



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Independent experts to evaluate flagship NHS tech scheme**

The impact of a flagship NHS programme aimed at improving the use of digital technology in hospitals is to be assessed.

Researchers have been commissioned to examine an ambitious new programme that will support some of England's most digitally advanced hospitals. The programme is helping other sites learn from the hospitals' experiences and spread best practice in the NHS.

A team of experts will assess the impact of an initiative that is helping digitally advanced providers to pioneer the integration of digital technologies into patient care. The aim is to help the NHS take full advantage of the benefits associated with health information technology.

NHS England's Global Digital Exemplar programme was launched in August 2016 to help establish proven pathways of introducing IT innovations that can be rolled out across the NHS more broadly.

There are currently 16 Acute Trusts and seven Mental Health Trusts taking part. Each is working on exciting digital projects, including providing doctors with faster access to accurate information, as well as improving patient monitoring at the bedside.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh have been commissioned by NHS England to lead the evaluation in collaboration with experts at UCL (University College London), Harvard Medical School and NHS Arden & Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit (Arden & GEM).

The team will engage with NHS staff, as well as international centres of excellence in healthcare provision, to gather valuable feedback for policy makers and managers.

Based on this feedback, the three year research project will make recommendations to support the efforts of leading health providers to achieve international best practice in digital health.

Professor Aziz Sheikh, Director of the University of Edinburgh's Usher Institute, said: "There is now widespread recognition that the NHS needs to evolve to provide higher quality, safer, more efficient healthcare that is delivered in patient-centred ways. Our work with leading international health systems has found that investing in digital and data science capacity is crucial to realising these goals."

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Professor Robin Williams and Dr Kathrin Cresswell, who are leading the project from the University of Edinburgh, said: “The NHS is strategically investing in developing the IT capabilities of ‘Global Digital Exemplar’ and ‘Fast Follower’ sites to transform the ways in which patient care is delivered. We are delighted to have been commissioned to evaluate this important national initiative. Our aim is to provide timely, constructive advice to NHS England on how the patient benefits from this investment can be maximised.”

John Parkes, Managing Director at Arden & GEM, said: “Supporting exceptional care through digital technology is at the heart of the Global Digital Exemplar programme. This evaluation will make an important contribution to accelerating wider digitisation across the NHS.”

For more information please contact:

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