

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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Pan-Pharmacy NHS IT Group Meeting – October 2007

The Pan-Pharmacy NHS IT Group, which has the remit of ensuring engagement between the profession and all relevant programmes within NHS Connecting for Health, met for the first time on the 4th October 2007. Key points discussed at the meeting are highlighted below.

NHS Healthspace

Healthspace is a secure NHS web service for people who live in England. The proposed HealthSpace strategy is to provide secure online patient access to a range of personal, transaction-based services including appointment booking, access to a patient's Summary Care Record (SCR) and potentially repeat prescription ordering. This will ensure that patients are able to access and alter information easily and quickly.

A rigorous registration process has been put in place for patient access to HealthSpace for the SCR early adopter sites. Consideration is currently being given to the long term arrangements for patient registration for access to the site. A potential option is for pharmacies to support this process by validating a patient's ID in the pharmacy.

The pharmacy network offers accessibility and a trusted location that patients could sign up for access. Patients are likely to visit a pharmacy more often than a GP Practice and this would support the profession's expanding role in managing patient care. Further work will be carried out to consider the practicality of this in more detail.

NHSmail

NHSmail will be piloted in pharmacies in two specific PCT localities prior to national roll out. A system is being put in place to allow the pharmacy bodies to feed into this process and for both the pharmacy bodies and Connecting for Health to receive regular feedback on progress with implementation.

Electronic Prescriptions Service

Over 40 million prescription messages have been issued via the service and 69% of GP Practices and 68% of pharmacies are considered technically live and able to operate Release 1 of the EPS Service. The pharmacy bodies are continuing to urge all pharmacy contractors, if they have not already done so, to contact their chosen system supplier and make arrangements to upgrade to EPS Release 1.

Once enabled, the pharmacy bodies are also advising pharmacists to use the EPS service to dispense prescriptions where practical to ensure that any

problems with the system are identified and can be resolved before EPS becomes business critical. Problems should be reported to pharmacy system suppliers who can escalate the issue to NHS Connecting for Health where necessary.

Press Release Approved by:

Company Chemists Association
Department of Health
Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists
National Pharmacy Association
NHS Connecting for Health
Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee
Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

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