



**Professional
Record
Standards
Body**

**Better records
for better care**

PRSB Information Record Standard Release Policy

June 2023

Document Management

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
0.1	1 st April 2023	First draft
0.2	25.04.2023	Following review and revision
0.3	03.05.2023	Updated after further reviews
0.4	15.05.2023	Updated after CEO review
1.0	21.06.2023	Updated and issues after S&M board and assurance committee comments and approval
1.1	21.06.23	Minor change to background text

Reviewers

Reviewer name	Title / Responsibility	Date	Version
Martin Orton	Senior Programme Manager	25.04.2023	0.1
Tom Hobbs	Support and Maintenance Manager	05.05.2023	0.2
Lorraine Foley	CEO, PRSB	11.05.2023	0.3

Approved by

Name	Date	Version
Support and maintenance board	08.06.2023	0.4
Assurance committee	06.06.2023	0.4

Glossary of Terms

Term / Abbreviation	What it stands for
CISS	Core Information Standards Service. The NHSE call off contract with PRSB
CTOP	PRSB Clinical and Technical Operational Panel
CQC	Care Quality Commission
DAPB	Data Alliance Partnership Board
FHIR	Fast Healthcare Interoperable Resources
ISN	Information Standards Notice . ISNs are approved by the Data Alliance Partnership Board (DAPB)
NHSE	NHS England
PID	Project Initiation Document
SPS	PRSB's Standards Partnership Scheme
ToR	Terms of Reference

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the PRSB's policy for the maintenance releases of updates to our standards.

1.2 Background and Context

Standards developed and managed by the PRSB are formally published on our website including the endorsement of relevant member organisations.

Thereafter, the standards are managed by the support and maintenance service to agreed service levels in perpetuity or until deprecated.

As part of the support activity, any issues, queries or suggestions as to how the standard could be improved received from any stakeholder are recorded and categorised. Stakeholders include all implementers, including system suppliers and providers across health and social care.

All standards have a fixed review date (3 years) which means the standard will be reviewed and if appropriate updated, at least once every 3 years but they may be updated more often than this in situations such as a safety issue, external change impacting the validity of the standard or just a high volume of logged issues.

PRSB standards are also published on the [NHS England standards directory](#).

1.3 Aims and objectives

PRSB aim to provide a professional standards management service that ensures the standards are useful, usable and used. This means that a balance must be struck between continuous improvement and keeping the standards current versus maintaining some stability for software suppliers and implementers.

1.4 Principles for publication and releases

- PRSB will endeavour to ensure that published standards and all related materials are managed to a high level of quality and consistency and kept up to date, accurate and aligned.
- All stakeholders will be consulted commensurate with the degree of change implied.
- Stakeholders will be given at least 6 months' notice of the intended change, except in cases where an urgent change is needed to address issues such as a safety or privacy need.
- PRSB will endeavour to strike the right balance between keeping standards current and making timely changes and not overloading implementers with constant changes.
- PRSB will be transparent and publish a log of requested and planned changes to standards to inform developers considering likely future changes to a standard.

2 Governance

The support and maintenance service will be governed by a **Support and Maintenance Board**. The membership and responsibilities of the board are defined in a separate terms of reference document (available on request). In summary the Support and Maintenance board will be responsible for:

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1. Oversight of the support and maintenance service including management of the maintenance log.
 2. Deciding whether an uplift and re-publication of a standard is required ahead of the default review period.
 3. The maintenance release schedule.
 4. All maintenance updates.

A diagram of PRSB's governance including the support and maintenance service governance is shown in Appendix 1 along with a description of PRSB's overall governance structures. The key parts of the overall governance for the support and maintenance service are the assurance committee and its sub-group, the Clinical and Technical Operational Panel (CTOP). The assurance committee reviews and approves PRSB's methodology and its products including maintenance releases. The CTOP sub-group approves detailed changes to reference library of components which make up PRSB standards, and also approves emergency releases (see Section 3.4 below).

3 Maintenance Releases

All standards will be reviewed and uplifted at least every 3 years.

The default 3-year release period may be shortened as part of commissioned projects to enhance standards, or as a result of stakeholder/user feedback that are assessed as requiring an earlier release. The decision to undergo an early release for a standard, as well as all proposed changes to standards, are reviewed and agreed by the Support and Maintenance board with oversight by the independent assurance committee.

3.1 The Maintenance Log

The maintenance log is where all issues relating to published PRSB standards are captured, assessed for priority and tracked. It also defines which standards are affected by a particular change and actions taken to resolve them to date.

It is monitored on a regular basis (bi-weekly by an analyst) and quarterly with the lead architect [technical rep in the interim] or as appropriate for circumstances to consider if either the number of entries or if the importance/urgency for any entries justifies a review of the standard before the default 3-year review.

A forward schedule of maintenance work will be maintained and published on the PRSB website [PRSB Standards – PRSB \(theprsb.org\)](https://www.theprsb.org).

Where the standard has an ISN, the maintenance release must also be approved through the DAPB process, as well as through the PRSB approval process.

3.2 What might be updated in a release?

A maintenance release will include the following stages as part of the work:

- Review of the context for a standard, its policy position and drivers, and any legislation changes which might impact the standard.
- Incorporating changes to the PRSB reference dataset (or ref library) since the last version, where these are appropriate.

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- Changes and issues from the maintenance log

A release for a standard should ensure that all related collateral and relevant guidance and documentation are also updated where required and kept aligned. The uplift could therefore include changes to:

- the version details and release schedule published on our web site and managed in our Art Decor tool and published on the NHS England standards directory listing
- the standard itself (the information model(s), any of the sections or data items or metadata)
- the 'must haves' or minimum viable product (MVP)
- the business rules
- the implementation guidance, both the section and element level guidance in the information model and the general implementation guidance document if it has been customised for the standard
- the safety case and hazard log
- any implementation toolkit and support materials that exist
- links to technical standards to support implementation (typically FHIR specifications)
- the associated information standards notice (ISN) if one exists and all the associated documents. Note in future this could include equivalent to the English ISN for other devolved administrations.
- examples to support implementation of a standard
- endorsing organisations

The following are not updated in a maintenance release:

- The final report. However, a further report for the update may be provided where the changes are major enhancements or revisions involving consultation so that the methodology, stakeholder engagement, findings and outcomes are documented.
- changes to the standards display format on our website

3.3 Triggers, priorities and considerations for an uplift to a standard

The following conditions and criteria would be considered in reviewing the need for a standard uplift:

- A regular, scheduled standard review milestone needs to be met.
- A safety issue has been identified.
- The weight of support requests for a particular standard or items within a standard suggest a high level of demand for change.
- A major shift in policy direction or other relevant considerations which mean the standard is invalidated or less useful unless changed.
- Date of last significant uplift, with a guideline of releases no more frequent than 6 monthly unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3.4 Types of Release

In order of ascending urgency, the types of releases are:

1. Minor Release

Minor changes to information in the supporting documents for a standard. For example, updating implementation guidance or examples.

Minor releases will be approved by a nominee from the support and maintenance governance board. Where appropriate and possible it will be reviewed by the development team for the standard.

2. Maintenance Release

Typically, these are completed on a 3-yearly cycle. This type of release covers any update or change to the information model(s) in a standard. The changes could be small changes to descriptions or value sets through to major enhancements of the standard and revision to the content. The process for these releases will be the same, although the scale and complexity of the work could vary hugely.

Maintenance releases will have staged approval by both the assurance committee and the support and maintenance board. The approval stages are:

- Project Initiation Document (PID), which will include the planned level of stakeholder engagement and consultation as appropriate for the scale of change, the approach to continued endorsement, and a list of the products to be updated.
- Review and approval of the update package for release.

3. Emergency Release

An emergency release may be carried out if a standard:

- a) is assessed with a potential safety risk to patients
- b) is assessed as not being implementable or unnecessarily increasing burden on users for technical or other reasons.

Emergency releases are carried out as quickly as possible and usually within 2 weeks. They will be approved by CTOP to ensure rapid response with notification to the support and maintenance board.

3.5 Maintenance release schedule

A release schedule for all PRSB standards will be maintained and published on the PRSB website [PRSB Standards – PRSB \(theprsb.org\)](https://www.theprsb.org).

4 Maintenance Processes

4.1 Stakeholders and Communication

At the beginning of an update project suppliers and key stakeholders will be notified that the update is starting. A contact list for all stakeholders of a particular standard, including partners and endorsing organisations, is maintained by the PRSB communications team.

The expected date of the update (next release) will be published on the standard's webpage.

At publication, a release note will be produced describing the details of the change to a standard, including the rationale, timing and any implications. Where the changes are more extensive (e.g. update to Community Pharmacy standard in spring 2023), a final report for the revision will be produced.

4.2 Raising maintenance requests

Each maintenance issue raised against a standard is recorded in the PRSB maintenance log. A maintenance issue is defined as one that may result in a change to a PRSB standard. Maintenance requests may be received from all sources, but encouragement will be given to use the support form available on the PRSB website [Standard support – PRSB \(theprsb.org\)](https://theprsb.org). The form includes the option to select a PRSB standard it relates to, as well as the option to upload files and add a proposed resolution for the issue.

The support mailbox (support@theprsb.org) is included on older documentation for PRSB standards and will remain as a route in for queries.

4.3 Process for addressing maintenance requests

The following process is followed (by the support and maintenance manager, or their nominated deputy) to handle maintenance requests:

- Identify maintenance issues from the incoming queries for support and maintenance.
- Add them to the log, including the priority and status as defined below, and as far as possible identifying the standard impacted.
- Address the open issues in priority order.
- Where needed, consult with the original project team or other people with knowledge in the PRSB team to find a resolution.
- If the solution involves changes to information model(s) then CTOP approval is needed for the change(s). This should include identifying where an emergency release is needed or where consideration should be given by the support and maintenance board to bringing forward a maintenance release for impacted standards.
- Make the changes to the products as required for the standard(s) or to the art-décor underlying datasets.
- Update the maintenance log including the status, resolution and actions required.
- If an update release is being done for a standard, then follow the approval route show above in section 3.4 for the release type.
- Follow the publication process for updating the webpage and the standards version control document.

4.4 Maintenance Issues Priority setting

The priorities to be assigned to all issues in the maintenance log are defined in the table below:

Priority No	Priority	Definitions	Other standards
1	High	Safety risk	Urgent resolution and update to standard needed. ASAP. Minimum one week for CTOP review; one week to publish. Assessment needed for action to other standards impacted and publication.

2	Medium	Important issue	Needs resolution Can be updated in next maintenance release, although many may trigger an earlier release.	Assessment needed for action to other standards impacted, and publication.
3	Low	Future enhancement / non-urgent fixes	Can be addressed at next maintenance release	

4.5 Maintenance log Status options

The Status options for each issue are:

1. **Open** – needs addressing and resolving
2. **Resolved pending update** – The issue has been resolved and the actions defined. But not closed as either the original standard the issue was raised for has not been updated, or other standards impacted by the same issue not yet updated.
3. **Waiting till next maintenance release** – the issue is noted and will be addressed at the next maintenance release of the standard.
4. **Parked with dependency** – The issue is not resolved, but is not being progressed until an external dependency is resolved (e.g. external information governance work on use of sex & gender, or waiting for funding).
5. **Closed / Abandoned** – Resolved and actioned on all standards impacted by the issue.

4.6 Version Control

Version control is managed through an overall “PRSB standards version control and audit record” document. This includes what versions of PRSB standards align to which versions of technical FHIR specifications for implementation of the standards for data sharing.

Releases are version numbered using simple major and minor version numbers, e.g. V2.1 where it is major version 2 with a minor revision 1.

- A minor release or a maintenance release (both as defined in section 3.4 above) with only small changes to the information model will use the minor version number element.
- A major release involving enhancements to the standard or major revision with new parts or structural changes to the standard will use the major version number element.

Previous versions of standards are available on request from the support service through support@theprsb.org. It is the intention to make these available from the website in future.

5 Appendix 1 – PRSB and Support & Maintenance Governance

The PRSB is an independent “not for profit” community interest company established by the DHSC (Department of Health and Social Care) to develop the content and support the implementation and adoption of professional records across health and social care. PRSB is a membership organisation where our members are the professional bodies and organisations representing front line staff across health and social care, patients and the public, system suppliers and key arm's length bodies.

PRSB is sponsored by the NHSE Transformation Directorate (TD) and has a sponsorship board for strategic oversight of the standards work programme chaired by NHSE TD and involving NHSE, Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and CQC. PRSB won the Core Information and Standards Service contract (4 years from 2022 to 2025) which provides core services including standards support and maintenance, and a priced catalogue of services for standards development and implementation support. An operational group, chaired by NHSE/I TD meets monthly to oversee the CISS contract and PRSB work programme at an operational level.

PRSB has a board with non-exec directors and an advisory board with representatives from each of our members. There is also a finance committee and an assurance committee which report to the board and are chaired by non-exec directors. The assurance committee is an independent committee with members from outside PRSB with the exception of the clinical primary care representative who is also PRSB's clinical director and a GP. It approves PRSB methodology and deliverables and comprises:

- Clinical rep (Acute care)
- Clinical rep (Primary care)
- Social care rep
- Technical rep
- People/lay reps (x2)

The assurance committee has a sub-group, the clinical and technical operational panel (CTOP), with devolved responsibility to make operational decisions on changes to standards and the reference dataset underpinning all PRSB standards. CTOP membership comprises:

- PRSB's clinical director
- Senior programme manager
- SPS assessor rep
- Technical architect
- Support and maintenance service manager

A diagram of the PRSB governance including the support and maintenance service is shown below:

