

A few notes on the ending of the FDP series in Computer Weekly

A former NHS England FDP staffer known as ITCrowd Tom has written a short series in Computer Weekly, which ends with him [addressing what he wishes the criticisms of FDP were](#) – in much the same way as Palantir staff downplay their close links and strategic guidance from The Disgraced Dark Mister Mandelson.

It is notable that Palantir's UK CEO [argues](#) that his (private) staff are only doing what NHS Digital did before it was abolished into NHS England. Louis can argue that his highly paid generalists can do what underpaid NHS specialists did, but that doesn't mean it's a good idea for anyone other than him and his company.

Frontline-First: "Frontline-First" is one vision of what one person thinks FDP should be. Tom's view is as fair as all of the other visions of what FDP could be, but that doesn't mean that it's what FDP is – and certainly not all of what FDP is.

Apache Spark is freely downloadable by anyone: It is incoherent to simultaneously argue that no other supplier can do this, and that other suppliers already do and that they should stop. The piece argues Foundry is the output of a \$328bn company, which it is, but Palantir built it on a free software product called Apache Spark, which has many resellers – usually without the PR budget Palantir has deployed, which has convinced some.

The NHS Evolves rapidly: The five week series will have been written before details of the [creeps and ghouls](#) who looked up the records of terrorism victims when they had no reason to do so became widespread knowledge. FDP will become the mechanism to do even more of that, as it makes people's whole Single Palantir Record available wherever the NHS logo is seen. While "Frontline-First" may make what the frontline does easier, not all of that is always entirely positive – though risks can be mitigated. (But SPR is just a new brand for old ideas which had no accountability either.)

Palantir AI Platform and the Single Palantir Record: It's outside of the scope of Tom's series to consider the "Single Patient/Palantir Record" summary of care. This will be a summary held in FDP, which by default will be initially created by feeding *all* of a patient's available history into the "NHS AI platform" – which is actually just the "Palantir AI Platform" renamed to hide a toxic supplier behind an NHS logo.

Critical IP is owned by Palantir: ITCrowd Tom's former employer may own the IP to the work he did on FDP, and it does – but when he writes "The Canonical Data Model belongs to the NHS, is licensed via the Open Government Licence, and is available to all on GitHub", he [omits to give the link](#) which shows:

- the [latest edit](#) is from a "-PLTR" user;
- when you [read the PDF](#), the word "palantir" is nowhere to be found – yet [in the Model description itself](#) Palantir are everywhere, from:
 - "servers: - url: <https://ptukhealth.palantirfoundry.co.uk>" (it's especially notable that this isn't an [nhs.uk](#) address and doesn't even reference the NHS – *this is not NHS owned*);
 - "paths: /api/v2/ontologies/palantirukhealth-ontology/objects/Admission";
 - with over 1000 mentions of Foundry and over 1000 of Palantir, including:

- “title: Palantir OpenAPI”;
- “description: The Palantir REST API. Please see <https://www.palantir.com/docs> for more details.”

While ITCrowd Tom may argue that the ontology is owned by the NHS, Palantir clearly has scope to disagree – and when it matters, the [repeatedly litigious](#) Palantir can and likely will deploy their lawyers to block use elsewhere.

Of course the NHS could deploy Claude to regenerate the ontology from NHS data, and update all the code, but that’s going around Palantir’s ownership of something the NHS doesn’t own – as, to quote ITCrowd Tom: “The CDM would need to be reimplemented”, because the NHS doesn’t own it. Which is the core point of the criticism, and is what can be used to block patient benefit unless Palantir benefits.

Who can build: “I intend to keep building” is an interesting choice of a last line. As a now [“Independent NHS Data Consultancy”](#), who is Tom working for? To *build* on FDP you need either a login from a Trust – i.e. you already have sufficient access via an honorary NHS contract to act as part of the Trust, i.e. you are not “independent” – or to have an expensive commercial contract with Palantir, to get a Foundry instance which is configured to be compatible with FDP. Things which Tom himself [will charge £8k+VAT](#) to tell you. ([Our substack is a lot cheaper.](#))

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