

# Maximising digital knowledge resources for health and care in England: a concordat

## Introduction

This concordat expresses our shared commitment to working together to ensure that the health and care system is underpinned by evidence from research, and that our investment in digital knowledge resources on behalf of the NHS and its partners is coordinated to maximise the benefits for the workforce, patients and taxpayers alike. It complements the partnership working, and agreements, which already exist between our organisations.

## Background

Health and care is a knowledge industry. Procuring, curating and supplying the evidence base to the health and care system are business critical functions, central to enabling the workforce to make decisions on patient care and safety, policy and commissioning, and to support learning, research and innovation. The Secretary of State for Health and Care has a duty, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to ensure “the use in the health service of evidence obtained from research.”<sup>1</sup>

Our organisations each purchase, curate and/or create digital knowledge resources at national level, contributing to a shared healthcare knowledge ‘ecosystem’. As examples, HEE procures digital knowledge resources, NICE produces high quality evidence-based guidance and advice resources, PHE produces evidence syntheses and data tools and CQC has a key line of enquiry regarding delivery of evidence-based healthcare.

At local level too, many health and care organisations in England purchase databases, e-journals, books and evidence summaries from third party suppliers, and use knowledge derived from these to generate further tailored resources and products, including guidelines, protocols and bulletins.

## Our shared ambition

We are committed to working collaboratively to ensure that:

- Health and social care and public health are underpinned by evidence from research;
- Investment in digital knowledge resources by national bodies is itself evidence-based;
- Our investment in digital knowledge resources on behalf of the health and care system is coordinated to deliver best value for money for the workforce, for patients, the public and taxpayers alike;
- Knowledge resources are packaged and delivered in ways which optimise their access and use.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/pdfs/ukpga\\_20120007\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/pdfs/ukpga_20120007_en.pdf), p3

## Working together

We are committed to work jointly to:

### 1. Increase the availability of high quality knowledge resources

- Developing a shared understanding of the knowledge needs of health and care organisations and the health and care workforce, drawing on data analytics and user research;
- Committing to agree that internally generated knowledge resources such as evidence summaries may be shared between signatory bodies, on request, without cost.
- Developing a shared vision and strategy for the procurement and management of published knowledge resources;
- Working together to find innovative ways to add to the value of externally published knowledge by combining it with 'know-how' and population data;
- Jointly making the case for additional investment, as required.

### 2. Deliver best value for money in the acquisition of knowledge resources

- Influencing publishers and suppliers to develop realistic and flexible pricing models that meet the requirements of the health and care organisations in England;
- Exploring options for joint and collaborative purchasing where this improves equity of access and deliver cost/time savings;
- Cooperating wherever possible to procure content in such a way as to permit extension of licences to staff of other Arm's Length Bodies and/or wider staff groups.
- Ensuring investment is evidence-based: informed by an understanding of information needs and knowledge-seeking behaviours; procured using quality criteria; monitored using robust data;
- Ensuring the investment made by our organisations complements and does not duplicate others;
- Influencing into the system to avoid duplication and optimise value for money;
- Supporting and promoting open access publishing.

### 3. Optimise discovery and the use of evidence for policy and in practice

- Working together and with suppliers to make digital knowledge content accessible in ways and in formats that meet the needs of service and of the workforce, exploring innovative ways to embed knowledge in clinical work-flows, patient management systems, decision-making systems and learning systems;
- Helping to ensure knowledge resources can be delivered and shared across organisational boundaries;
- Jointly promoting greater use of resources;
- Advocating the role of knowledge specialists in mobilising evidence in practice.

**Signed for and on behalf of Health Education England**

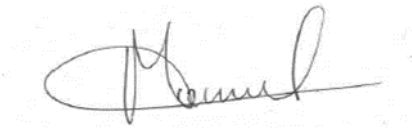


Name: Patrick Mitchell

Position: Director of Innovation and Transformation

Date: 26 July 2019

**Signed for and on behalf of The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**



Name: Alexia Tonnel

Position: Director, Evidence Resources

Date: 26 July 2019

**Signed for and on behalf of NHS England and NHS Improvement**

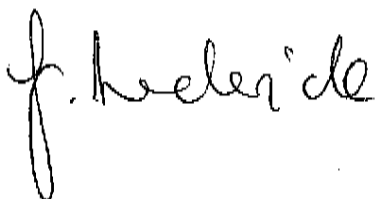


Name: Ming Tang

Position: Chief Data and Analytics Officer  
September 2021

Date: 13

**Signed for and on behalf of the Care Quality Commission**



Name: Joyce Frederick

Position: Director of Policy and Strategy  
December 2021

Date: 16

Previously signed by Malte Gerhold, former Executive Director of Strategy and Intelligence,  
22 October 2019

**Signed for and on behalf of the UK Health Security Agency**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Gleave". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "G".

Name: Richard Gleave

Position: Director for Scientific Strategy & Development  
January 2022

Date: 12

**NIHR Statement of support for the HEE concordat:**

“NIHR supports the ambitions of the Concordat to maximise digital knowledge resources for health and care in England.

The Concordat aligns with the aims of [NIHR's Open Access policy](#), and wider dissemination and knowledge mobilisation activity, to increase access, sharing and reuse of research outputs for the benefit of patients, service users, the health and care service, wider society and the economy. We will continue to work with signatories of the Concordat, and wider stakeholder community, to maximise the value from our collective investment in research and digital knowledge resources across health and care.”

22 November 2021.