



eBOOK

# Going Pear-Shaped on **Governing EHR Access**



How secure is the sensitive data sitting inside your electronic health record (EHR) system? The National Data Guardian's Data Security Standards requires that users only have access to personal, confidential data as needed for their current role. It also wants access removed as soon as the information is no longer required. To achieve this with maximum efficiency and minimal human error, National Health Service (NHS) trusts should leverage an identity governance solution that integrates with their most critical applications. This allows trusts to centralise governance of user access rights across the entire IT network.

Unfortunately, many identity vendors approach integration in ways that could lead to **costly upkeep/maintenance and leave security gaps.**

### **Why Integration Matters (And not just to CIOs)**

If you're like other healthcare organisations, you'll likely have between hundreds to a thousand or more software applications. Many of these systems contain sensitive data related to patient health, financial information, and other material. Without appropriate governance of who is accessing what, NHS trusts expose themselves to risk of data breaches, which can cost millions of pounds to remediate. Moreover, patient care may be affected as systems are temporarily shut down during the remediation period. With this in mind, proper integration may be a task for IT, but its implications matter to all of operations.

### **The Quickest Path to Failure**

How effectively you govern access to these systems depends on how they connect to your identity platform. For instance, one of the more common ways identity platforms integrate with various applications is called "screen scraping." This process involves the collection of data displayed in one application's screens for use by another application. Typically, screen scraping is used for integrating with older legacy systems because it is not suitable for modern applications that continually undergo revisions, improvements or even expansion. In essence, updates to the EHR (or any other system) could disrupt the organisation's ability to capture certain data through its identity platform, thus requiring extensive, manual updates. Moreover, it could leave users with improper and outdated access rights, which could trigger regulatory non-compliance and data breaches.

To avoid these challenges altogether, NHS trusts should seek out and implement an identity governance solution that uses API-based integrations, which yields the following benefits:

- Changes in the EHR application is reflected in the identity platform. Thus, user access data is always accurate and up to date.
- The scalability of this approach reduces the amount of time required to gather information.
- This type of integration enables NHS trusts to automate processes that lead to greater efficiency for provisioning teams and reduce errors in granting access to caregivers and others who interact with health data.

## **A Proper Integration**

Using a bidirectional, API integration with Epic, Cerner, and other systems enables NHS trusts to:

- **Accelerate deployment of identity management processes** – Integrate the EHR into compliance and lifecycle processes without the need for custom development.
- **Minimise interruption to hospital operations** – Reduce downtime for new hires and transfers by automating changes to access rights in the EHR.
- **Reduce compliance risks** – Mitigate risk of regulatory non-compliance by enforcing access policies and automating processes to reduce human errors.

To learn how SailPoint can help you establish a unified governance approach by integrating and providing true interoperability with various applications, [contact us today](#).

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