

What might Integrated Care Systems mean for the development of healthcare IT?

This factsheet provides pharmacy contractors and Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs) with an update about IT developments within Integrated Care Systems (ICS).

Background

ICS are intended to:

- enable cooperation between the NHS and local government;
- run services in a more coordinated way, agree system-wide priorities; and
- plan collectively how to improve peoples' day-to-day health.

There are around 40 ICS, with each serving populations of between 300,000 and 3 million people. ICS evolved from Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships. There are several Primary Care Networks within each ICS area, with each covering, on average, 30-50,000 patients.

ICS digital priorities

NHS England and NHS Improvement issued guidance for ICS that set out their digital and other priorities. 'Digital and data' is one of several themes. The guidance stated: "ICSs are to drive system working, connect health and care providers, improve outcomes and put the citizen at the heart of their own care."

ICS are asked to:

- develop or join a **Local health and shared care record system** (LHCR or 'Shared care records');
- introduce and/or expand shared contracts and platforms, including those for shared care records;
- employ a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for digital on their boards;
- prepare a digital transformation plan for the area;
- develop a roadmap for patient-centred digital channels;
- build the workforces' digital capabilities, "as well as specific digital skills such as user research and service design";
- build tools to allow collaborative working and movement of staff across organisational boundaries, including shared appointment booking, referral management and task sharing;
- follow nationally defined **standards** to enable integration and interoperability;
- use digital technology to transform care pathways;
- develop shared cross-system intelligence and analytical statistical functions;
- ensure transparency of information about health and care interventions and the outcomes they produce; and
- support remote monitoring to allow patients to stay safe at home for longer.

What is next for IT developments related to ICS and community pharmacy?

Many ICS are forming digital teams, which may include IT Leads and others from Trusts and councils etc. LPCs seeking to work collaboratively with ICS and pharmacy contractors with an interest in IT could:

- familiarise themselves with the guidance at psnc.org.uk/itpolicy and psnc.org.uk/ics;
- use **PSNC/CP ITG local digital priority list templates** to help work with the ICS (these align with the national **Community Pharmacy IT Group's (CP ITG) digital wishlist**); and
- identify aligned digital priorities which will work for community pharmacy and the ICS.