

Next steps for pharmacy IT and inputs into the 10-Year Health Plan

Community Pharmacy IT Group feedback

Last updated: 2025

Who are the participants within Community Pharmacy IT Group (CP ITG)?

Pharmacy Sector



Policy teams & NHS tech teams



Pharmacy IT Suppliers



Plus other suppliers

About the consultation and the feedback



Government 10 year health plan

The government is undertaking a programme of engagement to develop a 10 Year Health Plan to support the NHS and its impact.



Other member bodies

Community Pharmacy England and the other member bodies which take part with CP ITG submitted their own submissions into this enquiry, but also have a joined-up view of key digital priorities for community pharmacy on many of these matters



CP ITG response and how it gathered inputs for this feedback

Collating these inputs involved past pharmacy team surveys amongst the network of 10,000+ pharmacies, conducting sessions with the Community Pharmacy IT Group, separate sessions with each of the pharmacy bodies, holding a future IT pharmacy workshops, and gathering ongoing feedback from pharmacy teams. The list of priorities was shared with the wider Community Pharmacy IT Group for input. The CP ITG response relates to views from pharmacy representatives and takes into account of IT system supplier representative feedback. It focuses only on those areas concerning NHS community pharmacy IT.



CP ITG view aligned other policy

Our view is deeply aligned to:

- CPE's response to the 10-year health plan questionnaire
- Government's need for three big shifts for NHS reform - from analogue to digital, from treatment to prevention and from hospital to community
- King's Fund [10 Year Vision for Community Pharmacy](#),
- the NHS Long Term Plan,
- the [care closer to home agenda as set out by NHS Confederation](#),
- [Kings Fund Digital enablers for care closer to home \(2024\)](#), [Making care closer to home a reality \(2024\)](#)

The government are seeking views to inform the 10-Year Health. The CP ITG and its member bodies are feeding in on the digital and other reform needs

Overview of critical challenges and enablers

An overview of critical projects is set out below. These items will be further explained on other slides,

For each of these projects (and others) continue to develop: *Year 1: Plan and begin, Year 2–5: Mature, Year 6+: Further optimise*

Increase NHS IT investment & assurance

Expand NHS DSIC

NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care (DSIC)

Universal NHS BaRS

Booking and Referral Standards

MYS APIs

Service record APIs (Manage Your Service (MYS))

NHS GPC UR / AR further pharmacy uses

GP Connect Update Record / Access Record

IP IT: solution diversity and quality

Independent Prescribing IT: multi suppliers & IT enhancement

Expand PRSB standards: CPDS & CIS

Community Pharmacy Data Standard & Core Info Standard from Professional Record Standards Body

EPS enhancement

Electronic Prescription Service

Implement NHS Care Identity Service (CIS) 2

Integrate NHS App with pharmacy systems

Explore pathology improvements

Standardise Community Pharmacy data flow

Improve NHSmail access

Domains A-F (see other slides)

Challenges and enablers for tech use in health and care: six domains



A. Systems & services IT

Empower the community pharmacy sector with robust IT solutions for delivering NHS pharmacy services



B. Data flow, standards & IT communications

Facilitate the structured flow of information to and from community pharmacies



C. Electronic health records

Enable community pharmacies to record and access critical patient information to support direct care, benefiting both patients and healthcare workers



D. Referrals & appointments

Booking referral and appointment information must be able to be sent between pharmacies and NHS service providers quickly, safely and in a format that is useful to clinicians and patients



E. Digital patient services & prescriptions

Improve patients digital relationship with their pharmacy through the NHS App and other apps, to help their understanding of appointments and medications



F. Connectivity & data security

Ensure robust security, simplify login processes, and provide reliable connectivity and IT infrastructure for patients and pharmacies



Promoting IT solutions and clarity via

NHS DSIC (Digital Services for Integrated Care)

What is it: DSIC & Pharmacy NHS service IT framework

- **Overview:** A pharmacy equivalent of GP IT futures, tech detail for suppliers: [NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care \(DSIC\)](#)
- **Clarity:** A framework for the development NHS England requires
- **Focused:** The framework provides incentives for development, and timelines
- **Alignment:** The framework aligns with CP long-term objectives

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Funding issues:** Limited opportunity for IT suppliers of NHS pharmacy IT
- **Interoperability:** Lags behind other sectors outside of health & care
- **Lack of comprehensive long-term plan:** Regarding commissioning planning
- **Supplier uncertainty:** Struggles for new market entrants and existing assured suppliers to obtain clarity to support longer-term IT roadmaps

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Resource increase:** More support for NHS England IT assurance teams
- **MYS APIs:** Progress on service [NHSBSA Manage Your Service APIs](#)
- **Investment:** Expand DSIC community pharmacy IT plans
- **Communication:** Enhance stakeholder engagement including with IT suppliers

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Innovation and diversity:** Facilitate a marketplace of advanced IT solutions
- ✓ **Simplification:** Enable easier system changes
- ✓ **Influence:** Ensure there is NHS England control over IT quality and features
- ✓ **Alignment:** Data and information flow meets NHS and patient needs

Empower the community pharmacy sector with robust IT solutions for delivering NHS pharmacy services through an expanded NHS DSIC pharmacy framework

The NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care

The screenshot shows the NHS Digital website page for 'Digital Services for Integrated Care'. The page features the NHS England logo at the top left, a navigation menu with links for Services, Data, Cyber, Developer, News, and About, and a search icon. The main heading is 'Digital Services for Integrated Care', followed by a sub-heading 'Digital Services for Integrated Care' and a paragraph: 'We are improving digital products across care settings to support and enable an integrated care system, working with technology suppliers to deliver a choice of commonly assured, intuitive and innovative products and services.' Below this, there is a 'Page contents' section with links for 'Top of page', 'What we do', 'Why we are expanding our reach', 'Frameworks', 'Digital tools to support modern ways of working within general practice', 'The Buying Catalogue', 'Give us your feedback', and 'Contact us'. The main content area includes a paragraph: 'The Digital Services for Integrated Care model aims to give the people that use digital clinical systems a wider range of assured products and services, whilst also providing more opportunities for suppliers.' and a section titled 'What we do' with a paragraph: 'Our purpose is to provide healthcare professionals with digital products and services that help them provide the best patient care, reduce burden and provide greater value for money.' and a list of bullet points: 'Our work includes: publishing standards and capabilities to help suppliers meet technical and clinical requirements; defining assurance processes, so that buyers know that what is available is fit for purpose'.

A program of work for NHS England's tech teams with IT suppliers supporting NHS pharmacy service provision

- Service elements have entered into such arrangements during recent years
- CP ITG continues to feed back this can work well to drive up IT system quality
- DSIC has also incorporated GP IT Futures
- Items within DSIC have a specific protocols e.g. timelines for technical specifications and clear version control making things clearer for NHS IT technical teams and IT suppliers



Critical challenge & enabler: Expansion of the pharmacy information flow standard

What is it: PRSB's CP data standard

- **PRSB:** Professional Record Standards Body creates/improves standards
- **CP data standard (CPDS):** Info flow, [CPDS](#) notifications to and from pharmacy
- **Purpose:** Ease healthcare worker burden, improve safety & data flow
- **Existing example:** NHS flu vaccine note to GP (coding by NHSE TD)

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Development:** PRSB expanded standard needs coding – NHSE TD
- **Current scope limits:** Info flow only between pharmacy & GP systems
- **Funding:** Require NHSE financial support – commission of PRSB

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Expand standards:** Broaden info flow standard, so in use for more scenarios
- **Support development:** Standardise pharmacy IT systems
- **Fund workstream:** Invest in NHS pharmacy IT development
- **Enhance communication:** Improve stakeholder & supplier engagement

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Improved experience:** Better information exchange
- ✓ **Enhanced software:** Boost in quality and functionality
- ✓ **Interoperability:** Seamless system integration
- ✓ **Better outcomes:** Improved patient care and experience

Facilitate the structured flow of information to and from community pharmacies through expanded and coded CP data standard to enable more structured notifications and referrals



Service data record APIs

(for Manage Your Service (MYS))

What is it: PRSB's CP data standard

- **Interoperability APIs:** Reduce double data entry for pharmacies
- **Pharmacy IT goals:** Part of 2019 NHS Pharmacy Framework vision
- **Service integration:** Enhances NHS and pharmacy service alignment
- **Streamlined processes:** Facilitates efficient service record sharing

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Double data entry:** Adds workload to pharmacy teams
- **Administrative delays:** Service claims take significant time
- **API implementation:** Lags in NHS and supplier timelines to carry out work
- **Insufficient details:** Technical clarity may be lacking for suppliers

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Accelerate APIs:** Expedite NHSBSA and supplier interoperability efforts
- **Supplier collaboration:** Share drafts and specifications early
- **Technical guidance:** Provide clear instructions and updates
- **Capacity boost:** Enhance resources for API development

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Efficient admin:** More time for clinical tasks, less pharmacy data entry
- ✓ **Enhanced service data:** Broader pharmacy data regarding outcomes
- ✓ **Public health:** Data supports improved public health
- ✓ **Service evaluation:** Data supports service evaluation and improvement

Streamlining pharmacy IT to reduce admin and enhance NHS integration.

Critical challenge & enablers for Electronic Health Records



What is it: electronic health records

- **Definition:** Digital version of patient health records
- **Purpose:** Sharing info among healthcare providers
- **Example:** Pharmacy care updates visible to health care workers & the patient
- **Standardisation:** [PRSB Core info standards](#) for data flow coded and used

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Patient repetition:** Repeating info across care settings and creating clinical risk
- **Limited access:** Pharmacy often lack info provided in an integrated way
- **Separate systems:** Extra logins, & non-integrated info e.g. separate portal
- **Standards gap:** Suppliers have to integrate with each record system instead of integrate with a unified standard and API e.g. ShCRs, GP system and GPC

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Update programme:** Comprehensive pharmacy updates
- **Mandate alignment:** Align ShCR projects with Access/Update Record
- **Adopt NHS APIs:** Universal adoption, and NHS records APIs unifies record systems
- **Development:** Suppliers integrating to 1 record system, can integrate with any other

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Standardised access:** Streamlined onboarding pharmacy IT processes (NHS DSIC)
- ✓ **Data integration:** Pharmacy data in NHS records
- ✓ **Appropriate access:** Community pharmacy info access
- ✓ **Enhanced quality:** Better software and improved patient care

Enable community pharmacies to record and access critical patient information to support direct care, benefiting both patients and healthcare workers



Critical challenge & enabler: NHS Booking and Referral Standards (BaRS)

What is it?

- **Definition:** interoperability standard for IT systems
- **Purpose:** enable safe and quick info transfer
- **Ambition:** available in all care settings
- **Resource:** [BaRS information](#)

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Unstructured communication:** verbal email or post referrals
- **Cumbersome process:** burden for staff and patients
- **Hindered follow-up:** limits optimal care
- **Broader application needed:** potential for expansion to appointments & any pharmacy service

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Universal adoption:** expand BaRS in all directions
- **Pathology improvements:** enhance blood test ordering
- **Onward referrals:** include secondary care optometry dentistry
- **Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) standards:** re-use BaRS for various referrals

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Seamless experience:** improved patient care
- ✓ **Operational efficiency:** reduce admin burdens
- ✓ **Unified flow:** universal info transfer method
- ✓ **Optimal care:** enhanced follow-up opportunities

Booking referral and appointment information must be able to be sent between pharmacies and NHS service providers quickly, safely and in a format that is useful to clinicians and patients



Critical challenge & enabler: Independent Prescribing IT within pharmacy

What is it: Independent prescribing IT pathfinder

- **Pathfinder programme:** [NHS England IP IT CP initiative](#)
- **Purpose:** enable community pharmacist prescriber support
- **Opportunity:** integrate with primary care services
- **Details:** Information link

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Supplier limitation:** only one supplier assured
- **CP ITG principle:** need multiple suppliers
- **Scope clarity:** clarify long-term IT scope
- **Insight capture:** understand IT development needs

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Encourage suppliers:** robust process for multiple suppliers
- **Assurance capacity:** support multiple IT suppliers
- **Pathfinder insights:** capture and share learnings
- **Marketplace:** create diverse IT solutions market

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Innovative marketplace:** diverse IT solutions for pharmacies
- ✓ **Fit-for-purpose IT:** improved pharmacy systems
- ✓ **Job satisfaction:** enhance staff satisfaction & skill retention in sector
- ✓ **Care closer to home:** patients having fewer visits to walk-in centres

Develop Independent Prescribing IT to support primary care, integrate pathways, and create an innovative marketplace for pharmacy solutions



Critical challenge & enabler: Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) next generation

What is it: EPS NextGen

- **Definition:** [EPS NextGen](#) would be an advanced version of current EPS
- **Purpose:** ensure seamless prescription processing
- **Tech:** built on Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) standards
- **Vision:** enhancable, and aligned to paperless and net zero goals

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Outdated technology:** underlying tech created in the 2000s
- **Limited trackability:** prescription status tracking issues
- **eRD clunkiness:** improvements needed in electronic repeat dispensing
- **Prescription limits:** issues with multi-item prescriptions (max of four items)

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Resource allocation:** more resources for EPS team
- **Re-platforming:** move towards FHIR-based EPS for all EPS suppliers
- **Enhancements:** improve Electronic Repeat Dispensing & FP10 (MDA) forms
- **Single-item prescribing:** enable easier item management to overcome limits

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Operational efficiency:** streamlined prescription process
- ✓ **Environmental impact:** move towards paperless system
- ✓ **Global leadership:** maintain England's position as a leader of e-prescriptions
- ✓ **Patient experience:** enhanced service quality

Developing EPS next generation enhances prescription processing efficiency, adopts FHIR standards, and supports environmental goals

Critical challenge & enabler: Patient apps



What is it: patient apps

- **Definition:** digital tools for health management for patients
- **Purpose:** streamline medication orders, medicines info and appointments
- **Example:** NHS App and other health apps
- **Integration:** connect with pharmacy systems

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Patient expectations:** seamless digital interaction needed
- **Current progress:** enhancements in initial stages
- **Resource need:** further development required
- **Consistency:** ensure uniform experience across apps & open NHS App APIs

Enablers (recommendations)

- **NHS App integration:** link with pharmacy systems
- **Resource allocation:** fund ongoing development
- **Enhance functionality:** improve medicine tracking
- **Consistent experience:** uniform user experience

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Enhanced care:** better patient care and outcomes
- ✓ **Improved experience:** seamless patient interaction
- ✓ **Operational efficiency:** streamlined processes
- ✓ **Patient satisfaction:** increased user satisfaction

Improve patients digital relationship with their pharmacy through the NHS App and other apps, to help their understanding of appointments and medications



Critical challenge & enabler: NHS Care Identity Service (CIS)

What is it: NHS Care Identity Service (CIS)

- **Definition:** upgrade to CIS2
- **Purpose:** internet-based access
- **Technology:** standards-based solution
- **Vision:** secure, auditable access

Challenges (problem overview)

- **Workload:** multiple portal logins
- **Complexity:** managing various systems
- **Security:** maintaining data protection
- **Integration:** aligning different systems

Enablers (recommendations)

- **Resource allocation:** support CIS2 transition
- **Training:** educate staff on new systems
- **Standardisation:** adopt consistent protocols
- **Collaboration:** engage stakeholders

Impact and benefits

- ✓ **Efficiency:** streamlined access to data
- ✓ **Security:** enhanced data protection
- ✓ **Accessibility:** internet-based access
- ✓ **Compliance:** meet regulatory standards

Ensure robust security, simplify login processes, and provide reliable connectivity and IT infrastructure for patients and pharmacies



All proposed items for domain A



A1. Robust IT solutions

Robust IT solutions are available to deliver pharmacy NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) services



A3. Vigorous NHS pharmacy IT supplier framework

Expanded NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care pharmacy IT to incentivise innovation and alignment to CPCF developments and assist management of supplier capacity



A4. Standardised patient interaction capture

IT standards to ease capture, and log these for clinical purposes to capture the workload impacts



A2. NHS technical specifications

to promote a robust pharmacy services IT solutions marketplace



A5. AI-supported clinical practice

To enable teams to spend more time providing care to patients

All proposed items for domain B



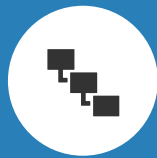
B1. Expanded Community Pharmacy Data Standard

Enabling data flow to and from pharmacies with other parts of health and care



B2. Structured message capabilities

To and from pharmacy systems and other parts of health and care



B3. Service record data APIs

To reduce the need for pharmacy teams to perform double data entry



B4. Optimized NHSmail model

Developed for the pharmacy sector



B5. Standardized practices

Using standards within systems such as system transfer minimum datasets



B6. Unified NHS pharmacy datasets

With simple profile updating for accuracy and no double data entry required e.g. NHS Profile Manager and NHS Service Finder have been expanded/interoperable with future related APIs

All proposed items for domain C



C1. Integrated records system

Enabling seamlessly viewing and updating systems, i.e. the use of: NHS GP Connect 'Direct Care APIs', Shared Care Record integration and expansion of PRSB Core information standard, and future NHS coding/APIs so that a supplier integrating with any records system can easily plug into other records systems (e.g. ShCRs)



C2. Shared Care Record integration

ShCRs pull and push information via NHS GP Connect (Direct Care APIs)



C3. National Care Records Service (NCRS) enhancement

Using ShCR and GP Connect links and information (within NCRS portal and NCRS integrated uses)



C4. Access to appropriate genomics information

For pharmacy

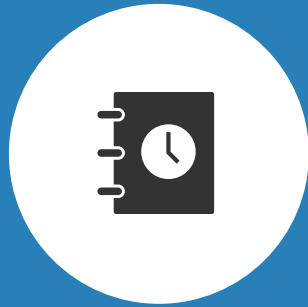


C5. Patients can share data

E.g. mobile and wearables data back to their pharmacy/records



D. All proposed items for domain D



D1. NHS Bookings and Referrals Standard (BaRS) expansion

Expand the BaRS to support appointments and integration across pharmacy and other sectors' systems.



D2. Patient appointment management

Can be done effectively in NHS App and pharmacy apps. Pharmacy & NHS systems (including NHS National Booking Service) integrated into BaRS, ensuring seamless appointment integration



D3. Face-to-face and remote consultation

Supported by pharmacy IT



All proposed items for domain E



E1. NextGen Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)

Includes single-item prescribing, eMDAs, standard doses, improved eRD, and future EPS enhancements.



E2. Digital patient-pharmacy relationship

Patients can send and receive information, and patients, plus other EPS users can see, track and be notified about the prescription status and other services



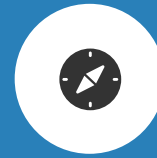
E3. Standardised medicine orders

Pharmacies are sighted of these, whichever IT is used



E4. Planned Drug Tariff IT changes

Ensure changes are properly planned, especially to patient medication record systems.



E5. Pharmacy service visibility

Patients and others can easily see which pharmacies deliver which services via the NHS website and NHS App.



E6. Optimized Independent Prescribing IT

For the pharmacy sector



F. All proposed items for domain F



F1. Straightforward security measures

Patients and pharmacies enjoy non-duplicative usable security measures - maintained through the Data Security and Protection Toolkit



F2. Seamless login experiences

Easier login with NHSmail and NHS Care Identity Service (CIS2), reducing the need for Smartcards and excess passwords



F3. Robust connectivity & equipment

Such as WiFi, mobile, paperless, contingencies. Robust hardware/software, and clinical devices

A reminder of critical challenges and enablers

An overview of critical projects is set out below.

For each of these projects (and others) continue to develop: *Year 1: Plan and begin, Year 2–5: Mature, Year 6+: Further optimise*

Increase NHS IT investment & assurance

Expand NHS DSIC

NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care (DSIC)

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Independent Prescribing IT: multi suppliers & IT enhancement

Expand PRSB standards: CPDS & CIS

Community Pharmacy Data Standard & Core Info Standard from Professional Record Standards Body

EPS enhancement

Electronic Prescription Service

Implement NHS Care Identity Service (CIS) 2

Integrate NHS App with pharmacy systems

Explore pathology improvements

Standardise Community Pharmacy data flow

Improve NHSmail access

Domains A-F (see other slides)

Conclusions: key recommendations



Increased IT funding & support

Provide more resources for NHS England's Transformation Directorate's assurance teams to expedite interactions with IT suppliers and enable a clear long-term plan for community pharmacy service commissioning.



Improved patient experience

Integrate the NHS App with pharmacy systems to enable patients better access to information on appointments, medications, and digital services.



Expanded pharmacy IT marketplace

Expand the NHS Digital Services for Integrated Care pharmacy IT workstream to create a more robust marketplace of viable IT solutions for community pharmacies.



Streamlined data integration

Enhance communication and stakeholder engagement between NHS England and pharmacy IT suppliers to improve data flow, standards, and IT communications between pharmacies and other providers.

Our recommendations would help address digital challenges and enablers to enhance patient care, data integration, and digital services across the sector

Discussion, thanks, and further information

Contact CP ITG secretariat and CPE IT lead for queries:

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Note: This slideset is an abridged version and the full version of this slideset is also available upon request