

NHS invests \$540 million into health tech and training



Tech transformation is coming to the National Health Service, according to the UK's new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, who has put information technology atop his list of priorities for improving the NHS.

In his first major speech since becoming health secretary, Mr. Matt Hancock revealed that "workforce, technology and prevention" were his top three priorities for the NHS. And he's backing his words with big money – the UK will invest around \$540 million for hospital IT, according to reports, with another \$98 million earmarked to help those trusts who still rely on paper make the move to electronic health records.

The millions in new funding, Mr. Hancock said, were needed to boost the efficiency and morale of providers and the engagement of patients.

"You know better than me the pace at which modern medicine moves and so it's crucial that your training looks to incorporate new technology that can save you time and offer better care," he said, in a speech delivered to staffers at West Suffolk hospital. "I want to make sure you have the access to the skills you need to make the most of these new opportunities."

Specifically, Mr. Hancock noted the need to enhance patient safety with barcode scanning, boost engagement through mobile technology and improve clinical workflows with voice recognition software.

Recognising that tech transformation "requires upfront investment," he said the new half-billion pound package would "help jump-start the rollout of innovative technology" aimed at improving care for patients and supporting staff to embrace technology-driven health and care.

"More than [\$540 million] will go towards new technology in hospitals which make patients safer, make every pound go further and help more people access health services at home," said Mr. Hancock. "A further [\$98 million] is available to Trusts to help them put in place state-of-the-art electronic systems which save money, give clinicians more time to spend on patients and reduce potentially deadly medication errors by up to 50 percent when compared to the old paper systems."

And that money was "just the start," he said. "The entire \$26 billion proposed for the NHS will be contingent on modern technological transformation."

The new health secretary also said he would prioritise new data standards – "getting the data architecture right," while "allowing for innovation at all levels while protecting the highest standards of privacy" would be key, he said – and work to foster culture change.

"I want to work with everyone across the NHS and social care system to embrace the next generation of technology," Mr. Hancock said.

Source: [Healthcare IT News](#)

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