# Background

Better Security, Better Care (BSBC) is a national programme to improve data and cyber security in the Adult Social Care provider sector. It is led by a programme board whose members include NHS Transformation Directorate, NHS England, the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and, on behalf of the care provider sector, [Digital Social Care.](https://www.digitalsocialcare.co.uk/) You can find out more about the programme [here.](https://www.digitalsocialcare.co.uk/data-security-protecting-my-information/better-security-better-care/)

There are around 26,000 care providers registered with the CQC and over 1.5 million staff working in care. The programme is delivered by a diverse group of care sector organisations, including many local care associations, with colleagues from the NHS, ADASS and local councils also involved.

**Programme aims**

We understand that the future of care is rooted in the effective sharing of information. That only by doing this securely can we make the most of the digital advances afforded the sector.

Better Security, Better Care is committed to supporting this through:

Helping Adult Social Care services manage data and cyber security risks better, enabling the benefits of digital technology to be enjoyed without putting people’s confidential information or the operation of services at risk.

Providing the tools needed to allow health and social care providers to share information securely and effectively, leading to joined up care and consequently to better quality of care for the people our services support.

Developing and promoting the Data security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) as the best way for social care providers to achieve these aims.

# Purpose of this project

The adoption of digital solutions is becoming increasingly important within the adult social care sector, to ensure quality of care and alignment with healthcare. The aim of this project is to establish the best way for a range of business types and sizes to communicate with each other electronically in a safe and secure manner. Currently, adult social care providers are strongly encouraged to apply for and use NHS mail. This was designed around NHS operations which differ vastly from social care models. Anecdotally, providers struggle to set up NHS mail in a way that complements their ways of working and the support received is not sufficient or delivered in an appropriate manner for the sector. The introduction of multi-factor authentication for NHS mail in the near future is also a concern with many businesses using shared tech and shared login details.

**Project objectives**

# Business Case

Adult Social Care organisations must be able to share information with and receive information from the National Health Service to plan, monitor and administer care. This includes Personal Identifiable Information relating to a service user.

The Health and Care Act 2012 s250 (1) states that ‘The Secretary of State or [NHS England] may prepare and publish an information standard.’ In practice this standard is set by the NHS and the information standards cover:

* technical – such as relating to messaging
* data – defining the structure and type of information to be recorded and submitted as a data set or a clinical terminology code set for example
* information governance - relating to policies, procedures or guidelines on information processing for example

The NHS’ Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB) assures the quality of information standards. Their standard for e-mail communication is DCB1596: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/information-standards/information-standards-and-data-collections-including-extractions/publications-and-notifications/standards-and-collections/dcb1596-secure-email>

Adult Social Care organisations must select one of two methods to comply with these standards:

Implement an already compliant service such as [NHSmail](https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhsmail), Office 365 or Google Workspace for all staff at your organisation.

Demonstrate your own service is compliant with the secure email standard by following the secure email accreditation process.

The process for each of these options is detailed here: [The secure email standard - NHS England Digital](https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhsmail/the-secure-email-standard)

The Better Security, Better Care programme receives frequent communications from social care organisation directly and through our partner agencies – our 28 Local Support Organisations - about the ease of use of each option with a high level of frustration shown.

We seek to understand:

1. What e-mail solutions are currently being used by the sector? This might include non-secure e-mail solutions either used as the only service or used in conjunction with a secure option for communication with certain organisations.
2. What are the risks, benefits, concerns or frustrations of using each option from a provider’s perspective and from a security perspective? This needs to be derived from desktop research and through speaking with a diverse number of social care organisations ranging in size, care type and setting.
3. Which of the secure e-mail options currently available is a best fit for the sector in terms of ease of access and ease of use? There may be more than one answer and that different types of organisation best fit with different options.
4. Recommendations on the usage of different e-mail domains and each one’s impact on operability with other NHS systems (such as proxy ordering of medications, GPConnect or access to funding for Digital Social Care Records through the DiSC programme).
5. Recommendations on improvements to existing options for secure mail in terms of access, support and implementation.
6. Recommendations on alternative options for secure mail in the adult social care market.

# Timescales

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| EOI deadline  | 30/08/24 |
| Submission review and clarifications  | 15/09/24 |
| Contract award by  | 30/09/24 |
| Project go live from  | 01/10/24 |
| Project complete by  | 01/01/25 |

**Budget**

The maximum available budget for this work is £40,000 (inclusive of VAT).

**Invitation to Tender**

For an informaldiscussion about the project, please contact: claire@digitalcarehub.co.uk

Expressions of interest are invited to be submitted in writing to bettersecurity.bettercare@digitalsocialcare.co.uk by the closing date.

Please use attached EOI application form and save file before returning as: EOI BSBC-24SP1 [Organisation Name].

Expressions of interest must include the following information:

* Company details
* A summary of relevant experience
* A summary of how you would approach this work and the process you would propose to follow
* Outline project plan with timescales
* Breakdown of proposed project budget including resource costings

This will be a single stage tendering process with expressions of interest being evaluated by a panel which may include representatives from any of the programme partners listed in the background above. The submissions scoring will be weighted towards those who can demonstrate relevant experience and understanding of the complexity of the adult social care sector.

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| Experience  | 50%  |
| Project Delivery  | 30%  |
| Budget  | 20%  |