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SCCI1596 Secure Email Implementation Guidance

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This information standard (SCCI1596) has been approved for publication by the Department of Health under [section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012](#).

Assurance that this information standard meets the requirements of the Act and is appropriate for the use specified in the specification document has been provided by the Standardisation Committee for Care Information (SCCI), a sub-group of the National Information Board.

This information standard comprises the following documents:

- Requirements Specification
- Change Specification
- Implementation Guidance.

An Information Standards Notice (SCCI1596 Amd 3/2016) has been issued as a notification of use and implementation timescales. Please read this alongside the documents for the standard.

The controlled versions of these documents can be found on the [NHS Digital website](#). Any copies held outside of that area, in whatever format (e.g. paper, email attachment), are considered to have passed out of control and should be checked for currency and validity.

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1 Overview

1.1 Glossary of Terms

Term	Acronym	Definition
Clinical Authority To Release	CATR	An approval to release an IT system, service or process into live clinical environment.
Communications-Electronics Security Group	CESG	CESG is the UK government's national technical authority for information assurance (IA). It protects the UK by providing policy and assistance on the security of communications and electronic data, in partnership with industry and academia. CESG became part of the NCSC on 3 October 2016.
Communications Listed Advisor Scheme	CLAS	A former Government scheme to manage a list of Information Security/Assurance professionals who have been vetted, assessed and approved by CESG to advise the UK Government (and its key suppliers, such as defence contractors, System Integrators and the like). It has been replaced by the the Certified Cyber Security Consultancy CESG and CAS scheme.
Cron		The software utility, Cron, is a time-based job scheduler in Unix-like computer operating systems. People who set up and maintain software environments use Cron to schedule jobs (commands or shell scripts) to run periodically at fixed times, dates or intervals.
Department of Health	DH	DH is the ministerial department of the United Kingdom government responsible for government policy on health and adult social care matters in England, along with a few elements of the same matters which are not otherwise devolved to the Scottish Government, Welsh Government or Northern Ireland Executive. It oversees the English National Health Service (NHS). The Department is led by the Secretary of State for Health with a Minister of State and four Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State.
Digital Marketplace		The online platform that all public sector organisations can use to find and buy cloud-based services (e.g. web hosting or site analytics).
Domain Keys Identified Mail	DKIM	DKIM is an authentication mechanism to help protect both email receivers and email senders from forged and phishing email.
Domain-based Message Authentication, Reporting & Conformance	DMARC	Is an email authentication protocol.

Term	Acronym	Definition
eDiscovery		Electronic discovery (or e-discovery or eDiscovery) refers to discovery in civil litigation or government investigations which deals with the exchange of information in electronic format.
Enterprise Control	EC	A baseline control set control that applies to an enterprise rather than a specific system.
Health and care organisations		Any organisation, whether public, private or 3 rd sector, delivering publicly funded health, public health and adult social care.
Health and Social Care Information Centre	HSCIC	Now known as NHS Digital. The national provider of information, data and IT systems for commissioners, analysts and clinicians in health and social care.
Information Commissioner's Office	ICO	The UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
Information Governance Toolkit	IGT	The IG Toolkit is an online system which allows organisations to assess themselves or be assessed against Information Governance policies and standards.
Information Security Management System	ISMS	An information security management system (ISMS) is a set of policies concerned with information security management or IT related risks. The idioms arose primarily out of BS 7799. The governing principle behind an ISMS is that an organisation should design, implement and maintain a coherent set of policies, processes and systems to manage risks to its information assets, thus ensuring acceptable levels of information security risk.
International Organisation for Standardization	ISO	Developer of international standards for organisations, for example ISO 27001 Information Security Management Systems.
National Information Board	NIB	The role of the National Information Board is to oversee data and technology safely in to work for patients, service users, citizens and the professionals who serve them.
National Cyber Security Centre	NCSC	The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) is the UK's authority on cyber security.
NHS Digital		NHS Digital is the preferred name for HSCIC (above). NHS Digital is the national provider of information, data and IT systems for commissioners, analysts and clinicians in health and social care.
NHSmail		Secure email service recommended for health and care.
Risk Management and Accreditation	RMADS	Document set evidencing appropriate management of risks.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Document Set		
Safety Case		A safety case is a document produced by the operator of a facility which: Identifies the hazards and risks. Describes how the risks are controlled. Describes the safety management system in place to ensure the controls are effectively and consistently applied.
Standardisation Committee for Care Information	SCCI	The Committee oversees the development, assurance and approval of information standards, data collections and data extractions (ISCE) for use in health and care in England.
Sender Policy Framework	SPF	An SPF record is a type of Domain Name Service (DNS) record that identifies which mail servers are permitted to send email on behalf of the organisations domain. The purpose of an SPF record is to prevent spammers from sending messages with forged From addresses at an organisations domain.
Secure/Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions	S/MIME	A protocol, for sending digitally signed and encrypted messages.
Transport Layer Security	TLS	Transport Layer Security (TLS) is a protocol that ensures privacy between communicating applications and their users on the Internet. When a server and client communicate, TLS ensures that no third party may eavesdrop or tamper with any message. TLS is the successor to the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). For secure email, forced TLS means encrypt and fail if not possible, opportunistic TLS means encrypt if possible, send in the clear if not.
The United Kingdom Accreditation Service	UKAS	Is the sole national accreditation body recognised by the British government to assess the competence of organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.
World Wide Web Consortium	W3C	The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international community that develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth of the Web.

1.2 Supporting Documents

Ref no	Title	Version
1	Information: To Share Or Not To Share? The Information Governance Review (Caldicott 2)	
2	The Good Practice Guidelines for GP electronic patient records	4
3	General Medical Council Good Medical Practice	2013

1.3 Related Standards

Reference	Title
SCCI0086	Information Governance Toolkit
SCCI0160	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems
SCCI0129	Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Manufacture of Health IT Systems
BS ISO/IEC 27001:2013	Information technology -- Security techniques -- Information security management systems -- Requirements
BS ISO/IEC 27002:2013	Information technology. Security techniques. Code of practice for information security controls
Cabinet Office Guidance	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-government-email
RFC5246 (TLS)	https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc5246
RFC7208 (SPF)	https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc7208
RFC6377 (DKIM)	https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc6377
RFC7489 (DMARC)	https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc7489

2 Introduction

Emails sent from and to NHSmail accounts, or to other secure email systems are protected by UK Government standards. This ensures that sensitive and confidential information is kept safe.

[NHSmail meets the Secure Email Standard \(SCCI1596\)](#). Any health and care organisation wishing to operate its own email systems securely and connect it to other secure email services such as NHSmail must meet the requirements to the standard.

This standard established the minimum requirements for email systems in health, public health and adult social care. The intention is not to impose significant requirements on organisations but instead to establish the minimum acceptable level. Where appropriate organisations seeking accreditation to this standard will refer to health and care, Government and international standards (e.g. ISO/IEC 27001 – see related standards). It is the responsibility of the organisation procuring the email system to understand and accept any risks associated with their email system and commissioned provider.

As well as defining basic requirements for any email service, the standard defines how email systems used for personal and sensitive data (e.g. patient identifiable data) should manage the information security of the email service.

Non-NHS organisations who are currently accredited to the government secure email standard are out of scope for this secure email standard.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to health and care organisations seeking to self-accredit to the SCCI1596 Secure Email Standard.

This implementation guidance describes the minimum required criteria for email systems to comply with SCCI1596.

An 'email service' describes any system sending emails on behalf of an organisation. This includes:

- Providing users with mailbox access
- Internal relays (NHSmail relay service) and gateways
- Email filtering services
- Third party applications or services that send email on behalf of the organisation, like transactional email services.

4 Implementation approach

The implementation of SCCI1596 Secure Email standard is managed by NHS Digital with sponsorship from the Department of Health. The principal approach is to provide support for health and care organisations requiring accreditation of their email solution to the standard. NHS Digital is providing a light-touch approach as the accreditation evidence process and submission is the responsibility of each health and care organisation.

Organisations are required to assess their current email service against the standard and determine if it conforms or not. If it does not then consider one of the following options:

- Bring the service up to the required level of conformance.
- Procure a service that conforms to the standard (e.g. NHSmail).
- Having due regard to the standard, determine that conformance is not appropriate. Organisations will still be able to access the old NHS UK insecure email relay, but won't be able to send secure emails utilising the secure relay unless they use an in-house encryption overlay.

It should be noted that the security levels required for personal and sensitive data are for where the data is unencrypted in the email service. Data encrypted to agreed good practice standards is secure by default.

Any issues regarding the standard itself or change requests should be sent in to the NHSmail Programme Team via feedback@nhs.net.

5 Implementation

5.1 Encryption

Follow these steps to encrypt email services:

1. Use TLS version 1.2 or later and preferred cryptographic profiles for secure email transport between secure health, care and UK government departments.
2. Create rules to use mandatory TLS when exchanging emails with other approved secure organisations. These domains include:

- *NHS.Net
- *HSCIC.gov.uk
- *.secure.nhs.uk
- *.gsi.gov.uk
- *.gsx.gov.uk
- *.gse.gov.uk
- *.gcsx.gov.uk
- *mod.gov.uk

Any other accredited domains that support TLS, as published on the NHS Digital website¹.

3. Follow NCSC [guidance](#) on TLS to ensure you are following the latest guidance on TLS use. If you operate an internet-facing email service you must buy and manage appropriate TLS certificates from the [Digital Marketplace](#).
4. Enable opportunistic TLS by default for domains not included in the mandatory TLS rules created above. You can use self-signed certificates for opportunistic TLS.
5. Show you have outbound TLS available and are DKIM signing email by either:

¹ <https://digital.nhs.uk/ses>

1. Creating an email address (for example emailsecurity@yourdomain.secure.nhs.uk) for each of your email domains. Create a rule or filter for this address so that if it receives an email from email security_check@nhs.net it will reply automatically. The content of the reply doesn't matter, but it must come from the domain to which the original email was sent. Auto-replies should only be sent to this address.

NHSmail Helpdesk must be notified of the auto-reply security email address created for each domain.

2. Sending an email to security_check@nhs.net on a schedule (for example using a cron or Windows Scheduled Task) daily from each domain you are responsible for. The email must have the correct sender information to make sure it is processed correctly.

5.2 Anti-spoofing

To prevent email spoofing you must put technical and business policies in place to check inbound and outbound email using DMARC.

1. Implement DMARC by:
 - Publishing a DMARC record starting at p=none rising to p=quarantine during implementation and enabling inbound checking on your email service.
2. Implement Sender Policy Framework (SPF) by publishing public DNS records for SPF, including all systems that send email, using a minimum soft fail (~all) qualifier.
3. Implement DKIM by:
 - Publishing DKIM selector and policy records
 - Signing outgoing email in accordance with the DKIM standard
 - Disabling outbound email footers if you have an outbound email filtering service.
4. Have matching forward and reverse (A and PTR) DNS records for the sending host. A PTR record for the SMTP sending IP address is mandatory for NHSmail relay use.

6 Conformance Evidence

6.1 Health and Care Organisations

6.1.1 Overview

The organisation or commissioner (of the email system) is responsible for providing evidence demonstrating the security of the email system regardless whether the email system is procured via an IT Service provider or an in-house email system. This evidence must be submitted to the NHS Digital via feedback@nhs.net for review. Once approved an assurance certificate will be issued accrediting the email system for a maximum 12 month period after which it must be renewed.

Health and care organisations shall self-certify to the standard using the evidence listed below.

6.1.2 Information Security

Evidence is required of a security risk assessment being conducted for the email service. This can be:

- Evidence of a security risk assessment for the email service.
- A completed Information Governance Toolkit submission at an appropriate level (seek advice from your local Information Governance team).
- An auditable Information Security Management System (ISMS) relevant to the email service that conforms to ISO/IEC 27001:2013.
- Published policies and procedures for the use of secure email using mobile devices.
- Evidence provided by the email service provider that they have met this standard.

6.1.3 Risk Assessment

Health and care organisations require evidence demonstrating completed security risk assessment.

6.1.4 Clinical Safety

Provide evidence of clinical safety approval for the email service, as per [SCCI0160 Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems](#).

6.1.5 Supporting Published Policies

Health and care organisations must have published policies demonstrating email usage including procedures for transmission to non-secure email services.

Evidence of policies and procedures for email usage on mobile devices is required. The policies must be published.

6.2 Commissioned IT Service Providers

6.2.1 Overview

Commissioners/health and care organisations need to ensure adequate contractual terms are agreed with IT service providers ensuring that the email service meets the

needs of health and care, especially when it is used for the transmission of patient identifiable data.

6.2.2 Information Security

The IT Service Provider must provide evidence confirming the ISMS encompassing the email service conforms to ISO/IEC 27001:2013. This should be in the form of ISO27001:2013 certification by a UKAS accredited certification organisation, based on a suitably scoped Statement of Applicability relevant to the email service.

6.2.3 Information Security

Evidence is required of a security risk assessment being conducted for the email service. This can be one of:

- A completed Information Governance Toolkit at an appropriate level (seek advice from your local Information Governance team).
- Evidence demonstrating the email service conforming to BS ISO/IEC 27001:2013.
- An independently audited Information Security Management System (ISMS) relevant to the email service. This shall be evidenced by ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certification issued by a United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited organisation. The information security controls contained within the scope, on which the ISO/IEC 27001:2013 certification is based, MUST be relevant to the email service.
- An IT Health Check (ITHC) / penetration test report conducted within the last 12 months, with all identified findings remediated / mitigated, and any residual risks accepted.

6.2.4 Official Sensitive Accreditation

Produce evidence demonstrating appropriate external independent health check of the email system with risk management conducted. An independently signed off RMADS can be submitted as an acceptable form of evidence.

6.2.5 Clinical Safety

Provide a Safety Case which must be submitted to NHS Digital and signed off with a CATR with conformance to [SCCI0160 Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems](#).

6.2.6 Supporting Published Policies

Health and care organisations must have published policies covering email usage including procedures for transmission to non-secure email services.

Evidence of policies and procedures for email usage from mobile devices is required. The policies must be published and endorsed by senior management.

6.2.7 Interoperability

Interoperability evidence is required to support conformance, normally promulgated by the W3C. Government open standards are published on data.gov.uk.

Systems should populate national directory services. Details of how to populate the NHSmail directory are available from feedback@nhs.net.

Systems can interoperate securely using:

- The Government Secure Networks.
- Secure TLS point to point connections.
- S/MIME or other email encryption.

6.3 Submission Process

6.3.1 Evidence Submission

Each organisation wishing to obtain accreditation to the standard must complete the relevant SCCI1596 Conformance Assessment template (see Appendix 2, and also available on the NHS Digital website), with all required documentary evidence embedded in the evidence section. This should be forwarded to feedback@nhs.net for review by NHS Digital.

On satisfactory completion of the review process (approximately 10 business days depending on availability of appropriate NHS Digital resources) the agreed SCCI1596 Conformance Assessment will be published on the [NHSmail website](#).

6.3.2 Secure Sub-Domain Creation

On successful accreditation, the submitting organisation will be contacted for information to support the creation of a secure sub-domain. The information will relate to the local network IP addresses. Examples of information required will be:

1. SMTP Registration for: Secure Email Subdomain Request

Full Organisation Name:

Postal Address:

Post Code:

Organisation Code:

Please enter telephone and fax numbers with **no spaces** e.g. 01139311311

Telephone Number:

Technical Contact:

Technical Contact Email:

Section 2

1. Complete this section to request Direct SMTP relay service

Example: Main Domain addenbrookes.nhs.uk, Mail Server / Firewall IP address 194.1.1.1

Main Domain

Mail Server / Firewall IP address

Section 3

Applicants Full Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Telephone:

Email:

6.3.3 Finalising Implementation

On successful completion of domain creation, the submitting organisation will be ready and active for secure email exchange. If there are issues, the organisation must contact the NHSmail national helpdesk.

Appendix 1 – Example Hazard Log

Overview

The example hazard log has been derived from secure email clinical risk assurance undertaken by NHS Digital. This is not an exhaustive list and should not be used as such. A hazard assessment should be undertaken in accordance with the SCCI standards and implementation guidance.

Hazard Log

Email is a communication system. The two biggest areas that could impact care are:

- Information is incorrectly communicated or delayed, for example an email becomes corrupt, meaning that care is compromised.
- Information is not communicated, for example because the service was unavailable, meaning that care is compromised.

Any hazard assessment will require the need for mitigating actions by taking the purpose of email in the context of the business process. Beyond this there are other hazards that derive from these two areas. These are given below.

Area	Hazard Name	Description	Effect
Email	Email notifications fail to arrive	Failure to receive email notification of error message.	The sender does not receive notification of email failure. Potential delay in treatment by way of failure to receive / send email.
Email	Email eDiscovery	Lack of traceability for investigations into incidents where recipients claim one or more emails never arrived.	The email itself is disputed, which may have medico-legal implications in cases where the email is evidence.
Attachment	File attachment issues	File attachments exceed mail system specified limits. File attachments exceed mail system specified attachment quantity limits. Incorrect file formats used when attached to email.	Delay to email transmission. Potential system error resulting from oversize files attachments. Failure to transmit / receive email successfully including potential loss of data. Potential system error resulting from large quantities of file attachments.
Attachment	File Attachments - Corrupt file	File attachment contains corrupt data undetected at source.	Inadequate validation on corrupt data files or email content results in loss of data or potential corruption of recipient systems.

Area	Hazard Name	Description	Effect
	attachments		
Attachment	File Attachments - files contain software virus	File attachment or email content contains virus.	Potential partial or complete system failure. Loss of data at source or recipient systems. Potential loss of service.
IT operations	IT Operations - Inadequate Backup / Archive Process / System	Loss or inadequate backup and / or archiving processes/systems.	Failure to run backup process. Potential loss of service resulting from erroneous recovery points. Lack of recovery position leads to loss of data.
IT operations	IT Operations - Inadequate Failover procedures	Insufficient IT operational procedures covering failover and recovery positions.	System does not failover into a known stable state. Potential loss of service and data resultant.
IT operations	IT Operations - Inadequate Rollback process	Inadequate process / system configuration to allow secure email solution to recover to a known stable system state.	At the point of error the email system cannot rollback to baseline configuration leading to potential unstable state, loss of service/data.
IT operations	IT Operations - Insufficient Disk Space	Lack of hardware storage used at any point within the secure email system where temporary or permanent data is required.	Email system performance issues due to inefficient storage loads.
IT operations	Document Archive	Chosen mail solution used as a document archive at Local Level.	Potential loss of service and / or data due to inadequate storage facilities.
IT operations	IT Operations - Insufficient Security compliance	Security procedures and / or configuration are not fit for purpose of email system proposed usage.	Potential security breaches leading to unauthorised access to personal identifiable data, and commercially sensitive information. System is vulnerable to security attacks variable in nature - causing system failure, loss of data, and other business critical failures.
IT operations	IT Operations - Email Receipt notification fails to arrive	Secure mail system fails to provide receipt during email transmission process.	Failure to receive receipt notifications could lead to resubmissions throughout the email transmission process. This would in turn increase messaging volumes and increase the potential for delays in system performance.
IT operations	IT Operations - Delays in end to end processing of email	Email system and / or performance issues lead to significant delays in transmission at any point within the email pathway to recipient.	Potential loss / delay of service. Potential loss of data.

Area	Hazard Name	Description	Effect
Deployment	Network Issues on deployment	Deployment of secure email results in network failures / issues at local or national levels, local network, or LAN performance and / or availability issues.	Network availability restrictions result in limited business functionality. Potential issues leading to the mail solution impacting user base day to day system performance and availability.
Deployment	Deployment of email system - Leading to Firewall / Routing issues	Deployment and configuration of firewall / routing infrastructure fails to complete successfully.	Restriction in messaging routing. Complete loss of service due to incorrect configuration of firewalls.
Deployment	Anti-Spam filter stops valid emails	The anti-virus anti-spam filter stops valid emails (a false positive) resulting in the email not being delivered. This include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-malware software incorrectly blocks an email or removes an attachment • Anti-spam software incorrectly files an incoming email (that is free of malware) in junk mail or spam folder. 	The sender does not receive notification of email failure. Potential delay in treatment by way of failure to receive / send email.
Deployment	Deployment of email system - Leading to 'Clash' of Software Tools	Deployment of email system leads to conflicts with existing system software.	Potential performance issues with conflicting systems.
Desktop/Client	Desktop / Client - Badly Configured	Inadequate / poorly configured desktop and client infrastructure.	Inability to standardise and deploy email system. Increased volumes of helpdesk requests on non-standard hardware. Inability to install email system on unsupported hardware. Inadequate system performance leading to complete system failure. Potential loss of existing business processes.
	Desktop / Client - "Old"	Target desktop and client systems are outside the baseline limitations and recommendations for email usage. Note this can include old email services not being compatible with new browsers.	
Desktop/Client	Desktop / Client - Unsuitable Windows	Existing operating system is outside the	Inability to install email system on target hardware. Poor configuration leading to operational issues and increased

Area	Hazard Name	Description	Effect
	versions	baseline supported configuration.	helpdesk calls. Potential inefficient email service levels.
Desktop/Client	Desktop / Client – Setup / Migration wrong	Email service setup and migration fails to complete successfully on target system.	Potential performance issues with poorly configured systems. Loss of data due to incorrectly setup storage and archiving facilities.
Desktop/Client	Desktop / Client - Local Connectivity Issues	Local System issues lead to inability to connect to the email service	Potential performance issues leading to complete loss of service.
Desktop/Client	Desktop / Client - Too many windows open	Large number of local desktop sessions exceeds 'normal' expected operational levels.	Email system connectivity issues and performance issues due to increases processing constraints.
Misuse	Misuse - IG / Unauthorised Access	Email system used inappropriately, contravening IG security controls / guides.	Potential breach in IG policies/controls leads to source email information compromise. Breaches in security protocol and local / national policies for mail usage. Potential to misuse system not having appropriate access/training leading to severe email issues.
		Email system operation by end user who does not have access or approval to use the system.	
Misuse	Misuse – Consent	Inappropriate use of mail system without expressed consent of data source or system authorities.	Potential breaches of information sharing and overall system usage.
Misuse	Misuse – Hacking	Email system is targeted by external or internal hacking or attempts to connect in a manner not permitted by existing IG/security controls.	Inappropriate access to email system data, personal identifiable or business critical information. Critical misuse implications if undetected - complete loss of service, data tampering, etc.
Misuse	Misuse - Internal Fraud	Existing authorised user attempts to fraudulently operate email system	Internal Fraud covers various targets for misuse and may lead to inappropriate email usage, authorisation messages, and potential access to business or personally critical systems.
Misuse	Misuse – Browsing	Inappropriate use of email system resulting in browsing of group/personal mail accounts.	Access to information outside of normal controls for end users. Potential conflicts of business operation due to inappropriate data access, security breaches, etc.
Migration	Data Migration	Errors / poor quality migration of legacy or	Data Migration of legacy or email records

Area	Hazard Name	Description	Effect
		existing email data.	
Functionality	New Functionality	Additional features of new email system / New functionality introduce issues with current service and / or existing functionality provided.	Potential loss / delay of service. Potential loss of data.
Functionality	Search	Poor search capability results in inability to find relevant email.	User unable to use information.
Training	Inadequate Training	Poor quality training on the new system leads to inappropriate email use.	Potential data loss. Potential inappropriate email usage based on 'not enough' or ineffective training.
Assurance/ Testing	Limited Test Assurance	Test strategy and scope does not fully assure the release of the new system	Potential loss / delay of service. Potential loss of data.
		Inadequate regression test assurance of existing / unchanged functionality.	
		Insufficient testing timeframe.	

Appendix 2 – Conformance Statement Template

SCCI1596 Conformance Assessment:

Date:

Purpose

This document provides the results of a conformance assessment undertaken by NHS Digital to assist health and care organisations who wish to self-accredit their services to SCCI1596 Secure Email. Each organisation must make their own decisions with respect to the standard. The assessment is for a single point in time. For further information please contact feedback@nhs.net.

This assessment does not give secure email connectivity between email systems. That requires connectivity with a secure email gateway, for example the PSN email relay.

Guidance Notes

The conformance statement issued is based on XXXXXX assertions, supported by evidence contained in XXXXX documentation.

NHS Digital is satisfied that the evidence presented meets the requirements of the standard, but in no way warranties local compliance.

This applies to email usage only.

As all data in Microsoft Exchange platform resides in the UK there are no offshoring considerations.

Health and Care Organisations

The following conformance criteria are for health and care organisations to assess. Where the systems supplier can give evidence of conformance this has been noted below.

#	Description	Statement of Conformance
Information Security		
1	Each Service Provider MUST have an independent IT Health Check / penetration test carried out (by a CHECK / Tigerscheme accredited or CREST member organisation) encompassing the email system and external network interfaces (including perimeter security / access control devices). Evidenced by a recent ITHC / penetration test report, with all identified risks mitigated, and any residual risks accepted.	
2	Either party (Service Provider and customer) MUST notify the other immediately upon becoming aware of any breach of security, including an actual, potential or attempted breach of, or threat to, the security policy and/or the security of the services or the systems used to provide the services.	
3	Health and care organisations MUST operate their email service to a level appropriate to the	

	security risk assessment, and at minimum BS ISO/IEC 27001.	
4	Health and care organisations SHOULD set policies and procedures for the use of secure email using mobile devices and ensure the email service enforces them.	
5	Health and care organisations SHOULD set policies and procedures for the use of secure email using mobile devices and ensure the email service enforces them.	
Safety		
6	Health and care organisations SHOULD comply with the provisions of SCCI 0160 Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Deployment and Use of Health IT Systems .	
7	Health and care organisations SHOULD set policies and procedures for staff who use the secure email service to ensure that they understand how to use it appropriately and safely.	
Interoperability		
8	Health and care organisations MUST ensure there are appropriate policies in place for the use of email, including correspondence with insecure email systems such as those used by patients.	

6.3.4 IT Service Provider

#	Requirement	
Information Security		
1	Each Service Provider MUST at all times maintain a secure service, even when the service is unavailable to users.	
2	Each Service Provider MUST maintain an Information Security Management System (ISMS) that conforms to the BS ISO/IEC 27001:2013, Information Security Management Systems baseline control set and BS ISO/IEC 27002:2013 Information technology Security techniques. Code of practice for information security controls. Conformance may be evidenced by appropriate certification.	
3	Each Service Provider MUST maintain a security policy which sets out the security measures to be implemented and maintained	

	<p>in accordance with BS ISO/IEC 27001, BS ISO/IEC 27002 and the Information Security Management System.</p> <p>The security policy MUST be reviewed and updated by the Service Provider in a timely fashion and will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p>	
4	Each Service Provider MUST ensure their email service meets the baseline control set for Personal Data if the service contains patient identifiable or sensitive data.	
5	<p>Each Service Provider MUST have an independent IT Health Check / penetration test carried out (by a CHECK / Tigerscheme accredited or CREST member organisation) encompassing the email system and external network interfaces (including perimeter security / access control devices).</p> <p>Evidenced by a recent ITHC / penetration test report, with all identified risks mitigated, and any residual risks accepted.</p>	
6	Either party (Service Provider and customer) MUST notify the other immediately upon becoming aware of any breach of security, including an actual, potential or attempted breach of, or threat to, the security policy and/or the security of the services or the systems used to provide the services.	
7	Each Service Provider MUST provide protection against malicious content for their services such as virus checking when onboarding data.	
8	The email service MUST provide anti-virus and anti-spam filtering, in addition to commodity content management such as attachment blocking, virus/spam filtering capabilities and data leakage prevention e.g. encrypt protectively marked email destined for the Internet. The service SHOULD also provide for the management of spoofed email and items that cannot be checked such as S/MIME encrypted or password protected attachments.	
9	All patient identifiable and sensitive data MUST be maintained in accordance with the Government's offshoring policy (https://ogsirooffshoring.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/203107991-HMG-s-Offshoring-Policy) and Department of Health policy.	
10	<p>The Service Provider MUST provide tools to ensure that mobile devices are appropriately secured when accessing the email service. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions to allow/deny/quarantine 	

	<p>by device type, organisation or groups of users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove device, expire password, and wipe any data associated with the service. • Reporting functions/ capabilities. • Detect and block rooted (i.e. jail broken) devices. 	
11	Each Service Provider SHOULD provide eDiscovery tools to support the administration of the service, especially with respect to the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000.	
Safety		
12	Service Providers SHOULD comply with the provisions of SCCI0129 Clinical Risk Management: its Application in the Manufacture of Health IT Systems .	
Interoperability		
13	Each Service Provider SHOULD comply with the open standards policy .	