

All-Ireland Digital Health Capability Framework

Background to the Project

Republic of Ireland Context

The health service is planning, prioritising and investing in digital capabilities that support Sláintecare and Health Service Executive (HSE) aims to improve services. As the second largest clinical workforce group in the Irish health service, Health and Social Care Professions (HSCP) are playing a vital role in digital health and in planning for future implementation of connected digital health.

Using a tripartite approach, the National HSCP Office¹ in partnership with colleagues from the Office of Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) and the Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) are developing a Digital Health Capabilities Framework for Ireland.

This development will build on work already established by ONMSD to explore the potential for adaptation of 'The National Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Capability Framework for Australia' (Nov, 2020) for the Irish context. With agreement from the Australian Institute of Digital Health (AIDH), this work will now be extended across all three clinical workforce groups in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

<https://www.digitalhealth.gov.au/about-the-agency/workforce-and-education/National%20Nursing%20and%20Midwifery%20Digital%20Health%20Capability%20Framework%20publication.pdf>

Northern Ireland Context

Northern Ireland (NI) has embarked on a ten-year transformation Programme to digitally enable Health and Social Care (HSC) services. The programme includes a number of major projects: the adoption of a citizen-focused Electronic Health Care Record (EHCR) across integrated, multi-

¹ The National HSCP Office will be working in partnership with the eHealth HSCP Advisory Group on this development. The Advisory Group comprises digital HSCP leaders and National HSCP Office representatives and was established in 2018 to advance eHealth developments for HSCP clinical services.¹

professional services, taking into account the diverse range of health and social care needs of the population; digital shared services; development of technology enabled care services; and mobilisation of the workforce. The Programme of work supporting the digital future for Health and Social Care in NI seeks to ensure that the appropriate building blocks are in place to improve the health of the population; the quality and experience of care; the support given to the workforce; and the future sustainability of services. A component part of this work is focused on the digital capabilities of the HSC workforce as an enabler for change and driver to achieve improved outcomes.

AIDH Engagement

The Australian Institute of Digital Health (AIDH) has recently developed a capabilities framework for Australian nurses and midwives. This work was completed in partnership and for the Australian Digital Health Agency with the input and support of the major nursing and midwifery professional associations, education and representative bodies. Following extensive national consultation, the Framework was released in November 2020. The ONMSD approached AIDH to explore the possibility of adapting the Framework for the Irish healthcare setting, leading to a proposal by AIDH. The Framework has not yet been implemented with Health and Social Care Professionals or Medical professionals in Australia.

Irish Digital Health Capability Framework Project

There is an opportunity to leverage the work completed to date to contribute to the development of an Irish Digital Health Capability Framework for all three clinical workforce groups. In Phase 1 of this project, consideration will be given to the applicability of the Australian Framework in the Irish healthcare setting. This will be achieved through engagement and consultation with a cross section of Irish healthcare professionals through an online survey and focus groups.. The information gathered will be used to inform an All-Ireland Framework and help further define and drive training needs for the Health and Social Care Professions, Nurses and Doctors.

Anticipated Benefits - The Framework will be:

- accessible and easily understood across a broad range of healthcare settings
- used by individual health care professionals to assess their own digital health capabilities and to identify learning and developmental needs
- used to equip managers with a structured process for developing a digitally literate and empowered workforce

- used to provide a structured approach to ensure patient services continue to maintain clinical effectiveness with the increasing use of digital solutions
- used by health services as part of their continuous quality improvement activities to assess organisational capacity and educational requirements
- used to explore competencies for health and social care professionals and help further define and drive training needs
- used to develop tools to assist in extending the digital health capabilities
- used to provide direction for career advancement planning in digital health
- an enabler to promote and encourage positive attitudes in relation to the increasing introduction and adoption of technology and innovation

The key deliverables from Phase 1 of the project include:

1. Following confirmation from AIDH to endorse and support the development of an All-Ireland Digital Health Capability Framework, project design and planning to be progressed
2. Stakeholder engagement and project awareness
3. Report from wide-ranging, representative national consultation
4. Formal review and endorsement or adaptation of Digital Health Capabilities Framework for Ireland
5. Framework launch

The Framework in Australia

Comprising five domains, the National Nursing and Midwifery Digital Health Capability Framework for Australia was developed to:

- define the digital health knowledge, skills and attitudes required for professional practice
- complement existing individual knowledge, skill, and attitudinal frameworks
- provide a solid basis for tailored learning

While designed for Nurses and Midwives, it is intended that this newly published Framework will be extended to other clinical groups in Australia.

It outlines the capabilities required to support individuals and organisations in extending their digital health development rather than providing a rigid set of competencies. It is intended to enable and inform and is not intended to be adopted as a professional standard but should be used as a resource

to guide individuals, employers and educators in their workforce and professional development planning and delivery.

Most importantly, the Framework intends to promote and encourage positive attitudes in relation to the increasing introduction and adoption of technology and innovation.

The Framework consists of five domains:

- Domain 1 – Digital Professionalism
- Domain 2 – Leadership and Advocacy
- Domain 3 – Data and Information Quality
- Domain 4 – Information-enabled Care
- Domain 5 – Technology

The 5 domains sit within the context of health care professional roles, workplace settings and the professional standards that apply to their practice.

