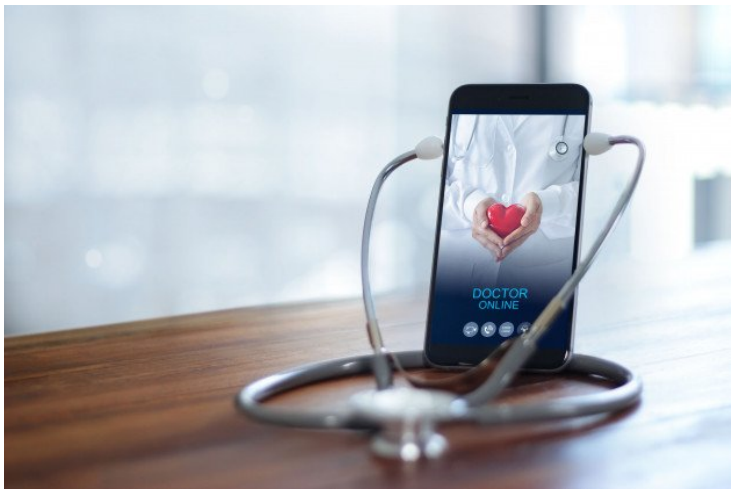
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The UK empowers digital healthcare by launching new "DTAC" app

March 1, 2021 | News

The New simpler and faster assessment process using the Digital Technology Assessment Criteria (DTAC) app boosts digital health technologies



The United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHSX) has unveiled a new simpler and faster assessment process to help give staff, patients and the public confidence that the digital health tools they use meet NHS standards. The new Digital Technology Assessment Criteria (DTAC) is a rapid process that can be completed in days.

With thousands of health apps and digital technologies available, NHSX's new assessment criteria will equip local and national NHS and social care teams with the guidance they need to decide which health technologies they should be buying or recommending to patients.

The tool will apply to all types of digital health technologies, from public facing health apps to digital systems used within hospitals such as electronic patient records.

All parts of the NHS, from hospitals to CCGs to national bodies, and social care will be encouraged to use the DTAC when they are looking at which digital health products they want to use.

The simple new guidance brings together legislation and best practice in five areas. Tools will receive a pass or fail in four categories - clinical safety, data protection, technical security and interoperability - and a score on usability and accessibility. It will provide reassurance to staff, patients and citizens that the digital health tools they use meet national NHS standards.

It is already being used by trusts and systems as they procure products to provide video consultations in secondary care over the coming year; their chosen suppliers must be DTAC assessed if they are to qualify for national funding available to support embedding and spreading of video consultations in secondary care settings.

Matthew Gould, chief executive of NHSX, said "The new Digital Technology Assessment Criteria is designed to give staff, patients and citizens confidence that the digital health tools they use meet the NHS's high standards. Digital health technologies are used throughout the NHS, and increasingly in social care, to improve patients' experiences, increase access to services and reduce the burden on staff. The new assessment process will identify the digital tools that meet NHS standards on clinical safety, cybersecurity and data protection from amongst the thousands available in the market, and do it more quickly than before."

Lord Bethell, Minister for Innovation, said "The new criteria will help innovators and developers understand the standards they need to meet to offer their products to the NHS, whilst offering a faster and simpler assessment process which can be completed in days. NHSX is now working to ensure DTAC is used across the NHS and becomes the default criteria against which all digital health technologies that are being considered for use are assessed against. The first version of DTAC published on Feb 23rd, 2021 reflects feedback received from over 800 stakeholders, after a draft version was published in October".

NHSX is working to ensure DTAC is embedded with local NHS organizations and in procurement frameworks so that anyone buying new digital health products is first assessing it against DTAC.

Tim Andrews, chief operating officer of ORCHA, said “The new DTAC sets out a clear, standards-based approach which allows hospital trusts and CCGs to take control. ORCHA is here to support the whole community – NHSX, developers, health and care providers and, ultimately, the citizens of this country".