

SMS Services – Questions and Answers

<p>Why is NHS England only funding the service for six months?</p>	<p>Funding for six months will allow sufficient time for local services to make their own provision for a new SMS service from 1st October 2015.</p>
<p>What happens after Sept 2015 - who pays and how?</p>	<p>From the 1st October 2015, it will be the responsibility of local general practices or other clinical service providers to procure this service. The cost of this service will be the clinical service provider's responsibility. They may choose to use a CCG or CSU to manage this on their behalf.</p>
<p>Why is NHS England providing funding for primary and not secondary care or other providers?</p>	<p>NHS England is responsible for commissioning primary care services and wants to ensure reasonable notice is given to primary care contractors, to ensure safe continuation of the service with minimal disruption.</p>
<p>Why are CSUs not included in the funding if they specifically support GPs?</p>	<p>If CSUs are currently managing SMS for the existing customers using SMS (on behalf of General Practices and CCGs), then this will continue. The contract for CSU own business usage is out of scope of the funding.</p>
<p>Who are the clinical primary care providers that are included in the funding?</p>	<p>Existing service users - GPs, Dentists, Pharmacists, Optometrists. This also includes CCGs and CSUs that currently provide the service on behalf of the clinical provider. However, CCG and CSU own business usage is out of scope of the funding.</p>
<p>Is a limit to be placed on usage?</p>	<p>The funding is limited to a specific amount, NHS England are looking at options for ensuring this amount isn't breached. We would ask that organisations monitor their own usage, which will be advantageous to them as they will pay after the end of September 2015. We don't envisage organisations having to cut back on their current usage, but we may have to look at options for limiting any additional growth in usage. As historic usage levels will be used to determine the allowance for individual organisations for the six month extension period, we strongly advise that SMS is not used to provide additional services.</p>
<p>How will the SMS service be continued for primary care on 1 April 2015 – will any configuration changes need to be made locally? Will the contract provider change?</p>	<p>Further information regarding the replacement service and any associated changes will be provided by NHS England in due course.</p>
<p>If I am a new customer where can I procure a contract that will give me best value for money?</p>	<p>The G-Cloud IV Framework seeks to deliver the best value for money.</p>

	<p>The Current provider, Vodafone has agreed a price of 1.95p, which is the same as the national contract. This is available until end of January 2015.</p> <p>Most recently Crown Commercial Service has communicated a tendering framework which seeks to minimise cost by aggregating the volume through collective procurement. Although the deadline was 11th December, there is an opportunity to express interest after the deadline. The contact email address is ICT_aggregation@CSS.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>Additional information can be found on the HSCIC website:</p> <p>http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/nhsmail/future</p>
<p>Will Fax services also be continued and funded for a further six months</p>	<p>No. Funding is in place for the NHSmail Fax gateway until March 2015. The service will be discontinued from 31 March 2015.</p> <p>Email-to-fax services may be purchased directly by local organisations wishing to continue them beyond this point. In support of this, the NHSmail team has produced guidance to assist local organisations in their procurement. This information can be found by following the link below to the HSCIC website.</p> <p>http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/nhsmail/future</p>
<p>I use third party software to manage my SMS messages, am I still covered by the service extension?</p>	<p>If the third party software that you use sends the SMS message from an NHSmail account within your organisation (CCG, CSU or Commissioning Hub) and you are in one of the organisational categories specified, then you are covered. To ensure this applies to your account you may wish confirm how the SMS is sent, with your third party software provider.</p>