

PSNC responds to the Electronic Prescription Service interim evaluation report

A steady, tightly managed and well-supported roll out is necessary to make the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) a success, PSNC argued in response to an interim evaluation of the service.

The UCL School of Pharmacy, the University of Nottingham and the London School of Economics and Political Science have published an interim report on their evaluation of Release Two of the EPS, commissioned by the Connecting for Health Evaluation Programme.

PSNC Chief Executive Sue Sharpe said:

“This report confirms problems that contractors have reported experiencing with the service, highlighting the conditions that pharmacists require to make a success of this service. It takes time, effort and thought to get EPS Release 2 up and running in a way that fits well with a pharmacy’s workflow. This means that the deployment must be tightly managed and well supported by the local NHS, even in this time of transition.

“Whilst many of the earlier kinks in the software have now been ironed out, it’s essential that pharmacists continue to report problems experienced to their suppliers, however minor. There is still much that can be done to enhance individual pharmacy systems to ensure that they fully meet the needs of pharmacy staff.

“As expected, the need for individual smartcards is highlighted in the report as a real problem for pharmacies, and PSNC does not believe the current smartcard policy is workable in a busy pharmacy where teamwork and rapid multi-tasking is commonplace. This policy needs to be reviewed, with a view to creating a more practical solution, with proportionate security controls.”

“The report also highlights the early problems experienced with system down-time. Though now rare, when this occurs it can have a major impact on patients and pharmacies. More needs to be done to prepare pharmacies for these problems before they occur.”

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