NHSmail and multi-factor authentication

This factsheet explains what NHSmail multi-factor authentication is and how to use it.

Normally you use your email address and password to log into your NHSmail account. **Multi-factor authentication (MFA)** is an additional way of checking that it is really you when you log in to your account. In addition to your email address and password, you will need to set up a second form of authentication, such as an authentication app on your mobile phone, text message, phone call or a '**FIDO2 token**'. This second layer of security is designed to prevent anyone but you from accessing your account, even if they know your password.

As of December 2023, MFA within England for pharmacy NHSmail users is optional. Within Wales, it is mandatory. The process for English NHSmail users to add / remove MFA is set out below. Advanced NHSmail users within England are encouraged to test out pharmacy NHSmail MFA and to report feedback to the **cpe.org.uk/itfeedback** webform to help inform the wider rollout of pharmacy NHSmail MFA, and to help inform future Community Pharmacy England and NHS pharmacy guidance regarding MFA. The NHSmail team has explained that MFA is to continue to be optional for a period prior to it **becoming mandatory within the English NHSmail system**. MFA will be needed in order to provide protection for the NHSmail system and its users. We therefore continues to welcome feedback about the early usage of NHSmail MFA. We will also share feedback back to the NHSmail team.
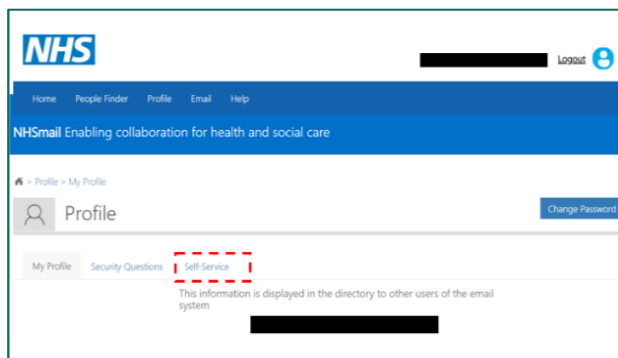

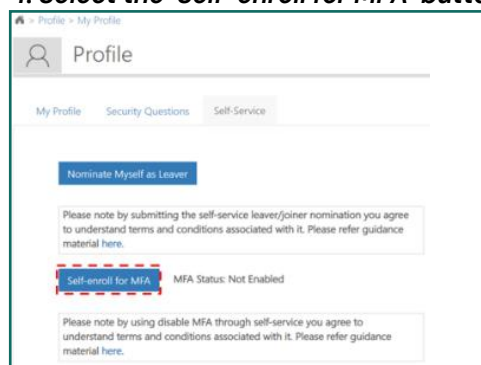### *Steps to add / remove*

1. Login at **portal.nhs.net**.

2. Choose 'Profile' in the navigation bar at the top of the screen and select 'My Profile' from the drop-down menu
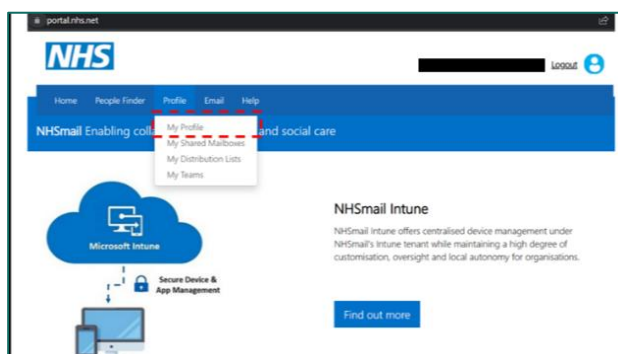
3. From 'My profile' page, select 'Self-Service'

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4. Select the 'Self-enroll for MFA' button

5. Select the method for which you would prefer to receive
You can receive MFA notifications for:
- A Microsoft authentication app on your smartphone (*recommended option to try if possible*);
- text message;
- phone call; or
- a 'FIDO2 token'

FAQs

Q. How do we 'turn off' MFA

Using the NHSmail portal, you may also switch off MFA.

Q. How frequently will I need to authenticate?

You should not need to authenticate for each NHSmail use.

Read more: **cpe.org.uk/nhsmailFAQs; cpe.org.uk/nhsmail** and **support.nhs.net MFA guidance**.

Updated December 2023. Contact **it@cpe.org.uk** for queries about this factsheet.