December 18, 2015

Dear Colleague ,

Re MIQUEST December release

May I take this opportunity to introduce myself; my name is Dave Roberts and I am head of Primary Care Information at the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC). I have recently taken charge of the MIQUEST work at the HSCIC. The purpose of this communication is twofold. Firstly I wanted to provide you with a new, hopefully more efficient, method for updating your MIQUEST software to incorporate the recent code change. Guidance on how to do this has been also attached to your email.

If you have any issues with these updates please respond using the usual Exeter helpdesk enquiry process.

In addition you may be aware that the Read code system will not be maintained after April 2016, heralding the implementation of SNOMED CT terminology in all GP clinical systems.

MIQUEST is not currently compatible with SNOMED CT and therefore the HSCIC has a decision to make. We can either undertake the development work for both the enquirer end of the system  which can be undertaken within the HSCIC and the responder side which would need significant work from the system suppliers, or turn off MIQUEST at an appropriate time when it will stop being effective in its current state.

This decision has to be made in the context that MIQUEST has no central funding for the maintenance and support of the enquirer system and the redevelopment of the responder element is almost certainly outside current contract arrangements with the GP system suppliers.

I have been given a small amount of money to undertake a survey of users of MIQUEST to understand how the system is used and the implications of turning it off.

In addition I need to test the appetite of users to pay a license fee that would help to support a future business model and the level at which such a fee would be acceptable. I will also undertake a cost analysis that will include estimates of the development work required to make both the enquirer and responder aspects of MIQUEST compatible with SNOMED CT and in addition the costs of an appropriate support and maintenance model. As part of this survey I would welcome your views on all these matters and ask that you respond to Tracie Lowe (tracie.lowe@hscic.gov.uk) who will collate all responses on my behalf. Dependent on the responses I may issue a targeted questionnaire via survey monkey at the beginning of February 2016.

I hope that this letter provides assurance that we are taking this matter seriously and I will continue to keep you informed of progress.

Yours sincerely



Dave Roberts

Head of Primary Care Information