



Code4Health™

Case Study: OpenChain

THE CHALLENGE

Open Source software is actively used across multiple market segments and is a proven model for enterprise level software. Open Source uses different licensing models to more traditional proprietary software, and requires a certain amount of institutional learning for effective use and adherence to compliance requirements.

Open Source compliance fundamentally relies on understanding how third party software is distributed and under what terms. The collaboration between the NHS, Source Code Control and the OpenChain Project addressed these requirements via training and process adoption.

THE COLLABORATION

NHS England and NHS Digital seek sustainable digital solutions for healthcare via the Code4Health initiative. They selected Source Code Control to provide guidance around Open Source code governance. Source Code Control proposed adopting the OpenChain specification to manage Open Source supply chains and creates an environment for continuous compliance.

An initial training course was delivered to Code4Health and several SME Service providers.

Subsequently the OpenEyes EMR for Ophthalmology provided by AB EHR was selected as a pilot programme for conformance to the OpenChain Specification.

THE STAKEHOLDERS:

- NHS England - Health Care Provider
- NHS Digital - national provider of information, data and IT systems
- Code4Health - initiative to enable the best use of digital tools and technology
- Source Code Control - System Training and Integrator
- OpenChain Project - Originator of Training Material and Compliance Specification
- AB EHR - Open Source Solution Provider
- OpenEyes EMR - A Collaborative Open Source Project

Supported by

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BENEFITS

The OpenChain Project builds trust in Open Source by making Open Source license compliance simpler and more consistent. The OpenChain Specification defines a core set of requirements which every quality compliance program must satisfy. The OpenChain Curriculum provides the educational foundation for Open Source processes and solutions, whilst meeting a key requirement of the OpenChain Specification. OpenChain Conformance allows organisations to display their adherence to these requirements. The result is that Open Source license compliance becomes more predictable, understandable and efficient for participants of the software supply chain.

“Open Source software is the foundation of modern business, research and connected technology,”
says Shane Coughlan,
OpenChain Project Director.
“The NHS has taken a leadership position in European healthcare with its approach to adoption.”

HIGHLIGHTS

The Open Source training provided by Source Code Control using the OpenChain Curriculum provided a simple but comprehensive introduction to the licensing and governance models involved. Expanding this training into practical OpenChain Conformance allowed institutional knowledge to become codified into practical processes that help manage inbound software, internal usage and potential further distribution to partners and suppliers as required. The adoption of OpenChain materials can be understood as a three-step programme:

1. Initial training and education
2. Conformance analysis
3. Confirmation that all the required processes exist

Due to the open nature of the education and training material, and the cross-organisational communication inherently facilitated by Open Source, these three steps could be completed in a relatively short timeframe.

FUTURE

The OpenChain Conformance of OpenEyes provides a strong foundation for sustainable use of the solution. Because OpenChain requires processes, it provides a foundation for quality assurance and transparency in software development. Moving forward this institutional learning can be applied to adjacent areas such as security and the adoption of third party components. This drives further improvements in the software used in medical services. It is expected that Code4Health will use OpenChain across further projects in its community supply chain, leveraging the solution as an assurance of quality in professional re-usable software solutions that can only be accomplished using Open Source software.

OPENCHAIN

The OpenChain Project identifies key recommended processes for effective open source management. This reduces bottlenecks and risk when using third-party code.
OpenChain can be explained in five sentences:

1



Simple & Consistent

The OpenChain Project makes open source license compliance simple and consistent in the supply chain.

2



Identifying Requirements

OpenChain Specification identifies the core requirements of a quality compliance program.

3



Displaying Adherence

OpenChain Conformance helps organizations display adherence to these requirements.

4



Best Practices

OpenChain Curriculum provides basic open source processes and best practices.

5



Increased Efficiency

Open source license compliance becomes more predictable, understandable and efficient for the software supply chain.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Follow our OpenChain partners on Twitter:

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