three years:**

- The information on a patient needed to support his/her care will be available when and where it is needed by any authorised member of the clinical / social care professional team caring for that person.
- Home-based and community-based clinical care and monitoring will be enabled by remote / mobile technology that reduces the need for physical attendance at a formal care setting, or for the clinician to visit the home, and speeds up clinical care.
- Patients will be able to access their own patient record to help them manage their own health, and check that the record is correct.
- Patients and clinicians will be aware of and confident in the security and access controls applied in the management of any integrated care record, with clear opt-out and consent-to-view steps in place.

The Informatics Strategy will facilitate more connected and joined-up information systems in health and social care services across Oxfordshire – supporting and underpinning all streams within the programme for Creating a Healthy Oxfordshire (CAHO). This will support better, more efficient and consistent multi-disciplinary care for patients. Authorised clinicians, GPs, social care professionals and other authorised carers will be able to access information required to support important decision making about a patient’s care, at the point of care.

**What would the Informatics Strategy deliver?**

- A new ‘health information exchange’ linking up the currently fragmented systems would allow authorised clinical staff caring for the patient to easily locate essential patient information as required to support patient care.
- Patients would be able to access their own electronic patient record to help them manage their own personal health, and check that the record is correct.
- Mobile and telehealth technologies would support more flexible home and community based care so that quality care is possible for patients in the comfort of a familiar environment.
- Patients would be asked for their consent before their record is viewed, or they will be able to “opt-out” of the ‘health information exchange’ if they prefer.

**How can you get involved?**

A consultation on the Informatics Strategy takes place from 15 November 2010 until 1 February 2011. The responses to the consultation will inform if / how the recommendations from the Informatics Strategy are taken forward, with final decisions not being taken until March 2011.

Contact us with your views - How and where can IT help improve and facilitate healthcare? How can we have a more ‘joined-up’ approach to systems that support care across the community?

**You can also write to us FREE with your views at:**

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