

Corporate Communications and Engagement Team

Communications and engagement plan for the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Release 2.

	Document information
Document type:	Communications and engagement strategy
Document Reference:	
Document title:	Communications and engagement plan for the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Release 2.
Document date:	14 January, 2011
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Approved by:	
Approval date:	
Version:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Amended following comments from Operation group members on 15 March. 2. Amended first draft following Operational Group Meeting on 15 February for further circulation to group.
Review date:	

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<p>The project /background</p>	<p>EPS will enable prescribers – such as GPs and practice nurses – to send prescriptions electronically to a dispenser (such as a pharmacy) of the patient’s choice. This will make the prescribing and dispensing process safer and more convenient for patients and staff.</p> <p>EPS – part of the National Programme for IT - is being introduced in two phases. The first, Release 1, is widely used by the vast majority of community pharmacies and GP practices in England.</p> <p>EPS Release 1 was designed to put in place the infrastructure for the service and to enable inter-operability between general practice and dispensary clinical systems. In Release 1, electronic prescription messages are sent from general practice and retrieved by community pharmacies via bar-codes on the paper prescriptions.</p> <p>EPS Release 2 is a necessary evolution from the out-of-date paper system. With 1.5 million prescriptions being issued across England every day and with this total set to rise by 5% every year, the NHS needs an efficient, clinically safe, electronic system, able to cope with this growth in prescription volumes.</p> <p>Release 2 will bring some real benefits and with it there will be opportunities to improve business processes. This will include the introduction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advanced electronic signatures • nomination • electronic repeat dispensing • electronic cancellation • electronic submission of reimbursement endorsement messages.
<p>Aim of this plan</p>	<p>EPS Release 2 will bring new challenges for those responsible for communicating the changes to their respective audiences. In addition to the need to ensure that healthcare professionals understand the implications of the changes and what actions they need to take, the implementation of EPS Release 2 will require clear, targeted communication with members of the public. EPS Release 2 will be implemented at different times over a considerable period in the 19,000 GP practices, community pharmacies and dispensing appliance contractors throughout England, which means there will be limited national communication activities, and the majority of EPS communications will need to be done locally.</p> <p>NHS Portsmouth also recognises that individual sites will have different approaches and target different patient groups in certain areas.</p> <p>Key to the success of the EPS Release 2 communication programme will be the provision of information at an area by area, or site by site, level, all timed to reach people when they need it and, particularly in the case of patients, when they are able to use the service.</p> <p>This document sets out the principles for communications and stakeholder engagement for the implementation of EPS Release 2. Specific focus will be given to the importance of informing and engaging patients, GPs and dispensers.</p>

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	<p>This document – a first draft which will need to be continually updated - aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide key messages and themes that need to be communicated about EPS Release 2 • identify the Portsmouth stakeholder groups within the scope of the EPS Release 2 project • define the key messages for prescribers, dispensers and patients • define the types of communication activities to be undertaken at each level • provide a template to allow for the development of an activities/events calendar for the roll-out of communications.
<p>Communication and stakeholder objectives</p>	<p>The communications objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure consistent key messages are delivered appropriately • to make a positive contribution towards the smooth implementation of EPS Release 2, minimising disruption to users • ensure that all stakeholders are kept regularly informed and engaged • to ensure that all communications are in plain English, and appropriate other languages and formats when needed • involve users and patients in the production of communication aimed at patients • to minimise concerns amongst patients and educate them about the changes • advise and educate staff and GP and pharmacy practices and patients so that they can cascade information to patients and carers about the use of nomination • ensure patients have the information required to make an informed choice on nomination.
<p>Context</p>	<p>This communications and stakeholder engagement plan is developed over six phases covering initial rollout to full implementation and a review exercise. This plan will be amended/updated for the latter phases. Initially it will focus on intense and targeted communication aimed at GPs and pharmacists, together with raising general awareness amongst the wider community. Monitoring of take-up will play a vital part in allowing more targeted communications when needed.</p> <p>A core objective of the plan is the recruitment of patient, GP and pharmacist champions to act as the public face/advocates of EPS. It is envisaged that these will be recruited from one of the GP practices which implements the system early – such as a pharmacy which has a good relationship with an identified champion GP practice.</p>

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	<p>A clear communications and stakeholder engagement strategy is vital in helping ensure the new system is implemented smoothly and with minimal disruption to users and patients. The communication strategy must integrate our communication with that of the various suppliers to avoid duplication of effort and mixed messages.</p>
<p>Governance</p>	<p>Development of the strategy This strategy has been developed by the EPS Project Manager and NHS Portsmouth Head of Communications with input from key stakeholders. The plan will need to be reviewed and signed off by the EPS Release 2 Project Board.</p> <p>Evaluation and review This strategy will be reviewed and evaluated as part of the implementation process and any changes – other than updates to the various workstreams on the action plan - will need to be approved by the EPS project board members.</p>
<p>Key messages</p>	<p>There is a need to ensure that certain key, consistent messages are repeated and reinforced throughout the length of the roll out of EPS Release 2. To help reassure stakeholders and manage their expectations the following will be highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the benefits to patients • the benefits to dispensers, including the potential to reduce errors and therefore increasing patient safety • the benefits to prescribers • potential to reduce wasted medicines • both EPS Release 1 and Release 2 will operate together for a period of time • release 2 will enable a new way of working that will improve the consistent delivery of high quality care • the system will maintain the confidentiality of patient information <p>The approach to disseminating the key messages is to ensure that the right messages are communicated to the right stakeholders at the right time and by the best means.</p> <p>The NHS Portsmouth EPS Project Board, established to ensure an integrated approach to implementing EPS, will be a key resource in the communication and involvement process.</p> <p>Project communications will focus on ensuring that stakeholders across the PCT area are taken to the right level of engagement. Locally, there will be project specific key messages to be conveyed to specific groups including regular status updates, the benefits, new processes, security and time saving procedures.</p> <p>Patients and their representatives</p> <p>A more convenient service</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a reduction in trips to the GP practice just to collect a paper prescription. This is particularly relevant for patients receiving repeat medication. <p>Freedom of choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Electronic Prescription Service also gives patients greater freedom of choice, making it simpler for them to use a dispensing contractor convenient to them. For example, a patient could choose to nominate a dispensary that is convenient to where they live, work or shop. • In the shorter term patients that have nominated and are participating in electronic repeat dispensing can change their nomination at any time. • In the longer term if a patient is participating in electronic repeat dispensing and hasn't nominated, they will be able to obtain the next repeat from any Release 2 enabled pharmacy with the use of their prescription token. For example if they are away from home and have forgotten to take their medication with them. <p>Reduction in pharmacy waiting times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It also has the potential to reduce pharmacy waiting times as dispensers will have the opportunity to prepare a prescription in advance of the patient arriving. <p>Electronic cancellation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the potential to enhance patient safety <p>Prescribing staff</p> <p>Reduction in workload</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPS Release 2 will reduce the workload generated by patients collecting individual prescriptions • After reviewing electronic prescriptions on screen, prescribers can either sign electronic prescriptions individually or select multiple electronic prescriptions to sign. This will potentially result in a considerable reduction in workload and make the prescribing process more efficient. • Where currently a GP practice operates a prescription collection service, staff will no longer need to sort (or post) prescriptions saving both time and
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	<p>resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP practices will no longer need to post prescriptions to dispensing appliance contractors – saving both time and resource. <p>Electronic repeat dispensing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPS Release 2 will make it easier to use repeat dispensing and it may reduce the workload generated by patients frequently requesting repeat prescriptions. • Prescribers are more likely to move patients who currently receive regular repeat prescriptions to repeat dispensing regimes as they will no longer need to print multiple paper batch issues. • Electronic repeat dispensing regimes can be cancelled easily, at any time prior to the prescription repeat being dispensed, giving prescribers a greater level of control over the regime. <p>Cancelling prescriptions electronically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribers will have the ability to cancel electronic prescriptions and record the reason why they were cancelled. • Electronic cancellation can take place prior to making contact with the patient (although communication with the patient is still critical) • When cancelling a nominated electronic prescription, contact details of the nominated dispensing contractor will be available to the prescriber/authorised person • All outstanding prescriptions for deceased patients will be automatically cancelled. When the PDS is updated detailing that a patient has died any outstanding prescriptions for that patient will automatically be cancelled. <p>Dispensing staff</p> <p>Reduction in re-keying prescription information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Electronic Prescription Service frees dispensing staff from the work associated with re-keying prescription information. <p>Streamline workflow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As nominated electronic prescriptions (both acute and repeat) may be received prior to the patient arriving, Release 2 will give scope to streamline their workflow by preparing medications in advance. It will also help to
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	<p>manage stock control more effectively and order out-of-stock items in a timely manner.</p> <p>Prescription collection services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction of nomination will mean that dispensing contractors currently offering prescription collection services will no longer be required to physically collect prescriptions from GP practices for patients who have nominated them. <p>Electronic repeat dispensing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispensers will no longer need to retain and store repeatable prescriptions and paper batch issues for audit purposes. <p>Electronic submission of reimbursement endorsements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to claim payment for prescription items dispensed, dispensers currently have to sort and post large volumes of paper prescriptions to the reimbursement agency at the end of each month. Dispensers will be able to manage the submission of reimbursement endorsements electronically. This will reduce the volume of paper that needs to be sorted and posted at the end of each month.
<p>Audiences</p>	<p>Different partners/stakeholders will need information and messages tailored to their needs at different times and some will wish to be more involved than others.</p> <p>INTERNAL (to NHS Portsmouth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Board the Senior Management Team staff <p>EXTERNAL (to NHS Portsmouth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> practitioners dispensers our partners, including PHT, Solent Healthcare, NHS Hampshire, South Central Strategic Health Authority patients, service users and the public GPs and primary care advisers Portsmouth City Council and the Health and Overview Scrutiny Panel Third Sector organisations MPs and local councillors Others (see stakeholders mapping on the action plan at the foot of this document).

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	<p>THE MEDIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print media (The News) • Online media (PortsmouthNews.tv) • Social media • Local radio (The Breeze, Express, BBC Radio Solent, Heart, Capital, Coast, Wave) • TV (BBC South, Meridian) • Trade press.
<p>Tools</p>	<p>The following tools will be used to communicate with key external and internal stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Portsmouth100 • the NHS Portsmouth website • social media (Facebook/Twitter) • media releases • newsletters • radio phone-in/interview (Express FM) • a Q&A • online media services (which use our copy as written) • Flagship (the PCC residents' magazine delivered six times a year to 83,000 homes and businesses. The PCT buys four pages in each issue) • PIP (the extranet for GPs and possibly pharmacies too) • the intranet (a dedicated page and the daily news service) • Insight (the bimonthly NHSP staff newsletter) • Contact (the monthly NHSP stakeholders) • Monitor (the biweekly media update for NHSP managers and some stakeholders) • internal communications mechanisms used by Solent Healthcare, NHS Hampshire and the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust) • all user-emails • staff briefings/management and team meetings • media briefing/launch • fact sheet • stakeholder forums • the Healthy Living Pharmacy (HLP) website • HLP newsletter • NHSP direct mailshot to pharmacies • NHSP newsletter for pharmacies • An Open Evening event? <p>Staff/project team protocol for media enquiries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all media enquiries to anyone other than the Project Lead direct to be put through to the NHSP's communications team, which will liaise with the lead PCT Director and/or Project Lead or a nominated representative

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- media enquiries will be dealt with either i) by phone ii) written statement or iii) press release.
- Records of all media contact on EPS will be recorded by the communications team on its Newsflash software

Press statements and updates to the NHSP website will be issued as appropriate to the media in line with the overall strategy.

Case studies. The use of personal stories from patients who have benefited will make the release more attractive to the media.

Copies of the first releases will be copied to NHS CFH communications team for information. Where negative coverage is likely or has occurred the NHSP communications team will alert the NHS CFH communications team at an early stage as this may have an impact on national coverage.

NHS CFH communications materials

The PCT will make use of the NHS CFH materials which have been developed nationally to help explain EPS to healthcare professionals and patients and these will be used or adapted to meet local circumstances.

<http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/systemsandservices/eps/staff/communications>

or by calling 08453700760 and quoting the reference number of the item required.

Identifying Release 2 enabled sites

The EPS sign will be used to alert patients to the fact that sites are operating EPS Release 2. The EPS Release 2 design style guide which is contained in the EPS Release 2 Communications toolkit. This is available on the EPS website www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/systemsandservices/eps/communications quoting reference 4123.

Involving patients and public

As part of the initial rollout of EPS Release 2, the project team may wish to engage with a GP patient group and recruit local patient champions. The purpose of the role will be:

- to work with the EPS team in ensuring that patient experience is at the heart of our approach
- act as a figurehead for EPS, championing the new system across all stakeholders including patients, GPs and pharmacists.

The key deliverables:

- support the EPS team in developing a patient experience survey which will then be sampled periodically. Purpose of survey will be to assess the benefits EPS delivers for patients and encourage take up
- support the EPS team in communicating the EPS message to the public and health professionals thereby ensuring a positive approach to EPS and encouraging take up

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> liaise with other relevant stakeholders to ensure that they are saying the right things about EPS and to get their support act as the EPS sounding board to ensure the patient perspective is built into policy. <p>The NHSP communications team, in liaison with the PCT's webmaster, will also develop a patient feedback section on its website to provide a mechanism for patients to feedback to the PCT about their experiences of EPS.</p> <p>The project team may wish to set up a patient user group once there is sufficient coverage of EPS within the PCT.</p> <p>The NHSP communications team must sign off any new communications materials established for the project – some of which may need patients input or feedback, particularly if the communication is aimed at the public.</p>
Comms and engagement evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> positive media coverage for a successful introduction of Release 2 across Portsmouth positive response to the survey to be created on the NHSP website positive verbal feedback from staff, service users and residents positive feedback from stakeholders other survey work? Positive practioner/dispenser feedback
Comms and engagement critical success factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public is well informed NHS staff are well informed Relevant local media are engaged in the process Our communications are understood and contribute to increased awareness about the reasons for the scheme.
Key dates	TBA
Comms risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We fail to keep prescribers/dispensers/staff/residents/staff/partners well informed Poor or negative media coverage will adversely affect a) people's confidence in the scheme and b) the image and reputation of the NHS locally and nationally PCT clustering and the need for management savings with the local NHS could affect communications support for this project from mid 2011 and onwards.

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ACTION PLAN/TIMESCALES

Stakeholder /audience	Activity/ requirement	Action /tools	Frequency /date	Owner	Status
NHS Connecting For Health	Escalated risks and issues	Agreed escalation processes	As required	Project lead	
PCT Board/ Clinical Executive Committee (previously PEC)	General report/ project updates	Workstream meetings		Project lead	
EPS steering group	Project progress, risks and issues etc	Email. Project meetings	As required.	Project lead. Various.	
RA Team	Roll-out plan Relevant risks and issued	Meetings. Email.			
SHA and other health partners (NHSH)	Issues. Updates.	Email/stakeholders newsletter	As required.	Project lead/NHSP communications team.	
PCT Medicines Management Lead and other key relevant staff	Roll-out plan Risks and issues General awareness	Newsletter/Email/Intranet	As required		
Patients and patient representatives	General updates/project development and key dates (implementation etc)	Healthcare professionals communicating with patients this will be supplemented by leaflets, internet and some local media coverage NHS Connecting for Health will provide a number of posters, signs and leaflets which	As required	The project board in liaison with NHS P's Head of Communications.	

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		will be available in a range of different formats and languages for the PCT to order.			
GPs and practice staff	General progress and development updates regarding Release 2	<p>PIP (Extranet for city GPs)</p> <p>Email to Practice Managers</p> <p>Meetings - A series of meetings will be hosted by the Project Manager with groups including GP practice staff and pharmacy staff. Additional small practice meetings will be organised by the project team as part of the regular staff meetings and delivered by a presentation followed by question and answer sessions.</p>		<p>NHSP Head of Comms</p> <p>NHSP Head of Comms</p> <p>PCT trainers</p>	
Pharmacists and pharmacy staff	General progress and development updates regarding Release 2	Local Pharmacy events, presentation & Awareness evenings, Smartcard registration events		EPS lead to liaise with System suppliers	
Local pharmacists?	Process for registering Smartcards General awareness	LPC website			
Local medical committees (LMCs)		EPS Project board. Multidisciplinary awareness event. Future mapping process workshop for pharmacies and practices		Project manager	
Local pharmaceutical committees (LPCs)		EPS Project board. Multidisciplinary awareness event. Future mapping process workshop for pharmacies		Project Manager	

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		and practices			
LINKs	Promote EPS to patients and the public, highlighting how the system will bring further improvements to their experience of NHS care.	Link website. Newsletters - will be produced reporting on EPS Release 2 offering overviews of the stages and success of development and roll out. Must include older people		NHS P's Head of Public Engagement	
Portsmouth's Overview and Scrutiny Panel				NHS P's Head of Public Engagement	
Voluntary Sector	Raise awareness of EPS and local deployment	PCC's monthly newsletters to 700 voluntary and community groups in the city		NHS P's Head of Communications	
Portsmouth 100				NHS P's Head of Communications	
Professional services and suppliers		Project board meeting		Project Manager	
GP system suppliers and pharmacy system suppliers		Email and usual meetings		Training Manager	
The local media		News releases, press briefings	As required	NHS P's Head of Communications	
Local Councillors and local authority social services		Briefing to PCC's communications team. Article for PCC's MIS (Members Information Service) – a weekly mailshot to all 42 city councillors. Specific letter to PCC Strategic Director responsible for social care.	TBA	NHS P's Head of Communications	
MPs		Email. Contact – the PCT's		NHS P's Head of Communications	

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		monthly online newsletter to stakeholders.			

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