Developers guidance

Using the Digital Technology Assessment Criteria (DTAC)

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This is best practice guidance

Although not legally required, it's an essential activity.

From:

- NHS England

This Guide covers:

- England

DTAC for health and social care

If you want your technology to be used in the NHS and social care, it needs to meet the standards set by the DTAC.

During procurement, adopters will review your completed DTAC to assess if your technology meets minimum baseline standards. If your technology meets the standards, adopters feel assured they are buying a safe and effective technology. They are then more likely to buy your technology.

Completing the DTAC

It's important to understand the assessment criteria and consider whether your healthcare technology meets the required standards. Make sure you are meeting the criteria during technology conceptualisation and throughout the technology's lifecycle.

The DTAC focuses on 5 core areas:

- clinical safety
- data protection
- technical assurance
- interoperability
- usability and accessibility

The DTAC brings together legal requirements and best practice in these areas. It overlaps with other legal requirements, such as conformity with medical device or data protection regulation.

For example, the DTAC requires you to:

- provide proof you have obtained a UKCA mark (or recognised equivalent) and details of your risk management system
- follow related guidance on data protection and demonstrating clinical safety
- follow related guidance on interoperability, usability and accessibility in the GOV.UK guide to good practice for digital and data-driven health technologies

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Using the DTAC

To meet the DTAC standards you need to:

- review the Digital Technology Assessment Criteria for health and social care
- consider whether your healthcare technology would meet the minimum standards, including the adopter risk-assessment criteria
- plan how to build the required standards into the design of your technology
- document all your processes to produce evidence demonstrating your technology meets the required standards

If you have questions about the DTAC, contact england.dtac@nhs.net

Using the NHS digital service manual

Use these components in the NHS digital service manual to help you develop your technology and check you're working to best practice from the start:

- the NHS service standard helps you meet the GOV.UK service standard for technologies or services in health and care. Commissioned services are expected to meet the service standard and may be assessed against it, as well as the DTAC criteria of usability and accessibility. The about technology section gives more detail about common tools you should consider using. These include the NHS login to authenticate identity, and the Personal Demographics Service to access and manage patient data
- the design system helps you meet usability and accessibility requirements. This can save the NHS money by reusing existing code. It also provides trusted NHS branding and easier user journeys between systems and services

Note that technology and software may be considered a medical device depending on its intended purpose. See writing an intended purpose statement for more information.

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