

Patient and public participation and insight will move to the Nursing Directorate, led by Jane Cummings, chief nursing officer for England

NHS England has set out the leadership structure it will put in place to drive its digital vision after the departure of Tim Kelsey, who has led on the agenda for the last three and a half years.

NHS England chief executive Simon Stevens sent an internal email to staff today which said the national commissioner was seeking to recruit for a newly created role of “chief information and technology officer”.

Mr Kelsey, who has held a wide ranging brief under the title of “national director for patients and information”, is leaving in December for a private sector role in Australia.

The email said the new director would take “forward [Mr Kelsey’s] leadership of the information and technology agenda for the NHS and wider system”.

The new director is intended to have a role that encompasses strategy, commissioning and delivery assurance, while the actual delivery role will be played by the Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Mr Stevens’ email said: “The [chief information and technology officer] will chair the National Information Board and will ensure the benefits of technology investments in nationally funded programmes are realised, support local health and care systems to embed core digital standards in their services, and transform public access to information tools and services.”

It added that the new director will have “specific responsibility for commissioning modern data services that will provide commissioners, clinicians and patients with the analytic resources they need, and technology programmes to support the needs of commissioners and primary care and future care models”.

The new director will “work in close partnership” with the Health and Social Care Information Centre, which Mr Stevens said would be “responsible for the information and technology infrastructure, and is the principal design and delivery organisation for national data and technology systems, as well as with national and local leaders in health, other public services and civil society”.

As a transitional arrangement, current information and technology teams led by Ronan O’Connor, director of information and transparency, and Beverley Bryant, director of digital technology, will report to national director: transformation and corporate operations, Karen Wheeler, “who will sponsor and support this work until the CITO is appointed”.

The email also revealed that **“the patient and public participation and insight and the NHS citizen programme, now led by Anu Singh, will move to the Nursing Directorate, led by Jane Cummings, Chief Nursing Officer for England”**.