FCI Clinical Safety Special Interest Group Webinar – Q&A

Apps

Q. Hello, I like the idea of continuous assessment, however in the App world enhancement and additional features are rapid paced and take place often. How long do you anticipate it will take to complete the review process for new functionalities?

A. It really depends on the App and what functionality is being added. Sometimes it's a small thing such as a colour change/spelling mistake, or sometimes it's whole new functionality. The quickest we've done an app start to finish was 24 hours, and the longest was 9 months (not continuously though!).

So it depends on the developer, their ability to provide information, the DPIA assessment, which is all down to developer really. The more proactive developers give us a roadmap 6-12 months in advance of what's coming. All assessment information is published in web, so developers know what they will be asked and many are using this guidance whilst developing their product, which makes the process quicker.

Q. We are starting to get requests for SNOMED CT codes for specified Apps. How do we know if these have been NHS approved as such? There's thousands of Apps coming out so we need to be able to differentiate the accredited ones as it will be recommended by NHS Staff.

We don't approve apps as such, but state that every app on the NHS Apps Library has been through the review process and have passed. There are 91 apps currently live, but around 162 apps have been published in our history – however some were removed, went out of business, were re-reviewed etc.

Pathology

Q. What is the level of engagement with the four UK nations? In Wales we have a national LIMs system which has been on this journey already so lessons can be shared.

A. Our work (at NHS Digital Pathology Product Development Workstreams) is at two different levels. The techies talk to each other, but we also coordinate at 2 levels of governance. There is the professional level (for clinical assurance), which includes the Pathology Information Standards Governance Board, which includes representatives of all four member countries, and these approaches are brought into our programme. There is also the Information Representation Strategy Board at a higher level which makes decisions for all 4 member countries. Our programme and the PSGB would feed into this.

Q. I there a specific COVID-19 workstream around testing and pathology messaging, and have codes been developed for that messaging?

A. Yes there is. People are asking for 1 or 2 codes to use for reporting, but Trusts can give so many variants of codes.

The official codes were given out a few weeks ago, but we are working on how we standardise not just those, but also the data that comes through from key worker strands. Some of these solutions will be tactical but won't be fit for purpose for next twenty years.