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The Use of Standards for Information Systems within New Zealand Healthcare

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Abstract

Standards are starting to gain prominence in a world that to some may seem to be being devoured by the advancements of technology. Healthcare is by no means void of the impact of technology, in fact some believe that technology could serve no better purpose than to advance healthcare.

To be able to link these new (and what some may consider incredulous) technologies, from hospital to hospital, doctor to doctor, patient to doctor, or any of the permutations of these, appropriate information systems standards are required.

Whilst people have begun to acknowledge that standards are important, few are willing to put forward what is exactly required from a standard, or indeed why one standard is considered to be more appropriate than another standard. Consequently this research aims to create and then investigate the framework to ascertain what the critical success factors are when selecting and utilising a standard. An associated goal of this study is to gain an understanding of which standards for information systems are being utilised within the New Zealand healthcare environment.

A survey of New Zealand healthcare found that the 'Completeness' of the standard is considered to be the most important element for adopting health information systems standards. Organisations wish to adopt standards that meet the required need, and that provide the required functionality. A number of different standards are utilised within New Zealand healthcare, some of which differ between organisations. Information systems management standards were the least utilised standards by all organisations.

It was found that organisation type and structure and the purpose of the standards both influenced the relative importance of different factors in the selection of standards.

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