

**Securing Excellence in IT Services
Operating Model for Community Pharmacies, Appliance Contractors, Dental
Practices and Community Optometry**

Frequently asked questions

1. **What is the IT Operating Model for Community Pharmacies, Appliance Contractors, Dental Practices and Community Optometry (primary care contractors)?**

The IT Operating Model defines how the NHS CB commissions the provision of services for these primary care contractors as it will need to provide the support and assurance from these contractors for use of national IT services such as Electronic Prescription Service (EPS); NHS mail from 1st April 2013, when the overall responsibility for the delivery of primary care IT passes to the NHS Commissioning Board (NHS CB).

Its purpose is to ensure the safe transfer of these services into the new commissioning system is highly important to ensure business continuity.

2. **How will quality improve?**

Under the new system, NHS CB through its regional and area teams will commission IT support services from appropriate providers who will have to deliver to quality standards, including compliance with information governance requirements.

Any local IT provider appointed by the primary care contractor will have to support their primary care contractor to deliver these set of quality standards to enable compliance.

3. **Who has been involved in the co-production of the IT operating arrangements for these primary care contractors?**

The IT operating model for these primary care contractors has been the product of good matrix working across the NHS CB, involving Patients and Information, Operations, Finance, Commissioning Development directorates, primary care commissioners, PCT cluster director of informatics, NHS Connecting for Health and SHA cluster chief information officers.

Informatics specialists in Leeds PCT, Sheffield PCT and North Yorkshire and Humber Commissioning Support Unit, Department of Health Informatics Directorate and NHS CB primary care commissioners have been extensively involved.

Funding

4. **How will the budgets be determined for delivery of IT support services for these primary care contractors?**

A Primary Care IT expenditure stock take will determine current revenue spending. The information collected will be used as a baseline to support the NHS CB through its regional/area teams to manage these IT support service arrangements.

The funding will be incorporated within the NHS CB operational directorate operating budget to commission IT support services based on 2012/13 expenditure levels. Overall funding will not exceed flat cash 2012/13 expenditure.

Service provision

5. **Who will be responsible for planning and co-ordinating access to national systems?**

The NHS CB through its area teams will commission an appropriate IT provider (or may choose to deliver themselves) to plan local implementation support for utilisation of National IT services and to ensure equitable provision of information and support is applied across local health community to ensure a level playing field.

6. **Who is responsible for ensuring community primary care contractors have completed the Information Governance Toolkit and that any action plans are adequate?**

The NHS CB through its area teams will be responsible for the performance management of any nationally mandated requirements.

7. **Who will be responsible for IT assets and their replacement?**

IT assets and their replacement is the responsibility of these primary care contractors.

8. **Who is responsible for ensuring that all parties comply with their contractual obligations?**

The NHS CB through its area teams will be responsible for ensuring any appointed IT service provider will have to deliver to a set of quality standards, including compliance with Information Governance Toolkit (IGT), determined by the NHS CB. Any local IT provider appointed by the primary care contractor will have to support their primary care contractor to deliver this set of quality standards to enable compliance.

The area teams will have the expertise in terms of overseeing performance management of primary contractors to enable them to be held to account.