

Community pharmacy IT progress update: Autumn 2021

This briefing sets out updates about community pharmacy IT and progress with Community Pharmacy IT Group's (CP ITG's) [workstreams](#) during the last quarter.

The updates are categorised into the work plan areas below.

- [IT policy updates](#);
- [Supporting interoperability](#);
- [NHSmal](#);
- [Data security](#);
- [Reduced burden and practical use of IT](#);
- [Pharmacy systems](#);
- [Electronic Prescription Service \(EPS\) enhancement](#); and
- [Apps, wearables and technologies](#).

Note: You can click or select a category heading (left) to automatically scroll down to that section of the document.

Comments or feedback that support progress on the priority areas, can be provided by emailing it@psnc.org.uk. These updates are also available within html format at: psnc.org.uk/itupdate.

5a

To support useful and usable IT beyond pharmacy PMR systems and EPS

Relevant webpages include: [itfuture](#)

Integrated Care Systems (ICS)

- PSNC published a one-page [ICS and healthcare IT factsheet](#).
- Integrated Care Systems [will be required to have digital and data platforms in place by April 2022](#).
- The requirement for all of England [to be covered by an Integrated Care System \(ICS\) was introduced to parliament](#).

IT policy: lessons from the pandemic

- [A more "systematic" approach to data collection and sharing is needed to better prepare for future pandemics](#), according to a report from the G7 summit.
- Richard McEwan, Lead Technical Architect, [explains the infrastructure behind one of the world's largest national COVID-19 vaccination programmes and how it has helped over 35 million people and counting get their life-saving jabs](#).
- A new study has revealed [the majority of the UK's leading health providers are accelerating their digital transformation plans this year in response to the Covid pandemic](#).
- [NHS Digital received an award for statistical work](#) to identify those patients most vulnerable to COVID-19 so that their care was prioritised. NHS Digital's Chief Technology Officer considered [How data shielded the vulnerable](#).

IT policy: changes to the landscape

- [Digital Health Network's Advisory Panels elected new members](#).
- Tributes were paid to [NHS Digital's deputy CEO Pete Rose also serving as the organisation's chief information security officer \(CISO\) who passed away in August 2021](#).
- Digital Health reported on [Amanda Pritchard's appointment as NHS England's new CEO](#).
- New interim chief executive of NHS Digital Simon Bolton [outlines his main priorities including to further improve working relationships between NHS England, NHSX and NHSD](#).

- Digital Health opined [on the biggest tech challenges for health secretary Sajid Javid](#).

CP ITG IT infrastructure survey

- Contractors and others can promote the newly launched survey using [template wording](#). [Please can pharmacy contractors and teams also submit an IT arrangements survey response within October](#). The results will help inform IT policy of system suppliers and the organisations which attend CP ITG.

dm+d code changes and synchronisations

- PSNC received system supplier and pharmacy contractor feedback about changes to dm+d codes impacting on the use of EPS.
- Pharmacy contractors should report actual or potential clinical impacts using the Learn from patient safety events (LFPSE) process outlined at the [dm+d webpage reporting guidance section](#).
- NHSBSA dm+d team are reviewing their scope to provide notifications ahead of changes and have already started to introduce some communications earlier than usual via the [Technology Reference data Update Distribution](#) communications route.
- Supplier comments have proposed that if dispensing and prescribing systems targeted aligned synchronisation dates this would reduce the risk that pharmacy contractors received problem prescriptions for items which have had changed dm+d entries. However, there are challenges given that some prescribing suppliers reportedly synchronise less often compared to pharmacy system suppliers and additionally whilst the drugs database update may be made available monthly for prescribers, it may take two to three weeks after the update for it to reach all GP practices using that system.

Next steps:

Pharmacy system suppliers will contact the CP ITG secretariat within October 2021.

IT policy key updates

- PSNC published a one-page [‘Reshaping how health and care data is used’ factsheet](#) about DHSC proposals in their Data saves lives paper.
- World Health Organisation (WHO) [forecasts global 13 million shortfall of health workers by 2035](#).
- Medical Futurist reports on [Google’s plans in the health and care sector](#).
- Kings Fund published a long read about [the impact of NHS administration processes on patients](#).
- NHS Digital calculated a [digital revolution in social care might have £127m in future benefits](#).
- King’s Fund considered [the journey towards a smarter hospital within an integrated landscape](#).
- Hospitals expected to begin [testing electronic prescribing systems from autumn 2021](#).
- CP ITG published its previous [Pharmacy IT quarterly round-up](#) after the last CP ITG meeting.
- [Microsoft announced Windows 11 plans](#).
- BT say Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) [phonelines](#) will all be disconnected within four years. [Pharmacy contractors will need to ensure they connect their phones into an internet connection \(Voice Over Internet Protocol \(VOIP\)\) and consider contingencies if internet is lost](#).

Innovation

- Digital Health London launched [Innovation Directory for London to help accelerate digital change](#).
- An [openaccessgovernment.org](#) opinion piece argued that [innovation can resolve NHS challenges](#).
- AHSN Network published [an innovation in healthcare study](#).
- NICE and AHSN have announced a [two-year agreement to support the use and promotion of innovation in the NHS](#).

Digital capabilities

- [Health Education England selects new consortium to deliver NHS Digital Academy programme.](#)
- Health Education England published a [Digital Capabilities in the Pharmacy Workforce](#) report.
- [UK Parliament reported on the extend of digital literacy amongst citizens.](#) Data suggests around a fifth of the population do not have “essential digital skills” for life as defined by the UK Government – impacting their ability to access services, get employment and healthcare.
- [The US core pharmacist curriculum has had additional Genomics content added.](#)

Inclusion

- Local Government Association (LGA) [has launched a Digital Pathfinders Programme with a promise of support of up to £20,000 each for a number of projects led by local authorities](#) aiming to improving digital inclusion, connectivity in their communities and cyber security.
- NHSX and others published [a factsheet for digital project teams to consider digital inclusion as part of their work.](#)
- NHSX [plans to further develop an NHS Account to simplify patient access to digital services.](#)
- Emma Stone, Director of Design, Research and Communications at the Good Things Foundation, [explored the implications of increased use of digital health services on the digital divide.](#)
- Healthwatch reported on [how some patients had been excluded by remote GP appointments.](#)

1a

Supporting the development of interoperability/integration

Relevant webpages include: [/interoperability](#) and [/dosesyntax](#)

Shared Care Records (ShCR) update

Updates about [ShCR](#) arrangements have been included within previous meeting papers and discussed at past meetings. ShCRs were previously called ‘Local health and shared care records (LHCRs)’.

LPCs and/or local contractors can continue to take steps to gain pharmacy access such as:

- identifying the ShCR project team from the [List of records systems](#);
- learning about case studies such as: [Dorset Care Record ShCR pharmacy access case study](#) and the recently published [East London Patient Record \(eLPR\) pharmacy case study](#).
- contacting the ShCR project team and other local partners to find out how to get involved;
- using the ‘[Planning pharmacy access briefing](#)’ and [frequently updated ShCRs webpage](#); and
- reviewing the December 2020 [PSNC/RPS ShCRs/SCR letter to NHS orgs about records access](#).

CP ITG pharmacy reps and LPCs took part in the [Virtual ShCRs event \(1st July 2021\)](#). PSNC continues to work with NHSX and other relevant stakeholders on the actions decided at this meeting. More information about these actions is available here: [minutes and outputs for the Shared Care Record \(ShCR/LHCR\) summer 2021 event](#).

Records

- NHS Digital launched a [Data Uses Register tool so patients can see which organisations access certain data](#) (also reported by [Digital Health](#)).
- NHSX is [looking at how new IT could allow pharmacy teams to add notes to patient records](#).
- NHSX [launched procurement framework for digital social care records](#).
- NHS England and NHSX [plan to invest £52 million into online maternity records](#).
- Royal Marsden Hospital [announced a partnership with Great Ormond Street Hospital to deliver a new digital health record powered by the supplier, Epic](#).
- Clinical and system leaders from Greater Manchester [presented a virtual September 2021 event about the progress with use of the ShCR ‘Greater Manchester Care Record’](#).

- [Genetic test results for urgent cancer patients can now be accessed digitally across Wales.](#)
- North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital [integrated into the Great North Care Record.](#)
- [A case study explored how to manage healthcare data volumes in health care records](#) (e.g. more high-resolution images).

Other updates about interoperability

- Enovacom launched a [FHIR: everything you need to know \(short factsheet\)](#) about Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources.
- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust [has extended its partnership with Babylon.](#)
- NHSX Blueprinting Steering Committee said that [Blueprints are important for delivery of digital capabilities within the NHS.](#) The committee considers blueprints a knowledge asset and a product of a structured approach to learning, from projects that have taken place. The committee is overseeing the development of hundreds of new blueprints.
- NHS Digital announced [the first providers had begun taking part in the national data alignment programme between the NHS and private sector.](#)
- At a previous meeting, CP ITG agreed to support the capability for anonymised data to be accessible, so that pharmacy teams’ interventions can start to be auditable, and the value of community pharmacy can be better demonstrated. If PMR systems were to be adapted to allow such data sharing, it would require the development of a roadmap and a standard approach to data provision, which may benefit from use of SNOMED CT clinical terms. A PSNC-drafted dataset was prepared and a dataset for the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) could be added. If you would like to help progress this work, please contact it@psnc.org.uk.

1b

Supporting NHSmail

Relevant webpage(s) include: [/NHSmail](#)

- NHSmail support pages outline the benefit of the NHSmail Teams “Virtual Visits” patient consultation platform – namely, this platform enables appointment booking and video consultation. The NHSmail team provided a demo to PSNC and CP ITG representatives. Pharmacy contractors that would like to pilot this can contact it@psnc.org.uk with their name, ODS code and telephone number and ‘Virtual Visits pilot’ within the email subject title.

1c

Supporting maintenance and demonstration of data security and information governance arrangements

Relevant webpage(s) include: [/ds](#)

Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPTK)

- PSNC and NHS Digital are currently updating the Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPTK) and related tips. Additional user testing is also planned. If you would like to get involved with this user testing, please contact it@psnc.org.uk.
- NHS Digital may update contractors about the availability of the initial Toolkit version. However, we strongly recommend that contractors hold off accessing the Toolkit until the planned improvements have been finalised and PSNC releases its updated guidance. Contractors will still have adequate time to complete the Toolkit before the submission deadline on 30th June 2022. We will keep contractors informed of any developments.

Data security key updates

- PSNC and NHSX published a joint [Cyber security tips IT factsheet for pharmacy teams](#).
- The implementation date of September 1st 2021 of the [GP Data for Planning and Research \(GDPR\) programme was scrapped. The proposed changes will apply only once criteria is met](#).
- World Health Organization published a report to [help national health systems protect data](#).
- The Irish government confirmed [it was aware that health data could have been stolen during a major cyber-attack and that data may potentially may be abused by criminals](#). Davey Winder, cyber security expert [gave his thoughts on the Irish incident](#).
- [Moorfields Eye Hospital in Dubai was subject to an IT security incident](#).

2a

Support reduced burden through tackling issues related to the practical use of pharmacy IT and promoting good IT practices

Relevant webpages include: [/itworkflow](#)

NHS Service Finder enhancements and user research

- NHS Service Finder is a free tool that provides access to information from the Directory of Services (DoS) and the NHS website. It is not accessible by the public, but it does allow pharmacy teams and other healthcare professionals to search for service information quickly. The [NHS Service Finder team published user survey results in August 2021](#).

Next steps:

- NHS Digital user researchers are conducting a further round of user interviews to help further develop the NHS Service Finder tool. If you'd like to take part email it@psnc.org.uk.

Discovery work about patient digital authentication

- Discovery work about patient digital authentication: PSNC and CP ITG are feeding into DHSC who are carrying out related discovery work and must explore: the best way to capture digital authentication in community pharmacies; main challenges in implementing digital authentication; and main benefits in implementing digital authentication (for pharmacies/patients).

Next steps:

- Contractors may submit further information into a survey at: <https://forms.office.com/r/VYUw5geidT> by 20th October 2021. CP ITG and PSNC will collate further feedback such as via survey and will share the output to DHSC.

Key reducing burden updates

- CP ITG previously identified going paperless as a priority – within its *Digital Priority List and Views on the next generation of EPS* shortlists. However, pharmacy teams continue to report considerable use of paper and printing for reasons such as enabling prescription information to move around the dispensary given limited space for PMR terminals. Following work with CP ITG and the paperless sub-group the '[Going paperless](#)' webpage has been further updated.
- [More than half of contractors were using MYS for end-of-month submission](#) by August 2021.
- The Government temporarily suspended the requirement for patients (or their representatives) to sign the back of NHS prescription forms or EPS tokens from 1st November 2020 until 30th August 2021. [PSNC reported on the end of this temporary suspension](#).
- PSNC published a [factsheet that explains how pharmacy team members can check if they have an older NHS Smartcard needing replacement in case it is reaching 'end-of life' this calendar year](#).

- NHS Digital previously added the multi-site 'FFFFF' Smartcard code and SCR rights onto Smartcards with the pharmacist or pharmacy technician role, because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative was supported by PSNC and NHS England and NHS Improvement. [NHS Digital have confirmed to PSNC that assignment codes will be further extended until 31st March 2022.](#)
- Medical Futurist explored how [Drones may be used to support the delivery of health and care.](#)

3a

Supporting the development of pharmacy systems

Relevant webpages include: [/systems](#)

Use of pharmacy systems for CPCF services

- [DMS](#) was introduced as an Essential service in early 2021. NHSE&I and PSNC were keen for suppliers to be given information on the service, IT implications and dataset requirements. Supplier briefings occurred in October 2020, February and May 2021. Contact persons on the project introduced themselves to CP ITG previously. There is an objective to progress the specification work further during autumn, and for a 'go-live date' ideally by late 2021. PSNC is continuing to push for this work to be completed at the earliest opportunity. Updates will be published at: psnc.org.uk/itrequirements and psnc.org.uk/dms.
- NHSE&I announced that a national procurement model would be in place to support community pharmacy contractors with the delivery of the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS). This was scheduled to terminate on 1st October 2021, but was [extended](#) to the end of March 2022. Contractors are recommended to start considering which CPCS IT supplier they want to choose well in advance of the next change. From the autumn, contractors will be able to transition to their own contractual arrangements with one of the four assured IT providers: [Cegedim](#); [Positive Solutions](#); [Sonar Informatics](#); or [PharmOutcomes](#).
- NHSE&I has published a [CPCS IT Provider 'Switching' guide](#) and additional buyers guidance and an [NHSE&I CPCS IT webinar is expected shortly on Thursday 14th October, from 7.00-8.30pm.](#)

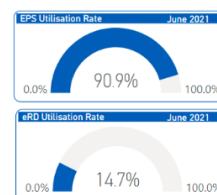
3b

Supporting EPS and its enhancements

Relevant webpages include: [/eps](#), [/rtec](#) and [/itfuture](#)

EPS

- Since the last meeting, PSNC has restructured and revised the webpages within its [EPS website section](#). PSNC has also updated its [EPS totals reconciliation guidance \(EPS totals\) guidance](#) and [reported on EPS script volumes exceeding 95% of total items](#).
- EPS Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs): The current 'NCSO workaround' is being phased out and it is recommended that all contractors and system suppliers ensure they are using the EPS SSP endorsement instead of NCSO as soon as possible. NHSBSA is issuing some guidance and support to system suppliers implementing the EPS SSP feature. Suppliers also have some flexibility as to the extent to which they will support pharmacy team members for example, by asking users to complete any missing or incomplete SSP endorsement information if the required endorsements are not present or not in the specified format. NHSBSA has received examples of invalid/incorrectly endorsed SSP claims submitted via EPS. [PSNC tips explain how to avoid submitting invalid SSP claims.](#)



Real Time Exemption Checking (RTEC)

- NHSBSA has led the RTEC project since January 2020. CP ITG and PSNC have been supportive of its continued roll-out. Read more on RTEC, its phases and continued piloting of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) RTEC at five pharmacies using PSL at: [RTEC](#). Feedback from RTEC users (PSL/EMIS/Cegedim/Titan/Lloyds/RxWeb systems) has continued to be very positive. Use of RTEC reduces the exchange of paper between pharmacy teams and patients, assisting infection control.
- [Contractors are now being encouraged to register for RTEC](#) and more than three quarters of pharmacy organisations have now done so.
- NHSBSA, DWP and the RTEC steering group plan to allow the expansion of the DWP RTEC functionality to additional pharmacy contractors shortly.
- PSNC published an [RTEC benefits case study](#) (CP ITG Vice Chairman, David Broome).

4a

Consider the development of apps, wearables and technologies in healthcare

Relevant webpages include: [/apps](#)

NHS App

- [NHS App](#) has reached [more than 10 million users and become the UK's most popular app](#) with over 6 million new users since the COVID-19 vaccination status service was added on 17th May 2021. The NHS App is available on the Google Play store and the Apple App store.
- The NHS App team are working on [further features](#) including: *Personal Health Records (PHRs) integration with NHS App*: The first supplier, Patients Know Best, was made available in the NHS App from April 2020 and more are expected to go live in late 2021.

Tool quality and tool frameworks

- NICE is [consulting on its plans to amend health technology evaluation](#). This plan is intended to enable quicker innovation of personalised medicine and digital health technologies.
- Digital Health explored the [clinical and regulatory factors of Mobile messaging platforms](#).
- British Medical Journal (BMJ) [analysed over 20,000 mobile health apps on the Google Play Store the majority of which did not properly explain how data was being protected](#).
- Davey Winder, data security expert explored the [design and use of health-related apps](#).

Apps and tools

- [NHS website launched newly designed public-facing profile for pharmacies](#). The new pharmacy profiles aim to better meet the needs of patients, feature improved support for mobile devices and meet modern accessibility standards.
- ORCHA (the Organisation for the Review of Care and Health Apps) published '[Digital Health in the UK, National Attitudes and Behaviour Research](#)', after surveying those who use health apps and those who do not, to provide a snapshot of app use across UK regions and across demographics. Medtech News [reported on the related findings](#).
- Digital Health reported [on the launch of NHS Digital Weight Management Programme](#).
- NHS Test and Trace app [expected to be used into 2022, contracts suggest](#).
- [The Government launched COVID Pass Verifier app for businesses to more easily verify the vaccination status or offer proof of a negative test](#).
- [Over three million records were uploaded to the Welsh COVID-19 passport service on launch day](#).
- [A digital physiotherapy tool may save over £1m annually in Wales, pilot results suggest](#).
- [BT reported digital transformation in healthcare](#), 97% of people who've communicated with the health service since the beginning of the pandemic have done so digitally. And 80% of UK health providers believe the need to deliver better remote care is a main driver of digital transformation.

- [Combining consumer technology and clinical needs will make health information universally accessible](#), the vice president of Google Health said.

GP tools

- Babylon [announced plans to become a public company following a £2.9bn merger](#).
- GP at Hand [hit a new milestone of 100,000 patients on their GP practice list](#).
- [Over 120 GP practices in London and Manchester have deployed a telephony solution from X-on](#).
- A GP practice in Milton Keynes [has partnered up with Livi to offer video consultations for patients which includes weekend and evening appointments](#).

Artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics

- HeartFlow tech company [explored how gender inequalities might be tackled with help from AI](#).
- NHS Shared Business Services (SBS) [has issued a tender calling for intelligent automation \(IA\) vendors that supply “off the shelf” automation solutions](#) which would ease NHS administrative task work. The 48-month framework will allow NHS organisations to purchase IA services from pre-approved suppliers, streamlining the process of implementing IA in the health service.
- Pulse reported that [NHSX and NHS England are considering the viability of a wider roll out of an AI triage model based on that used by Babylon](#).
- NHS AI Lab’s [“AI in Health and Care Award” backed a further 38 projects](#) with £36 million of funding. These will be backed by NHSX and Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC).
- The UK’s medicines watchdog [has vowed to improve interoperability and collaboration across the health system through smart solutions such as AI](#).
- AI has been used to predict the structures of almost every protein made by the human body. [The development could help the discovery of new medicines](#).
- [The pandemic has shifted views on AI and data use across industries including within the NHS](#).
- Robotics & Autonomous Systems (UK-RAS) published the report, [Preparing the Workforce for 2030: Skills and Education for Robotics & Autonomous Systems](#).

About CP ITG

CP ITG voting members nominated by AIMp, CCA, NPA, PSNC, and RPS: **Matthew Armstrong (Chair)**, Steve Ash, David Broome (Vice Chair), Sibby Buckle, Darryl Dethick, David Evans, Nick Kaye, Sunil Kochhar, Fin McCaul, Graham Phillips, George Radford, Ravi Sharma, Craig Spurdle, Iqbal Vorajee and Heidi Wright.

The wider group: Other pharmacy representatives, system supplier representatives and representatives from NHSE&I, NHS Digital, NHSX and NHSBSA.

Secretariat: Dan Ah-Thion.

Social media: To publicly tweet about the group/meeting use: *#cpitg*

Date of last main meeting: Wednesday 22nd September 2021.

Next main meetings: 17th November 2021, 9th March 2022, 8th June 2022 and 21st September 2022.

Comments or feedback: Comments that support progress on the priority areas, can be provided by emailing Dan Ah-Thion (it@psnc.org.uk).

About CP ITG: The Group was formed in 2017 by [PSNC](#), [NPA](#), [RPS](#), [CCA](#) and [AIMp](#). The meetings are attended by members representing the five organisations and representatives from [pharmacy system suppliers](#), [NHSBSA](#), [NHS Digital](#), [NHSE&I](#), and [NHSX](#). Further information on the group can be found on the [CP ITG webpage](#).