

Primary care IM&T - Community Pharmacy IM&T Programme Projects and Work streams

1. Infrastructure Project—Connectivity

Since 2005 there has been a staged system to introduce connectivity for pharmacy contractors to the Health of Wales Information Service (HOWIS) the Welsh NHS intranet.

In line with published guidance, all Welsh pharmacy contractors have now placed an order for an 'approved' network connection with either their Pharmacy System Supplier (independents and small chains) or their corporate network provider. As of November 2007 more than 75% of contractors have had the approved systems installed. Approved networks are currently being enabled to allow Contractors to access NHS Wales intranet resources on HOWIS , with over 37% of contractors being connected by Nov 2007 .

2. Electronic Transmission of Prescriptions (ETP)

With differing architectural development for IT, it was agreed that Wales would develop its own solution to ETP through a phased approach of programme development. An interim solution of 2D bar coded prescriptions has been agreed as the first phase of ETP. This approach has been successfully trailed and evaluated,

With the programme Board agreeing to proceed with plans for 2DRx nationally, commencing from October. . A Development document has now been provided to GP and Pharmacy System Suppliers to specify the changes necessary for automatically populating pharmacy systems with the contents of a Welsh GP Prescription Form.

It is anticipated that GP and Pharmacy System Suppliers will commence plans for development work during spring 2008 and that early testing will start soon afterwards.

3. Electronic Transmission of Claims Project

One of the next Projects of the Programme during 2008 , is to liaise with Pharmacy Suppliers to develop systems that can automatically transmit a Contractor's prescription reimbursement claim to the Welsh prescription payment division , using the secure NHS Wales network presently being installed into Pharmacy stores in Wales.

4. NHS Wales eMail Service

It was unanimously agreed that Welsh pharmacy contractors should have access to an NHS Wales eMail service at each registered premises, this would allow them to receive safely and instantly important notifications such as Medical Device Alerts and Drug Recalls, issued by the Business Service Centre, LHBs, or Welsh Assembly Government. The programme is currently working on plans to introduce this requirement from spring 2008.

The eMail Project is expected to start with an initial pilot using a limited number of Pharmacy sites able to connect to NHS Wales, followed by a User Evaluation and national roll-out. In the first instance, the PCIP will provide a single branch mailbox account per Pharmacy store, which will accommodate the principal reason for its introduction. Future plans will investigate an eMail account for each store's Lead Pharmacist for NHS business use only.

The final phase of development should be a full ETP solution with both the primary care programme and IHC programme linking together.