

February 2015

## PSNC Briefing 003/15: Smartcard software transition

This briefing provides contractor and LPCs with information about NHS smartcards following HSCIC’s announcement that the software used by all Smartcards will be updated during an overnight transition starting late night on Saturday 21st February and carrying on until the early hours of Sunday morning.

**Some smartcard users will need to take action to ensure their smartcards function during and after the transition.**



### What’s happening?

Older Smartcard authentication and management software is being replaced with the new Care Identity Service (CIS), run by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), who also manage the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS).

### How can I reduce the impact on my pharmacy?

Please use the tables below as a guide to the changes which will help you take appropriate action.

#### Before the switchover

Who’s affected?	What you need to know
<b>Users with older Smartcards</b> (numbers 01, 02 or 03).	Check your Smartcard number (in the bottom right hand corner on the back). If the first two numbers are 01, 02 or 03 you should contact your local Registration Authority (RA) to request a new card as you won’t be able to renew or unlock your Smartcard after the switchover.
<b>All other Smartcard users.</b>	If the first two numbers of your Smartcard number (in the bottom right hand corner on the back) are 04, 05 or 06 you do not have to take any action.
<b>Users with Smartcard certificates due to expire during the transition period.</b>	If your Smartcard certificate is due to expire during the switchover weekend, you must renew before the transition occurs.  <b>Renew when prompted:</b> Therefore, if you are prompted to renew your Smartcard certificate in advance of the transition, make sure you do so to avoid a break in access.

#### During the switchover

Who’s affected?	What you need to know
<b>Any users who try to logon during the transition night.</b>	At the time of the switchover, any active sessions will terminate and users will be logged out. There will be a short loss of service (HSCIC have advised this will last approximately five minutes) and then you will need to log back in to restore access.

## After the switchover

Who's affected?	What you need to know
<b>Sites that use self-service Fallback Smartcards or premises cards</b> <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/hscicSmartcards">www.tinyurl.com/hscicSmartcards</a> .	Self-service Fallback Smartcards or premises cards* will not work after the switchover.  *Premises cards are used by sites that have not yet upgraded to EPS Release 2.  <b>N.B.</b> Short Term Access cards should continue to work.
<b>Any user who needs to unlock their Smartcard</b> (due to accidentally entering an incorrect passcode three times).	A Smartcard can be unlocked if two smartcard readers are present and there is a user who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an RA role (i.e. Sponsor, Agent or Manager) on their card <b>OR</b></li> <li>Has been granted the activity B0263 'unlock smartcard'.</li> </ol> Any user with the relevant access rights will be able to unlock any card except their own.  <b>Note:</b> As previously mentioned older Smartcards (numbers beginning 01, 02 or 03) will not be able to unlock smartcards after the switchover.

### Is there anything else I need to do?

Talk to your Registration Authority (RA) staff about having a Local Smartcard Administrator in your pharmacy (a person assigned with the role B0263 on their Smartcard) to assist with unlocking and certificate renewal. RA staff can also advise about Short Term Access Cards.



### Smartcard certificate renewal FAQs

#### Q. How can I renew my Smartcard certificate?

Users are able to self-renew their certificates up to 30 days before expiry. When you receive a renewal prompt click 'Yes'. You will then be taken to the Self Service Portal (<https://portal.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/portal>), talk to your system supplier if you cannot access this). After the switchover, the message prompting users to renew will include a link to the relevant CIS application page, where they will complete the certificate renewal process.

#### Q. How often do I need to renew my card?

Your system will prompt you to renew at the appropriate time, which is every two years. At every third renewal (i.e. once every six years), users will need to visit their Registration Authority (RA) in person to re-verify their identity.

#### Q. What if I do not renew my Smartcard certificate?

Once your Smartcard certificate has expired, it will no longer be possible to use the Smartcard to access the Electronic Prescription Service. In this situation, a face-to-face meeting with your RA is required to renew the expired certificate. Contact your local RA for more information.

### Where can I find out more?

**Local RA contact details:** NHS England Area Teams (ATs) are responsible for commissioning local RAs to provide and oversee Smartcard issues. Your RA contact information may be available from your AT ([www.tinyurl.com/areateam](http://www.tinyurl.com/areateam)), or might be listed on your LPC site ([www.lpc-online.org.uk](http://www.lpc-online.org.uk)).

Further information about Smartcards is available on the EPS website, [www.tinyurl.com/hscicSmartcards](http://www.tinyurl.com/hscicSmartcards) or the PSNC website, [www.psn.org.uk/smartcards](http://www.psn.org.uk/smartcards) or from PSNC EPS lead, [Daniel Ah-Thion](#). See the [CIS website](#) or talk to your Registration Authority staff for more information.