

Community pharmacy IT progress update: Spring 2025

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

The updates are categorised into the work plan areas below.

- [Community pharmacy IT developments: overview](#)
- [Establishing data flows & IT standards](#);
- [Developing robust services IT & systems](#);
- [Digital prescriptions & services](#);
- [Electronic health records usage](#);
- [Straightforward security & connectivity](#);
- [Policy and general updates](#);
- [Seamless referrals & appointments](#); and
- [Optimal principles across all pharmacy IT](#).

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@cpe.org.uk. These updates are also available within html format at: cpe.org.uk/itupdate.

Community pharmacy IT developments: overview

[Overview of current pharmacy IT priorities](#)

NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care, and the CP ITG have identified key IT priorities for pharmacy. These include:

- the Professional Record Standards Body (PRSB) Community Pharmacy Data Standard;
- the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) IT;
- electronic health records;
- service data APIs;
- Booking and Referral Standards (BaRS); and
- the next generation of EPS.

The CP ITG actively supports these projects, with Community Pharmacy England working alongside the NHS to advance these initiatives. These priorities align with the groups 2025-updated [CP ITG's vision of pharmacy IT](#) and the IT-related aspects outlined in the [Nuffield Trust's Vision for Community Pharmacy](#). Similarly, the Primary Care Recovery Plan integrates digital elements consistent with these priorities, such as [GP Connect](#) Update Record, GP Connect Access Record, and [BaRS](#) for pharmacy services.

NHS England continues to work on a framework to incentivise community pharmacy IT system supplier development to align with the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF). They aim to support an open supplier market and have involved pharmacy and supplier representatives in developing their approach. NHS England's Transformation Directorate plans to help community pharmacy suppliers transition to the [Digital Services for Integrated Care \(DSIC\)](#) framework. In preparation for the meeting, group members have requested updates on DSIC, including news about:

- additional IT development relevant to the four assured suppliers; and
- potential processes for a second intake of suppliers that meet the necessary standards.

EPS and the detained estate

NHS England's Health and Justice Information Service (NHSE HJIS) updated the group during its [June 2024 meeting](#). Since then, NHSE HJIS has worked collaboratively with stakeholders to prepare for the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) rollout in this care setting. NHS England recently [announced](#) that, between late February and May 2025, EPS will be fully implemented across Detained Estate healthcare services in England. This phased rollout will enable prison prescribers to electronically issue 'To Take Out' (TTO) and urgent prescriptions to community pharmacies, eliminating the need for paper FP10 forms.

Details for pharmacy teams regarding the free-of-charge 0015 HMP exemption code: Patients who are not otherwise exempt from prescription charges will be exempt for medications provided by prisons. For such prescriptions, the prescriber's address section must include the initials 'HMP' or 'YOI' (Young Offenders Institution), confirming the exemption. In these cases, patients are not required to sign a declaration on the back of the prescription form or Token. The 0015 exemption category is specifically for HMP prescriptions for individuals released from prison.

NHS Vaccine Digital Service

The Vaccination Digital Services team within NHS England's Transformation Directorate is dedicated to advancing digital solutions that enhance the delivery of NHS vaccination programs. They aim to increase vaccination uptake, improve coverage, and address health inequalities. The team plays a key role in achieving NHS England's vaccination strategy goals by implementing digital services that simplify and expand access to vaccinations.

One of the team's current core projects is the ongoing development and phased rollout of the [Record a vaccination service \(RAVS\)](#). To be further piloted in Community Pharmacy (CP), RAVS is designed to record vaccination events in various settings, including hospitals, maternity services, and community pharmacies. This tool aims to streamline the recording and managing of vaccination events while offering NHS England valuable insights into user needs, with the potential for national rollout.

The group reviewed NHS vaccination IT strategy last year, and inputs were centred on several key themes: System Integration, appointment accessibility, usability and Supplier diversity:

1. System integration

- a. Expand the BaRS system to incorporate appointment IT standards.
- b. Integrate pharmacy systems and NHS systems to streamline appointment management and communication.
- c. Stock management integration.
- d. Stock ordering integration.
- e. Integrated records reporting to the patient's record held by the GP.
- f. Record-keeping support to fulfil pharmacy record-keeping requirements.

2 Appointment accessibility

- a. Allow patients to view and modify appointments using the NHS and pharmacy apps. (item remaining on the CP ITG NHS App wishlist document).
- b. Integrate Pharmacy & NHS systems into BaRS to ensure seamless appointment management, including NHS National

3 Usability

- a. Usable systems.
- b. Login with Care Identity Service 2 to reduce login burden (like 'login with Facebook').
- c. Robust support and training.
- d. Robust resilience.
- e. Link to payment systems e.g. NHS Manage Your Service APIs.
- f. Avoidance of double data entry - does the data only flow to NHS England, or is the data accessible anonymously?

4 Supplier diversity

- a. Enable multiple system suppliers to contribute to developing vaccination service modules.
- b. Diversity promotes flexibility, innovation, and continuous improvement in vaccination services.
- c. Feedback suggests a marketplace of supplier options can enable improved competition.

Care Identity Service (CIS) and multi-factor authentication (MFA)

The 2025 Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPTK) introduces a new mandatory question concerning using multi-factor authentication (MFA) within clinical systems. Both Smartcards and CIS2 solutions meet the current DSPTK MFA criteria.

NHS Care Identity Service 2 ([CIS2](#)) Authentication is a secure service used by health and care professionals in England to access national clinical information systems.

Previously, the NHS CIS team presented updates on the planned deprecation of CIS1, which many pharmacy suppliers currently rely on. CIS1 requires the use of physical Smartcards. CIS2, however, introduces modern authentication options not supported by CIS1, such as:

- Security keys (e.g., dongles).
- Microsoft Authenticator.
- The NHS CIS2 Authentication iPad app.

Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) suppliers are encouraged to prepare to transition to CIS2 ahead of the final CIS1 deprecation date on 28th February 2027, although there are expected support impacts before this deadline. NHS England is focused on the ongoing development of new authentication options and exploring opportunities to reduce reliance on HSCN.

Feedback from the group has emphasised the need to minimise HSCN dependency and enhance the ability to use NHS IT mobile devices, which would benefit pharmacy teams.

CP ITG suppliers also participated in a CIS2 and MFA discussion on 26th February 2025.

[Primary Care Cyber Security Readiness](#)

The Joint Cyber Unit within the Department for Health & Social Care and NHS England assesses cybersecurity readiness and capabilities across the primary care sector, including community pharmacy, general practice, optometry, and dentistry.

As part of this effort, the unit has conducted interviews to gain deeper insights into cybersecurity challenges and needs. Additionally, a comprehensive survey has been launched to evaluate various aspects of cybersecurity, including:

- readiness and preparedness;
- risk management;
- behaviours and attitudes; and
- good practices.

The group previously contributed feedback on these topics during an earlier NHS Digital and Templars study, and lessons from those study are being incorporated into this current initiative, as well as new research building on that.

Pharmacy and supplier representatives are all encouraged to [complete the survey](#) by **6th April 2025**. The findings from these interviews and the survey will help NHS England and DHSC enhance their understanding of cybersecurity in primary care and identify how best to provide support for healthcare organisations including community pharmacies.

Establishing data flows & IT standards

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

[User research into NHS 111 referral data flow to pharmacy](#)

NHS England's Transformation Directorate has data regarding NHS 111 referrals. This data is currently shared with 111 Providers, Commissioners, Directory of Services (DoS) Leads and hospitals with Streaming and Redirection tools. A user research team is continuing to talk to

health and social care organisations – including pharmacy professionals, about whether the data would also be relevant to pharmacy teams.

[NHSBSA's Open Data Portal \(ODP\) and related survey](#)

The [NHSBSA's ODP](#) is the home of data NHSBSA releases to the public. It lets users:

- filter and download datasets;
- access Open Data via an Application programming interface (API); and
- view the metadata and data in a single place.

It includes prescription item analysis and pharmacy-related data.

NHSBSA is surveying the content within the ODP (closing at 9am on Monday 24th March 2025). Group members making use of this data to support pharmacy service provision are encouraged to put comments into our [IT feedback form](#) prior to 9am on Monday 24th March 2025.

Survey questions include:

- Thinking about the dataset(s) you have used, did the data meet your needs?
- Which new datasets, if any, would you like to see on the ODP?

[Standards and interoperability](#)

- Community Pharmacy England reported on [GP Connect: Update Record developments](#).
- Pharmacy team members using [GP Connect](#) Update Record / Access Record / Booking and Referral Standards (BaRS) who want to share feedback (or speak with NHSE's TD user research team members) should email it@cpe.org.uk. NHS researchers may also visit further pharmacy teams using these functions.

Developing robust services IT & systems

Relevant webpages include: [/servicesit](#) and [/systems](#)

[Pharmacy First IT: General](#)

NHS England and its Transformation Directorate are continuing to work with four IT system suppliers to assure Pharmacy First functionalities:

- [Cegedim](#)
- [PharmOutcomes](#)
- [Positive Solutions](#)
- [Sonar Informatics](#)

Previously, the system suppliers updated their NHS-assured IT support for the Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) to incorporate the additional elements of the Pharmacy First service. As a result, pharmacy owners continue to have the option to either:

- Continue using their current IT system supplier for Pharmacy First IT support or
- Transition to another NHS-assured Pharmacy First IT system supplier.

NHS England and suppliers continue to work on the other IT elements coming in post-launch:

- GP Connect Update Record (see also the records section of this report);
- GP Connect Access Record; and
- Booking and Referral Standards (BaRS).

[NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework \(CPCF\) pharmacy IT](#)

- NHS England and Community Pharmacy England have expressed the need for suppliers to receive comprehensive information about the service, including the IT implications and dataset requirements. The [minutes and slides](#) from the group's previous meeting provide further details on the progress of MYS APIs. The MYS API priorities were previously listed

as Discharge Medicine Service (DMS), Pharmacy Contraception Service, Blood Pressure Checking Service, New Medicines Service (NMS) and [Smoking Cessation Service](#). CP ITG pharmacy representatives have continued to report that data entry for services like DMS consumes excessive time for many pharmacy teams. Both NHS England and NHSBSA remain committed to prioritising the progress of the API programme.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and pharmacy

- RPS published a policy document, [Artificial intelligence in pharmacy](#), which outlined how AI can be used to support pharmacy practice and improve patient care.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance

- The UK Government has signed [an international agreement to manage AI products to protect the public from potential misuse](#).
- [The MHRA opened applications for manufacturers and developers of AI medical devices to join their “AI Airlock regulatory sandbox”](#).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and health

- NHS England published [Planning and implementing real-world AI evaluations: Lessons from the AI in Health and Care Award](#).
- [The London Artificial Intelligence Centre for Value-Based Healthcare received £1.8 million from the London Secure Data Environment, funded by NHS England](#).
- NHS Confederation published a guide on [AI in health care: navigating the noise](#). This guide aims to support healthcare leaders in making sense of AI.
- NHS Confederation published [an engagement paper on the effective use of artificial intelligence in NHS communications](#).
- Open Access Government reported [NHS encounter significant obstacles in adopting AI due to its outdated and inefficient IT infrastructure](#), according to leading experts.
- BMJ published [Generative Artificial Intelligence in Primary Care: An Online Survey of UK General Practitioners](#).
- NHS Confederation published [AI in healthcare: navigating the noise - a comprehensive guide supporting healthcare leaders to make sense of AI and explore the art of the possible](#).
- RSPH published [Public health 2040: how technology and AI is reshaping the wider public health workforce](#).
- An online survey of UK GPs by the BMJ revealed [that one in five GPs are using generative AI tools such as ChatGPT in clinical practice](#).
- [AI triage system achieved a 73% reduction in waiting times, according to an NHS study](#).
- Digital Health published an article on [Insights: AI and data. Time to deliver on the promise of AI](#). This discusses AI in real-world challenges (such as outdated infrastructure, tight resources, and cyber security).
- McKinsey & Company published an article on [Reimagining health care industry service operations in the age of AI](#). This explored how health care leaders could use AI to transform their service operations and outlines critical considerations that could help them succeed.
- Ada Lovelace Institute published a report on [Buying AI: Is the public sector equipped to procure technology in the public interest?](#)
- NHS trialed an [AI tool that can predict patients’ risk of heart disease, and risk of early death, using an electrocardiogram](#).
- Open Access Government reported on [AI implementation: could technology help the overburdened NHS?](#)
- Open Access Government reported on [the future of AI and the NHS](#).
- SMF published a report [that outlined the benefits the civil service and public sector can reap by further integrating AI and automation into their user-facing workstreams](#).

- OECD published [Artificial intelligence and the health workforce: perspective from medical associations on AI in health](#).
- UK Authority reported that [NHS Shared Business Services \(SBS\) plans to set up a new procurement framework for AI solutions in healthcare](#).
- [The government announced a new package of AI tools \(jointly nicknamed 'Humphrey'\) to streamline the NHS and other public services](#).

Digital prescriptions & services

Relevant webpages include: [/patientdigitalservices](#), [/apps](#), [nhsapp](#) and [/eps](#)

Independent prescribing IT

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) previously consulted and reported on [changes to the requirements for entry to independent prescribing courses](#). The Pharmaceutical Journal reported that [independent prescribing piloting was to begin across England](#). NHS England continues to [advance](#) independent pharmacy prescribing through the Community Pharmacy Independent Prescribing Pathfinder Programme. Pathfinder sites have been selected to implement prescribing models in three categories: existing community pharmacy services, long-term conditions, and novel services. The rollout of the CLEO SOLO system can begin and this will enable community pharmacists to generate prescriptions via the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS). CLEO SOLO is the sole supplier in the community pharmacy IP space.

Electronic Prescription Service Tracker changes

The EPS team will also be enhancing the EPS clinical prescription tracker replacing the current EPS Prescription Tracker.

EPS information within the NHS App: prescription item readiness

CP ITG pharmacy representatives have long supported the existence of additional EPS statuses – with the caveat that system design must ensure these are easily or automatically recordable to keep the pharmacy team burden low. The group has also supported patients getting relevant messages e.g. 'ready to be collected' – such as via NHS App and other apps. Patients have also requested such a development.

The EPS and NHS App teams have been progressing work since 2022 with EPS system suppliers to surface prescription item readiness. CP ITG sub-group meetings have been held on the topic previously. A CP ITG sub-group also met with the EPS team on 6th August 2024 to discuss the NHSE's TD recent work. Piloting has taken place since late September 2024. All suppliers had been invited to participate, and the rollout will be on a supplier-by-supplier basis. Further considerations will also be considered later - including the possibility of more granular statuses and notifications.

Other NHS account and NHS App updates

- NHS App launched a feature that allows patients to trace the status and readiness of their prescriptions, which has been released on the NHS App.
- NHS England plans to make [a single patient record available to patients through the NHS App](#).
- NHS England published new walk-through videos that show [how to use the NHS App](#) and its features step by step. There are also videos that demonstrate [how to navigate the NHS account](#).
- [NHS App upgrades will enable patients to choose providers, book appointments in more settings and receive test results](#).

Patient digital tools and apps: case studies

- DHSC announced [a pilot which will refer women with a worrying lump to a breast diagnostic clinic through the NHS App](#).
- NHS Couch to 5K app has been [downloaded over 7 million times since it launched in 2016, with 9.3 million NHS Couch to 5K runs started in 2024](#).
- The NHS Federated Data Platform has [introduced two new online tools to enhance transparency and understanding of the programme](#).
- NHS England has claimed [a productivity gain in hospitals since the introduction of its Federated Data Platform last year](#).

Electronic health records usage

Relevant webpages include: [/genomics](#) and [/records](#)

Records: National

- Shared care firm Graphnet examined how [shared care records and personalised medicine might 'prevent hundreds of deaths'](#).
- [DHSC will develop a shared digital platform to allow up-to-date medical information to be shared across the NHS and between care staff](#).

Records: local

- [Mid and South Essex Integrated Care System, in partnership with Orion Health, launched a new Shared Care Record](#) a transformative digital solution designed to revolutionise the delivery of health and care services across mid and south Essex.

Genomics

- Ada Lovelace Institute published a report [Assessing the potential, risks and appropriate role of AI-powered genomic health prediction in the UK health system](#).

Straightforward security & connectivity

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

- Community Pharmacy England published [new guidance to help community pharmacy owners complete the latest Data Security and Protection Toolkit](#) and hosted a [DSPTK webinar \(hosted jointly with the DSPTK team\) \(now available on demand\)](#). Community Pharmacy England also distributed draft template information to IT suppliers so they can consider adapting and making this available to their customers.

NHSmail multi-factor authentication (MFA)

- The NHSmail team previously announced that [multi-factor authentication will become mandatory across the platform for all NHSmail users from 2024](#).
- The NHSmail team previously presented to the group about MFA and NHSmail. MFA is already a requirement for Welsh NHSmail. The group has advised the NHSmail team that clear communication and thorough testing should occur before a full roll-out of MFA across pharmacy NHSmail users. Community Pharmacy England and the NHSmail team have worked on guidance to support the testing of MFA. MFA will be an essential development for NHSmail as it enhances data security, protects the reputation of the NHS, its users, and organisations, and provides increased defence against cyber-attacks. The

NHSmail plan is to make MFA mandatory for all NHSmail users. Community Pharmacy England, working with the NHSmail team, has a prepared [one-page factsheet for pharmacy NHSmail users to guide them in testing MFA \(or adding/removing MFA\)](#).

Changes with the use of legacy Chrome Extension for NHS Credential Management

Previous CP ITG updates included some info about NHS Credential Management. NHSE's TD has provided an update about the legacy Chrome Extension, which does not align with Care Identity Service (CIS) IT. If required, support/questions: iampatforms@nhs.net

Care Identity Service (CIS) 1 deprecation and multi-factor authentication (MFA)

The 2025 Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPTK) introduces a new mandatory question concerning using multi-factor authentication (MFA) within clinical systems. Both Smartcards and CIS2 solutions meet the current DSPTK MFA criteria.

NHS Care Identity Service 2 ([CIS2](#)) Authentication is a secure service used by health and care professionals in England to access national clinical information systems.

Previously, the NHS CIS team presented updates on the planned deprecation of CIS1, which many pharmacy suppliers currently rely on. CIS1 requires the use of physical Smartcards. CIS2, however, introduces modern authentication options not supported by CIS1, such as:

- Security keys (e.g., dongles).
- Microsoft Authenticator.
- The NHS CIS2 Authentication iPad app.

Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) suppliers are encouraged to prepare to transition to CIS2 ahead of the upcoming final CIS1 deprecation dates and service level changes.

Policy updates

Relevant webpages include: [techpolicydev](#)

Future IT and the 10-Year Health Plan (CP ITG)

The NHS England pharmacy team and NHS England's Transformation Directorate (NHSE's TD) are considering further development of NHS pharmacy IT priorities for the current financial year and beyond. They plan to engage with the group further in future sessions.

In initial meetings between NHSE's TD, Community Pharmacy England, and CP ITG Chair, we provided feedback on pharmacy priorities identified by the CP ITG. This includes support for the following developments (in alphabetical order), and we have advised that the CP ITG is open to providing further input:

- Booking and Referral Standards (BaRS);
- Electronic health records and GP Connect;
- Expanded Community Pharmacy Data standard;
- Independent Prescribing IT; and
- NHS App, apps and the next generation of EPS.

A CP ITG workshop was held in August 2024 with pharmacy representatives from each of the CP ITG pharmacy bodies to discuss the proposed next steps to support progress. The group have been updated on the discussions of this meeting and commented on the drafted and earlier versions included within the group's last set of meeting papers documents. See:

- [Next steps for pharmacy IT \(CP ITG\) \(prose version\)](#)
- [Next steps for pharmacy IT \(CP ITG\) \(abridged slides\)](#)

- [Next steps for pharmacy IT \(CP ITG\) \(full slideset\)](#)

The theme across pharmacy requests for IT change (in line with NHS Long Term Plan) relates to a desire for the 'seamless flow of clinical information (interoperability)'. A more seamless flow of clinical information would also help to realise Nuffield Trust's vision for the sector with it being able to support continuous improvement:

- preventing ill health and supporting wellbeing;
- providing clinical care for patients;
- helping patients to live well with medicines; and
- provision of integrated primary care for neighbourhoods.

The updated 'Next Steps' document were shared with NHS England. Related documents were also passed by the CP ITG secretariat to NHS England and in support of the [10-Year Health Plan](#) considerations.

[IT policy: priorities, reports and the future](#)

- NHS England announced a plan to [adopt the Cyber Assessment Framework as its main mechanism for assuring standards on cyber security](#). National Data Guardian announced that [it commented on this](#).
- The NHS announced [a new partnership with libraries across England to help more people access online health services and use the NHS App](#).
- [NHS England has signed a contract with CLEO Systems for the Independent Prescribing in Community Pharmacy Pathfinder Programme](#).
- NHS England's FDP faces legal challenges, [lawyers advised that key aspects of the program lack a lawful basis](#).
- NHS Confederation published [The Darzi investigation: what you need to know](#). The report summarises and analyses Lord Darzi's independent investigation of the NHS in England.
- [Healthcare leaders urged NHS England to unleash the full potential of the NHS App following a critique from Lord Ara Darzi](#). Lord Darzi's review, published on 12 September 2024, said that the NHS App is "not delivering a 'digital-first' experience similar to that found in many aspects of daily life, although there is huge potential".
- NHS published a contract notice for [the Digital Workplace Solutions 2 framework, worth £2.5 billion](#).
- [DHSC set out plans to review clinical risk standards for digital health tech](#).
- Speaking at the Health Excellence Through Technology conference the medical director for transformation at NHS England, said that [fixing digital and data infrastructure is a key national priority](#).
- NHS England launched [Solution Exchange a growing catalogue of products](#) available to Trusts and ICBs (on behalf of ICSs) through the NHS Federated Data Platform. It is a catalyst for data-led innovation providing a safe and secure space for NHS developers to create and test new ideas using notional data.
- DHSC launched a new [Regulatory Innovation Office to help speed up access to technologies that could improve people's lives](#).
- New partnerships backed by public and private sector investment will [trial new ways to tackle cancer and other life-threatening diseases with faster diagnoses and better treatments, deploying innovative technologies and approaches](#).
- Director for the Surgical MedTech Co-operative at the NIHR, shared views about [the biggest opportunities in health tech, and making health tech innovation more visible and successful](#).

- ABHI conducted a survey, [Pulse of the sector:2024 business survey](#). The results indicate that while the health technology sector continues to provide critical life-enhancing technologies, it faces persistent regulatory challenges and NHS barriers that hinder innovation.
- The Prime minister stated that the [NHS must make “much more use of technology”, as he launched a consultation on the future of the health service](#).
- Chancellor pledged to [invest more than £2bn in NHS technology and digital in the Autumn Budget](#).
- The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology confirmed that [it is working on the development of a National Data Library of public sector data](#).
- [NHS England is reviewing its digital clinical safety standards \(DCB 0129 and DCB 0160\) to ensure they align with modern technology and user needs](#). We’re inviting interested parties to register their interest in joining our pre-consultation focus groups for DCB 0129 in February 2025.
- Digital Health revealed [the membership of the key group leading strategy on data and technology for the NHS 10-year health plan](#).
- The Health Foundation's public survey [outlined the findings on attitudes towards health technologies and data – and what they suggest for engaging with the public](#).
- The STACK reported that [NHS announced a new staff collaboration platform called NHS.net Connect that's designed to help staff work together and improve security](#).
- NHS England published a report on [The Innovation Ecosystem Programme-how the UK can lead the way globally in health gains and life sciences-powered growth](#).
- [Chief executive of NHS England, admitted that there is no set date planned for the NHS to become paperless](#).
- Socitm published a report on [Public sector digital trends: beyond borders](#).
- UK Authority reported that [NHS England committed to spending a further £50 million on its NHS.UK portfolio, with a new contract with BJSS and a notice of increased spending with IBM](#).
- Wired Gov reported that [NICE announced proposals to transform its HealthTech programme to drive more technology into the NHS](#).
- Community Pharmacy England and NHS England reported that [EPS will fully extend to Detained Estate healthcare services in England](#).

IT policies: localities, organisations and suppliers

- [The NHS launched a joint tender worth £1.5 billion for suppliers to provide computer hardware](#), including desktop computers, laptops, notebook devices, smartphones, tablets and wearables.
- A module was released to the MYS platform [that enables pharmacy owners to notify their ICB of any temporary closure of their pharmacy instead of using the paper form or emailing the information to ICB pharmacy teams](#).
- Patient safety guidance from NHS England states that [primary care’s IT systems should include clinical decision making support and automatically flag patient safety issues](#).
- Healthcare Financial Management Association published a report, [A guide to business cases for digital projects](#).
- Healthcare Financial Management Association published a report on [the role of digital technologies in financial recovery](#).
- Research by NHS Providers found that [73% of trust leaders believed that funding and financial constraints are the biggest barrier to digital transformation](#).
- The [Community Faster Data Flows \(FDF\)](#) Programme aims to reduce the burden on providers by rationalising current datasets.

- Community Pharmacy England's [Data Security and Protection Toolkit 2025 workshop is available on-demand](#).

IT policy: commentary and requests for the future

- NHS Providers published a report, [Digital transformation survey 2024: challenges, opportunities and priorities for trust leaders](#).
- [Optimisation of technology could help overcome NHS digital transformation hurdles as financial challenges slow investment](#), a report from Royal Philips, a global leader in health technology, revealed.
- ABPI published a report on [Partnering for progress: a data-driven analysis of NHS-industry partnerships](#). The report examined how partnerships between the NHS and the pharmaceutical industry can achieve shared goals of improving population health and enhancing healthcare experiences.
- The Strategy Unit published a report, [Digital downsides: a discussion document](#).
- Former chief digital officer of NHS England stated that [a 'bold commitment' to tech would deliver benefits in the key areas for action identified by Lord Darzi](#).
- The Health Foundation reported that [most people are open to sharing some of their health data to develop AI in the NHS](#).
- TechUK published a report on [Driving Digital Transformation: techUK's Recommendations for Health & Social Care](#).
- The Health Foundation published a briefing on [Trust and confidence in technology-enabled care: a joint analysis with Q](#).
- [The King's Fund called for digital healthcare platforms, including the NHS App, to be more responsive and allow for two-way communications](#).
- Health Tech World reported on [Digital health leaders responses to NHS England's 'back to basics' priorities](#).
- [The Digital Health Networks' advisory panel and councils shared thoughts on what lies ahead in the new year and what they hope to see happen over the next 12 months](#).
- [The Tony Blair Institute conducted a poll which explored public opinion on digital transformation in the NHS](#). It found that 60% of the public supported patients being able to choose where they are referred for treatment. (Also reported by [Digital Health](#)).

Innovation

- A [new study](#) showed that [patients who followed a digital consultation strategy were four times more likely to receive the optimal medication after 12 weeks](#), compared to patients on the traditional care pathway.
- NHS trust ePMA technician examined [the advantages of digitising the pharmacy ordering process](#).
- The Senior lecturer in Health Informatics at the University of Manchester, examined [how the adoption of digital tools in health care can impact health inequalities](#).

Digital inclusion

- [The Health Information and Quality Authority \(HIQA\) has published the results of the National Engagement on Digital Health and Social Care](#). This found that the public are comfortable with digital tech in health care.
- Concerns have been raised that [the government's NHS digital and data plans could exacerbate health inequalities for older adults who do not have access to technology](#), "90% surveyed think that an online health record will help them manage their health between visits to a healthcare professional". The project comprised of a survey of over 2,000 members of the public, and a separate survey of over 1,000 professionals working in health and social care.
- NHS England published an article on [Tackling digital exclusion and health literacy: How libraries can help bridge the gap](#).

Digital capabilities of the workforce

- The chair of Digital Health's CNIO Advisory Panel opined that [clinicians need a culture of education and understanding to get the best out of AI and protect themselves and their patients from inappropriate information](#).
- NHS Digital Academy published an [AI capability framework which aimed to help healthcare workers identify gaps in their current knowledge](#). They launched their basic awareness learning and Beyond the Basics AI training.
- Digital Health reported on [How to equip NHS staff with cyber security skills they will use](#).

Seamless referrals & appointments

Relevant webpages include: [/bookings](#)

- [NHS England's Transformation Directorate's BaRS programme](#) continues to aim to enable [booking and referral information to be sent between NHS service providers in a format that is helpful to clinicians](#). The intention is for BaRS to eventually be available in all care settings. The [minutes and slides from the group's previous meetings](#) contain additional information about BaRS and pharmacy use cases. CP ITG feedback indicated that the BaRS programme should be expanded to incorporate NHS appointment standards.

Optimal principles across all pharmacy IT

Relevant webpage(s) include: [/itworkflow](#) and [/itcontingency](#)

- Pharmacy teams can provide updates about any efforts to move towards more [paperless](#) work by contacting it@cpe.org.uk.

About CP ITG

CP ITG voting members nominated by IPA, CCA, NPA, Community Pharmacy England, and RPS: Matthew Armstrong (Chair), Steve Ash, David Broome (Vice Chair), Darryl Dethick, David Evans, Sanjay Ganvir, Nick Kaye, Fin McCaul, Darren Powell, Sian Retallick, Craig Spurdle, Iqbal Vorajee and Heidi Wright.

The wider CP ITG: Other pharmacy representatives, system supplier representatives and representatives from NHS England pharmacy team, NHS England's Transformation Directorate, NHSBSA, DHSC and PRSB.

Secretariat: [Dan Ah-Thion](#).

Social media: To publicly tweet about the group use: [#cpitg](#)

Date of last main meeting: Wednesday 18th September 2024.

Next main meetings: 4th June 2025, 17th September 2025, 5th November 2025 (to be confirmed), 4th March 2026 (to be confirmed)

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