

Technical Support and Testing Arrangement

Plan / template | DIG-PLN-001

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Title	Technical Support and Testing Arrangement
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Replaces	None (new document)
Standards and criteria supported	Standard 2D, criterion 2D.3
Evidence basis	E-009
Status of this document	Recommended best-practice model. A hospital may adopt, adapt or replace it with an equivalent that meets the same criteria.

At a glance: what to do

1. Name the technical support route for each digital system, with a response time.
2. Test each new system before full use, and after each major change.
3. Record each test on DIG-FRM-004.
4. Review the support arrangement each year.

Stop and get help straight away if: a live system has no named support route, or a new system went live with no test record.

1. Purpose

To make sure each digital care system has accessible technical expertise and is tested before and after full use [EC].

2. Scope

Applies to	IT lead, clinical leads, vendors and contracted support
Locations	All digital systems at {{facility.legal_name}}
When	Before go-live, after each major change, and yearly review
Does not apply to	Medical device maintenance, covered by EQP-SOP-001

3. Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning in this SOP
Named support route	The person, team or vendor helpdesk to contact, with a stated response time
Test record	The dated record of tests, results and actions

4. Background and rationale

A system without support becomes a risk, and staff left to solve faults alone work around them. Criterion 2D.3 asks for expertise in place and tests before full use.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Duties in this SOP	Competence needed
IT lead	Owens the arrangement; keeps the list of support routes	Health informatics (EC)
Vendors and contractors	Provide support and testing as contracted	Contract
Clinical leads	Report faults and take part in testing	Clinical

6. Equipment, materials and resources

Item	Specification or standard	Check before use
Support list per system (name, route, response time)	Current	Published on the intranet
Test record (DIG-FRM-004)	Current	Held by IT

7. Safety and infection prevention

- Do not run a system in clinical use after a failed test until the fault is fixed or a fall-back is used.

8. Before you start

- Check the support route for the system is current.

9. Procedure

Follow the steps in order. Where a step says "If", take the action for the case that applies. Do not skip a step. If a step cannot be done, use section 11 and section 12.

Step	Action	How to do it	Key point
1	Set the support route.	For each system, record the support route, the response time for urgent and routine faults, and the escalation contact.	Staff must know who to call before a fault happens.
2	Test before full use.	- Test the system with a pilot group, the interfaces, and the fall-back plan before full use. - Record each test and its result on DIG-FRM-004.	A pilot finds the faults that a demonstration hides.
3	Test after change.	Repeat the key tests after each software update or major change.	Updates change behaviour. Tests catch that.
4	Manage faults.	- Log each fault with the response time achieved. - Review repeated faults each quarter.	Repeated faults show a system or a training need.
5	Review yearly.	Review the support arrangement each year, including the contract and the named people.	Staff move on and contracts end.

Decision points

- If a response time is missed twice in a quarter, the IT lead escalates to the vendor and to the chief executive.

10. Special situations

Situation	What to do
Vendor support unavailable	Use the fall-back plan and the in-house support contact.

11. Problems and escalation

- Faults affecting patient care are reported to the clinical lead and INC-POL-001 at once.

12. Monitoring and compliance

What is checked	Target	How often	Who	If the target is missed
Systems with named support route and response time	100%	Yearly	IT lead	Add within 14 days
Tests recorded before full use	100%	Each launch	IT lead	Stop launch
Response time met (urgent faults)	Set by committee (EC)	Quarterly	IT lead	Escalate to vendor

13. Records

Record	Where it is kept	Kept for
DIG-FRM-004 Digital System Test and Support Record	IT file	{{facility.records_retention_years}} years

14. Training and competence

- Staff are shown the support route at induction (EC).

15. Related documents

ID	Title	Relationship
DIG-FRM-004	Digital System Test and Support Record	Used in steps 2 and 3
DIG-SOP-002	Digital Care System Assessment	Assessment before use
SOP-074	System Downtime Procedure (generic)	Downtime

16. Evidence

ID	Source and status
E-006	ASF Policy Framework v1.2. Adapted.
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus. Response times to be set.

EC = ASF Expert Committee consensus. Items marked EC are reviewed by the Committee each year.

17. Change history

Version	Date	What changed	Approver and signature
1.0	{{document.effective_date}}	First version	Approved by the ASF Expert Committee
1.1	{{document.effective_date}}	Internal quality review: corrected cross-references, status wording and document control	Approved by the ASF Expert Committee