

Michael Thick Joins IMS MAXIMS

Renowned health informatics leader Michael Thick has appointed as chief medical officer (CMO) and chief clinical information officer (CCIO) of electronic patient record software pioneer IMS MAXIMS.

Well known for his position as chief clinical officer on the National Programme for Information Technology, he has been instrumental across various successful clinical, informatics and research initiatives, including the introduction of the 'clinical five' into the Department of Health's 2008 health informatics review - a basis for fundamental clinical functionality within a hospital.

The former surgeon and clinical informatics lead at the Department of Health will lead the company's continued focus on clinical excellence and apply his valuable insight and experience into software design, product development and change programmes for healthcare providers.

"I will offer a deeper understanding of the NHS, specifically around clinical processes for IMS MAXIMS' customers, whilst supporting the development of clinical governance within the product portfolio to ensure they are safe and effective," said Thick.

Commenting on his appointment by IMS MAXIMS, Thick said: "It is a highly ambitious company driving innovation and change that is developing its strong reputation within the health service.

"I was attracted by the company's clear understanding of the way healthcare needs to develop and its deep knowledge of business transformation to support sustainable new models of clinical care. It is an agile organisation that is able to change and adapt quickly where necessary to produce the correct tools for clinicians to deliver safer care."

On the role of electronic patient record (EPR) technology in the NHS, Thick said: "EPRs are essential to clinical practice. If we are going to achieve improvements in the quality of healthcare in terms of outcomes and patient experience, and redesign the NHS to become more clinically-based, then the only piece of technology that will be able to support those needs is an electronic patient record."

For IMS MAXIMS, the appointment of Thick represents a long-term commitment to develop and innovate healthcare software systems and applications that enhance patient safety and outcomes and support the delivery of best practice.

The company has been pioneering in the use of open source software after releasing the software code to become the first open source electronic patient record provider in the UK.

Its openMAXIMS solution is currently being deployed at Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, which is due to become the first acute NHS trust to implement an open source EPR later this year. In January it was announced that UK private hospital provider, Ramsay Healthcare, was partnering with IMS MAXIMS for 10 years after signing an agreement to use its open source EPR and clinical modules to improve patient satisfaction and outcomes.

"Clinical safety should be at the heart of any healthcare software," said Shane Tickell, chief executive of IMS MAXIMS. "We've held that as our company ethos since the beginning and have continued to innovate and develop our solutions alongside clinicians over nearly 30 years. We welcome Michael to our growing team of talented individuals as we continue to recruit quality personnel committed to improving patient outcomes."

Thick's 30-plus years' clinical and informatics experience has been built over a decorated career in the public sector. During his time at the Department of Health, he also served as senior medical advisor to the Choose and Book and PACS (picture archiving and communication system) programmes. The former consultant transplant surgeon has developed many clinically-led systems, including working with the end of life team at The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust to co-design Coordinate My Care, a shared end of life care register.

His achievements at a national level have been preceded by an established career within clinical practice. After qualifying as a doctor in 1976 from Cambridge University, he went on to become director of liver and renal transplantation at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle, and served as chairman of the IM&T Strategy Committee for the city's hospitals.

Until recently a professor of genomics at Imperial College London, Thick spent ten years researching the use of genomics and data mining big phenotypic datasets, techniques which will require EPRs to deliver personalised medicine. Other achievements include being appointed senior registrar to Professor Sir Roy Calne in Cambridge, and setting up several transplant units across the NHS. He is currently a member of the Digital Health Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) Leaders Network.

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