

Bulletin

Broadcast one – January 2010



NHS

Electronic
Prescription
Service

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NEWS

EPS Release 2 Goes Live



Release 2 of the Electronic Prescription Service went live for the first time in July 2009 with the first GP practice and pharmacy pairing in England switched on in Leeds.

[More...](#) (Opens full press release)

Implementation Stages

NHS CFH has published a range of implementation guidance to assist PCTs and SHAs as well as general practices and dispensing contractors to prepare for Release 2.

The guidance explains the four stages of implementation and includes criteria and checklists based on the lessons learned from the initial implementation sites. In time, sample policies and documents will also be added to the site.

The four stages of implementation have been published online on the [EPS pages](#)

[Read more](#) later in the this bulletin.

Patient Feedback

Patients in Leeds have been giving the new Release 2 service the thumbs up. Here's what some of the patients who are already experiencing the benefits had to say:

“It will be great when I can order repeats, and pick up in my lunch hour next to where I work.”

“Great, when can my husband be included?”

“It will save me time, as I work full time and it's always difficult for me to collect a prescription from my GP.”



System Demonstrations – Bringing Release 2 to Life

The EPS team has been busy bringing Release 2 to life using business process scenarios to demonstrate its functionality.

The sessions allowed delegates to see a prescription being prescribed on CSC/TPP's SystemOne, downloaded from the Spine in an instant and then dispensed by Cegedim's Pharmacy Manager in just a few clicks.

Delegates were also shown how to set a nomination; apply an advanced electronic signature; cancel an electronic prescription; repeat dispense; and submit an electronic reimbursement.

The sessions proved very popular and more are being planned.

Here are some of the things that delegates said:

“Started off a bit depressed but ended up very impressed. I know it's early days but I'm actually looking forward to it.”

“Would be good to find a similar way of demonstrating other systems.”

“I think that two hours is possibly a little too short.”

Recent Events

The EPS team have been around the country exhibiting at a number of national conferences.

Last year saw the team conduct live demonstrations of EPS Release 2 at the following events:

- British Pharmaceutical Conference
- Family Doctors Association National Conference
- Pharmacy Show
- RCGP Annual National Conference
- Non-medical Prescribers' Conference
- Dispensing Doctors' Association Conference

A total of 501 delegates at these six events took the opportunity to vote to record what difference they thought EPS Release 2 would make to their practice or pharmacy.

Of the 501 votes cast:

- **343** said it would make things more efficient and help them provide a better service to patients
- **85** said they were unsure or thought it would not make any difference
- **73** said it would make things worse

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THE LATEST POSITION ON EPS

The numbers of Release 1 prescription messages being issued and dispensed are rising each month as preparation for Release 2 gets underway in many parts of the country.

- Over a quarter of a billion prescription messages have been sent so far using EPS Release 1
- Over six hundred thousand of these have been used to dispense prescriptions to date
- On average, over half a million prescription messages were sent every day last week

System suppliers continue to make good progress towards achieving full roll out approval for EPS Release 2. CSC/TPP's SystmOne and Cegedim's Pharmacy Manager are being used at the first sites in Leeds and North East Lincolnshire to prescribe and dispense to patients.

Lloyds' CoMPaSS and Rx Systems' ProScript are the latest systems to receive accreditation to dispense to patients and these systems will shortly be used at a number of sites in Leeds, Nottinghamshire, North East Lincolnshire, the Isle of Wight and Trafford PCTs. Cegedim's Nexphase has received technical accreditation and been deployed to a site in Leeds PCT. Prescribing system INPS Vision has also received technical accreditation and will be deployed shortly to a site in Sunderland PCT.

As additional systems become available more of the [17 initial implementation PCTs](#) will become involved. For a full list of when other prescribing and dispensing systems are scheduled to receive technical accreditation, visit the NHS CFH EPS [supplier status pages](#).

EPS Release 1	
Number of R1 prescription messages	
On 13 Jan 10	Total to date
496,784	287,793,248
Number of R1 messages used for dispensing	
On 13 Jan 10	Total to date
34,186	16,582,685

TIMETABLE FOR SHAs TO APPLY FOR SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTION

Unlike dispensing contractors, prescribers cannot start using EPS Release 2 until their PCT has Secretary of State Direction, authorising that their GP practices can use an EPS Release 2 compliant system to generate electronic prescriptions, signed with an advanced electronic signature. The process to achieve this was outlined in a document sent out by NHS CFH to all PCTs and SHAs in November 2009, which has been published on the [NHS CFH website](#). The timetable with the latest dates is reproduced to the right.

SHArequest submitted to DH mailbox by	Start of Notice Period	Direction in Place by
4 January 2010	1 February 2010	1 May 2010
15 April 2010	1 June 2010	1 September 2010
There will be further opportunities for SHAs to submit requests (the first of which will be no more than four months after April 2010). These dates will be publicised in due course as appropriate.		

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RECENT FAQs

Here are a few of the recent questions that have been raised by clinicians and people working on EPS together with the answers from NHS Connecting for Health.

Q. What if the patient attempts to collect their medication after the electronic prescription has been cancelled?

A. When a dispensing contractor attempts to retrieve the electronic prescription, they will be notified of the cancellation.

Q. When does an electronic prescription expire?

A. Electronic prescriptions follow the same arrangements as paper prescriptions; most electronic prescriptions will therefore expire after six months. An electronic repeat prescription must be dispensed for the first time within six months of the date it was generated and is valid for 12 months from the date it was generated.

Q. If the pharmacy ODS code changes, do I need to update my Smartcard (i.e. will the Smartcard stop working at the premises)?

A. Yes, all pharmacy staff need to have the ODS codes (a pharmacy's unique identifying code) of the pharmacy sites where they operate the service on a regular basis on the profile of their Smartcard. The exception to this model is the case of community pharmacists/dispensing technician locums who may need to legitimately work within many community pharmacies at short notice. In such cases, they will also have a generic organisation ODS code for a "locum pharmacy" on their profile, that allows them to operate the system from any pharmacy.

If the pharmacy ODS code changes, all users need to have the new ODS code added to their profile. An RA02 form needs to be completed and sent to the RA manager for action. This can be done before the removal of the old ODS code to aide transition.

To minimise the disruption caused by changes in ODS codes, a new ODS code should only be requested when a change of ownership occurs and the contractor buys out a business on a non debts and liabilities basis (i.e. the outgoing contractor requires payment for all items dispensed up to the date of sale). More information on ODS codes is available from the systems and services section of the [NHS CFH website](http://www.nhs.uk/CFH).

The PSNC have provided additional information on Smartcards for dispensing contractors on their website:

www.psn.org.uk/pages/allocation_of_ods_codes.html

For a full list of questions and answers, please visit the NHS CFH Electronic Prescription Service FAQ pages.

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WEBSITE LATEST

The [EPS website](#) is updated regularly; here are four of the key items that have been added.

1. Four Stages of PCT Readiness

The full detail of the [stages of implementation](#) is contained in a document issued by NHS CFH on 1 December 2009.

To help with the transition, NHS CFH has identified four stages to support progress locally and to work within the National Operating Framework in the run up to initial implementation:

- [Stage 1: The Foundation Stage](#)
- [Stage 2: Preparing for EPS Enablement \(Obtaining Secretary of State Direction\)](#)
- [Stage 3: Initial Enablement of EPS](#)
- [Stage 4: EPS Operating as Business as Usual](#)

2. Implementation Toolkit

The EPS Release 2 [implementation toolkit](#) represents best practice and lessons learned so far from the initial implementation PCTs.

3. Business Process Guidance

A guidance document designed to support initial implementers of Release 2 of the Electronic Prescription Service. The full guidance document is now available to download from www.cfh.nhs.uk/eps

4. EPS Communications Toolkit

The EPS Release 2 communications toolkit has been developed to provide healthcare professionals with information resources on the changes and benefits that Release 2 will bring. To order a copy of the toolkit, please visit www.cfh.nhs.uk/eps

FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback on this bulletin, questions about the Electronic Prescription Service or would like to invite the EPS team to an event you are planning please contact us at: cfh.eps@nhs.net or write to us.

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