Case Study: Implementing a Cloud-Based Electronic Health Record System in a Large Healthcare Organisation

# Background and Context

* Gold Healthcare Ltd is a large organisation that provides a range of healthcare services, such as primary care, acute care, mental health, aged care, and disability care, to a diverse population of over one million people.
* The organisation has 2000 employees, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, administrative staff, and managers, who work in various settings, such as clinics, hospitals, community centres, and residential facilities.
* The organisation has been using an on-premise EHR system for over 10 years, which stores and manages the health records of the patients and supports the clinical and administrative processes of the organisation.
* However, the legacy EHR system has several limitations and challenges, such as: outdated and incompatible software and hardware; lack of functionality and features; poor usability and user interface; frequent downtime and maintenance issues; high costs and risks of data loss and breach; and difficulty in scaling and integrating with other systems and platforms.
* Therefore, the organisation decided to migrate to a cloud-based EHR system that offers more benefits and advantages, such as: modern and user-friendly software and interface; enhanced functionality and features; improved security and reliability; lower costs and maintenance; and greater scalability and interoperability.

# The Change

* A business case has been built by the Gold Healthcare technology team for a major change, the project involves migrating from a legacy on-premises electronic health record (EHR) system to a cloud-based EHR system that offers more functionality, security, and scalability.
* The project will need to ensure the compatibility of the new system with existing systems and workflows and providing adequate training and support for the staff to adopt the new system.
* The project team are taking an agile approach to the technology change, involving the end-users and key stakeholders in every stage of the project, from planning to evaluation. The team also want to use various communication and engagement strategies.
* The project should be completed within the budget and timeline, and the new cloud-based EHR system will be implemented across the whole organisation.
* As the organisation moves to a cloud-based solution, historic policies and governance on healthcare records will be review and significant changes will be required.
* It is expected that there will be resistance from different stakeholders, particularly from those who have previously experienced negative effects from widespread changes. Disruptions affecting operational staff can result in significant detrimental impacts for both staff and patients.
* Outcomes expected from the new system will improve efficiency, quality, and safety of patient care, as well as the satisfaction and productivity of the staff. The project also wants to use the opportunity to enhance the digital maturity of the organisation for future technology changes.
* The project will be initiated in January 2025, with a budget of £5 million and a timeline of 18 months. The project scope includes designing and configuring the new system, testing and validating the system, migrating the data from the old system to the new system and training and supporting the staff to use the new system.
* The project team will have an adoption and change management workstream closely aligned to work collaboratively with technical teams to build an appropriate Change Management plan.

# Challenges

* Employees will not understand why the organisation is making the change
* Training uptake has previously been low with any new technology being introduced.
* Some of the staff and stakeholders especially front line are difficult to engage with due to conflicting priorities.
* Some staff primarily are out in local communities so have limited time engage in organisation changes
* A wide range of demographics in the workforce leads to different levels of digital maturity.
* Managing the expectations and resistance of various stakeholders, especially those who had negative experiences of previous technology changes.
* Additional fears also creep in like the volume of disruption to work, increase in workload, and some employees have a strong attachment and loyalty to the old system, which they were familiar and comfortable with.
* Another challenge was ensuring the compatibility of the new system with existing systems and workflows.
* Previous Feedback that has been given suggests not all leadership understood changes themselves and did not plan activity to support their teams.