

# New funding to help hospitals introduce digital prescribing

- To mark World Patient Safety Day today, Minister Nadine Dorries confirms £8.7 million to help 7 NHS trusts introduce digital patient records to hospitals
- E-prescribing has already been rolled out to over 130 NHS trusts
- The new technology helps the NHS to access patient history and prescribe medication digitally, which can reduce errors by up to 30%

More patients and healthcare staff will benefit from single electronic patient records as 7 hospital trusts receive a share of £8.7 million to introduce digital records and e-prescribing, Minister for Patient Safety Nadine Dorries announced today on World Patient Safety Day.

The roll-out has already been introduced to over 130 NHS trusts, and is part of a £78 million investment to deliver the ambition set out in the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) to introduce electronic prescribing systems across the NHS.

NHS trusts will now be able to more quickly access potentially lifesaving information on prescribed medicines and patient history, and build a more complete, single electronic patient record, which reduces duplication of information-gathering, saves staff time and can reduce medication errors by up to 30%.

The funding was announced at a virtual conference organised by Imperial College London to mark World Patient Safety Day. This international day was started by the World Health Assembly in 2019 to recognise patient safety as a global health priority and is something the UK government had called for on the world stage.

This year's event is focusing on health worker safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, in recognition that combatting workplace issues such as stress, workload pressures and discrimination and creating a safer working environment for health workers can also minimise patient harm.

Speaking at the Imperial College London event, Minister for Patient Safety Nadine Dorries said:

World Patient Safety Day this year comes at a more important time than ever, with healthcare systems and workers across the world tested like never before.

In my role I have seen first-hand the dedication and care demonstrated by so many of my colleagues in the NHS and this year's theme of health worker safety is a vital one.

Today I am also pleased to announce the 7 trusts receiving a share of £8.7 million to help eliminate paper prescriptions. This will

not only help reduce potentially deadly medication errors but save our hardworking staff valuable time.

In addition to streamlining hospital prescribing, the UK government has an ongoing commitment to strengthen the NHS workforce and train 50,000 new nurses, which will help to minimise workload pressures and ensure NHS services are appropriately staffed. Following this year's A level results, over 25,750 applicants have been placed on nursing and midwifery courses at English providers, an increase of 22% on the same time last year. The latest [NHS People Plan](#), published in July, also sets out how the NHS will improve physical and mental support for all staff.

The Minister for Patient Safety will also be paying a virtual visit to University Hospital Southampton alongside NHS England's National Patient Safety Director Dr Aidan Fowler to hear about how they are protecting their hospital staff and patients during the coronavirus pandemic.

National Director of Patient Safety Dr Aidan Fowler said:

World Patient Safety Day is an important opportunity to reflect on the vital work that goes on across the NHS to protect patients from harm, and to thank staff for their efforts to keep patients safe.

Patient safety is of paramount importance and is something we are continuously looking at ways to improve, whether through new technology, such as the introduction of electronic prescribing, or by building a safety culture where all NHS staff feel supported and safe to speak up.

The Department of Health and Social Care and its health partners will use learnings and outcomes from this year's World Patient Safety Day events to build a safer culture and safer systems for both patients and healthcare workers through our patient safety strategy.

## **World Patient Safety Day**

An annual World Patient Safety Day on 17 September was agreed by the World Health Assembly in 2019 when it adopted a UK-led resolution on 'Global Action on Patient Safety' that included the awareness day and which encourages all 194 World Health Organization member states to prioritise patient safety.

The Department of Health and Social Care offices at 39 Victoria Street, Westminster are being illuminated in orange today.

Nadine Dorries MP will be addressing 2 virtual seminars to mark the day:

- Imperial College will host a seminar entitled [COVID-19 and the Drive for Safety and Equality – Learning from the Front Line](#), with a focus on the perspectives of black, Asian and ethnic minority front-line staff working during the pandemic

- the World Health Organization will host a seminar entitled 'Oneworld: Global solidarity for health worker safety and patient safety' to bring together global stakeholders demonstrating initiatives that support health worker safety.

### **£8.7 million e-prescribing funding**

This funding is the third wave from a £78 million pot to improve patient care by speeding up the implementation of electronic prescribing systems across the NHS over 3 years:

- £16.2 million was awarded in 2018 to 2019
- £29.4 million was awarded in 2019 to 2020
- another £12 million will be invested later this year

The 7 NHS trusts receiving this fund are:

- Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust: £ 1,700,000
- Solent NHS Trust: £988,000
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust: £637,000
- United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust: £1,258,000
- North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Trust: £2,000,000
- East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust: £1,595,000
- Birmingham Community NHS Trust: £531,000