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Critical Systems Management: Information Standardization and Society

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To date standardization in critical systems has been studied from the perspectives of vertical and horizontal processes. Vertical information systems (IS) standardization has become the key scholarly research in the context of sector and industry-wide interactions of various system's elements (Markus et al., 2006; Scott and Orlikowski, 2022). Alongside the study of vertical IS standardization there have been studies of horizontal processes. Horizontal IS standardization in the critical systems has been studied in the context of the Electronic Health Records (Kohli and Tan, 2016; Galetsi et al., 2019). However, it remains unclear how these vertical and horizontal IS standardization processes address social inequalities in critical systems. Therefore, the purpose of this TREO talk is to explore the links between vertical and horizontal IS standardization processes and the existing social inequalities. The discussion of the TREO talk is contextualized within the National Health Services of Scotland (NHS Scotland, UK). Vertical and horizontal IS standardization processes is viewed from the perspectives of a wide range of the health system's stakeholders, such as policymakers, managers, clinicians and patients. Social inequalities are viewed from the perspectives of the healthcare improvement processes and the challenges within the public healthcare. The TREO talk is multidisciplinary and contributes not only to the existing scholarly work on tensions between social disparities and IS standardization (Cruz and Paine, 2021), but also addresses practitioners' concerns about health services digitalization and social inequalities that deteriorated further during COVID-19 (Toh and Brown, 2020).

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