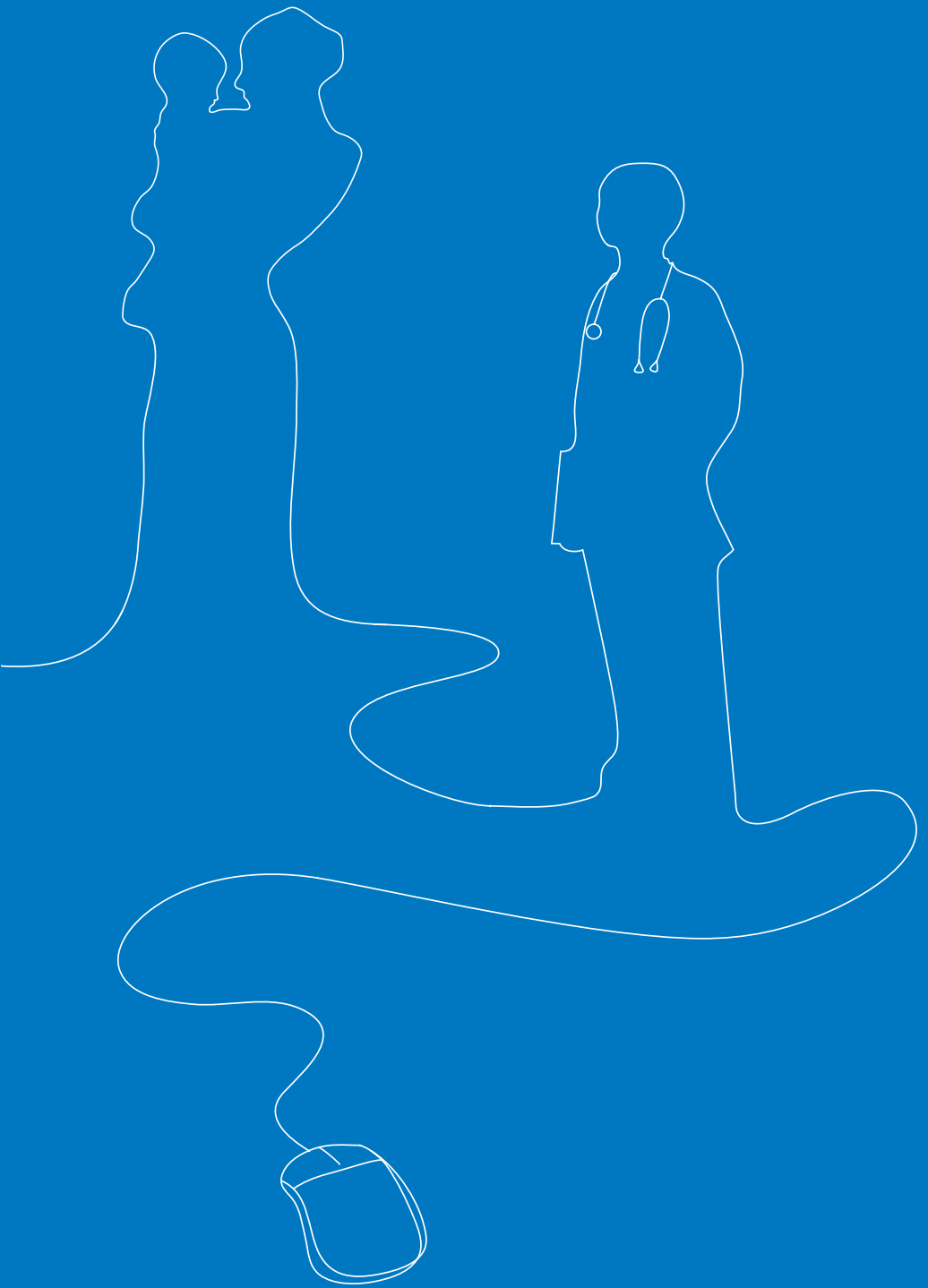
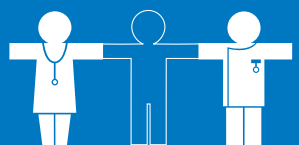


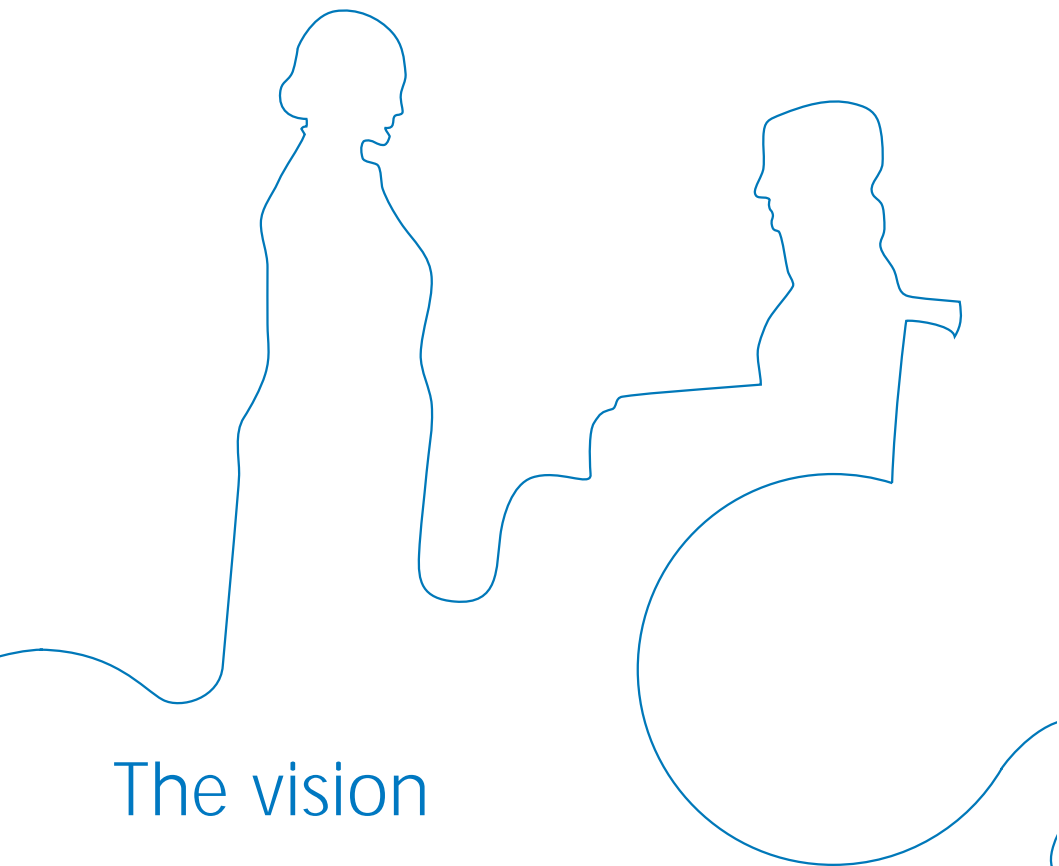


Connecting for Health



***Better information,
better health***





The vision

The NHS is entering a new era. Modern, sophisticated information technology (IT) will give staff the information they need at the touch of a button. This will mean they can deliver even better care for patients. This new technology will help tackle problems the NHS has struggled with for years.

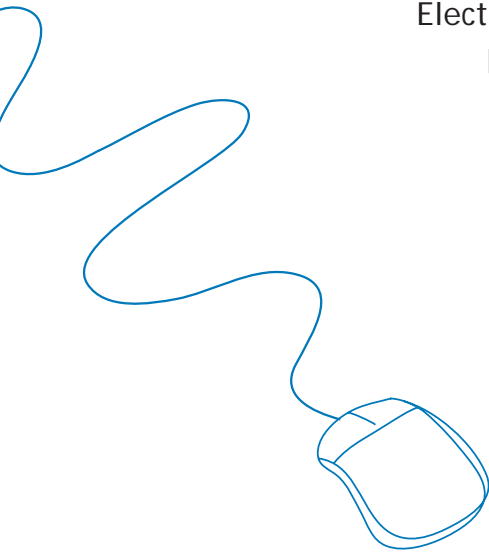
Gone will be the days of lost medical records, inconvenient appointments and wasted trips to hospital.

Gone will be the endless paper chase between GP surgeries and hospitals as fewer appointments will have to be re-booked and test results are less likely to be lost.

Along with other changes, a much more patient-led NHS will develop. It will be better able to meet patients' needs at times and places to suit them.

This is an exciting time for the NHS, its patients and staff. It's an opportunity not to be missed - to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and safety of services. Staff will be able to give higher quality, more convenient care to patients round the clock, every day of the year.

Hundreds of thousands of patients are already finding it easier and more convenient to use the NHS. As more information becomes available to help patients make choices, they will be able to take more control of their health and treatment. In time, patients will also be able to see a summary of their own electronic health information, using secure internet access into the NHS system.



Electronic care records will mean patients and staff will have fewer forms to fill in.

There will be no need to re-record basic information every time a patient uses the NHS.

The NHS Care Records Service is central to the new systems and services.

It will give authorised staff easy access to up-to-date, accurate patient records. This will make

diagnosis and treatment safer and faster. Staff will no longer have to chase missing files, scans and X-rays, saving precious time for themselves and their patients.

Through a new National Knowledge Service, clinical staff will have access to the best current medical knowledge and be able to combine this with patients' needs and preferences.

New systems and services

We are the agency of the Department of Health responsible for delivering the National Programme for IT. Our programme of work includes the following:

1 NHS Care Records Service – will provide electronic health care records for every patient in England. The service is at the centre of all the new systems and services and will deliver health care records whenever and wherever they are needed.

2 Choose and Book – the new electronic booking service. Patients who need to be referred to a specialist for certain conditions now have a choice of at least four hospitals or clinics at a place, date and time that suits them.

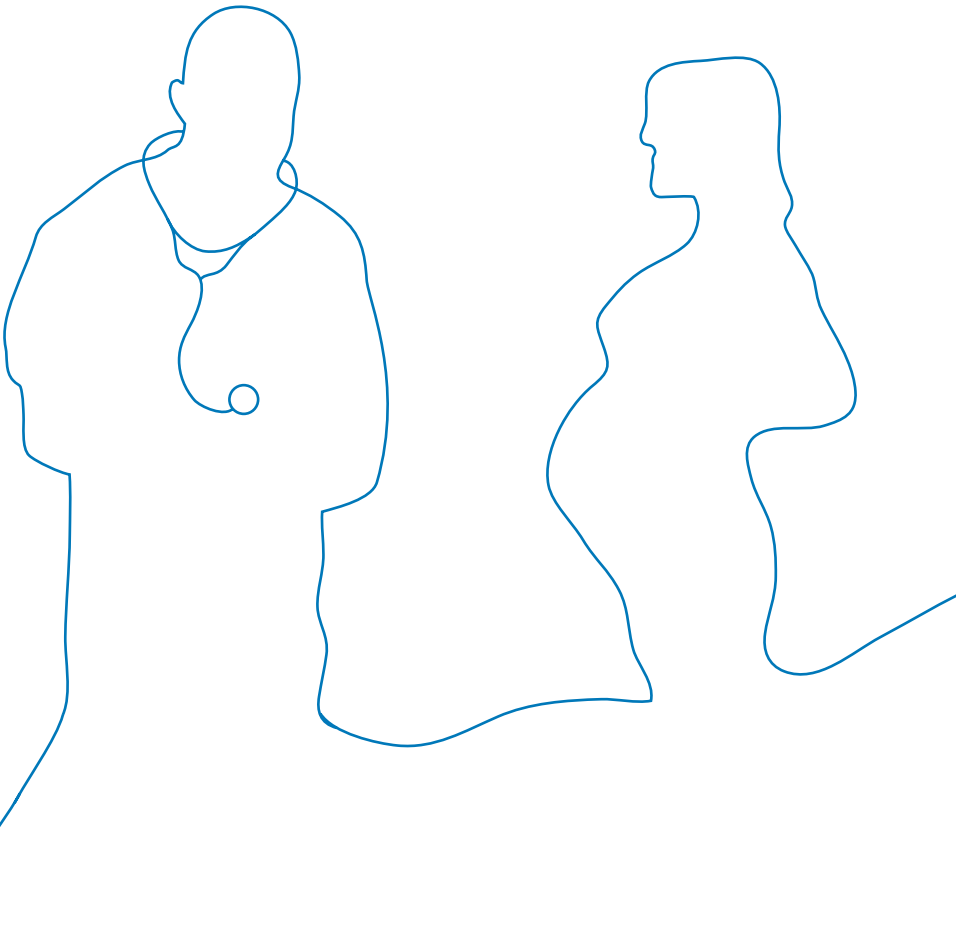
3 Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) – allows a patient's prescription to be sent electronically from their GP to the pharmacy. This makes prescribing and dispensing safer and more convenient for patients.

4 National Network for the NHS (N3) – network services and broadband connections to link IT systems and NHS organisations in England. It makes sure information can be shared reliably and securely.

5 Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS) – images such as X-rays and scans will be available at the touch of a button. These new systems can make diagnosis much faster.

6 IT Supporting GPs – the Quality Management and Analysis System (QMAS) gives GP practices and primary care trusts access to independent evidence and feedback on the care they give to patients. A system for GP-to-GP record transfer will mean GPs can transfer health records safely and efficiently when a patient changes practice.

7 NHSmail – an email and directory service secure enough to allow clinical information to be exchanged.



“These IT systems and services are essential for creating the modern, safer, joined-up NHS to which we all aspire.”

Richard Granger

*Director General of NHS IT and Chief Executive of
NHS Connecting for Health*

Benefits for patients, health professionals and managers

Choice and control

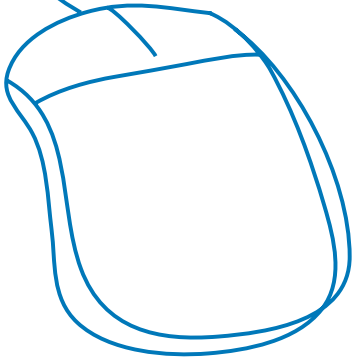
Benefits for patients include:

- information for diagnosis and treatment when and where it is needed, including in an emergency;
- access to parts of a summary of their own health information using a computer;
- more protection for the confidentiality of patients' information; and
- increased safety as fewer mistakes will be made when prescribing and dispensing medication.

Joined-up care

Benefits for health professionals include:

- improved support for diagnosis;
- access to patient records 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- knowing which care providers have been involved with a patient;
- less time on administration by reducing duplicated information and lost test results;
- more efficient referrals and better ways of communicating test results and discharge summaries; and
- increased safety in prescribing and dispensing, including warnings about possible conflicts in treatment.



“The application of knowledge is the single most important thing we can do in the next decade to improve health and treatment of disease. This is why we’re creating a National Knowledge Service for the NHS.”

*Sir Muir Gray
Director of
Knowledge, Process
and Safety*

Modern, efficient information systems

Benefits for managers include:

- better quality information which can be made anonymous far more easily for planning, audits, detecting fraud, carrying out research and managing performance;
- cutting down on the amount of film used and reducing the need for filing and storing paper files.

“I’d sometimes go to the clinic and find they didn’t have my X-rays or notes. That meant going back for another appointment to have more X-rays and more visits to the clinic. I’m sure people would feel a lot better if all the information was there at the right time.”

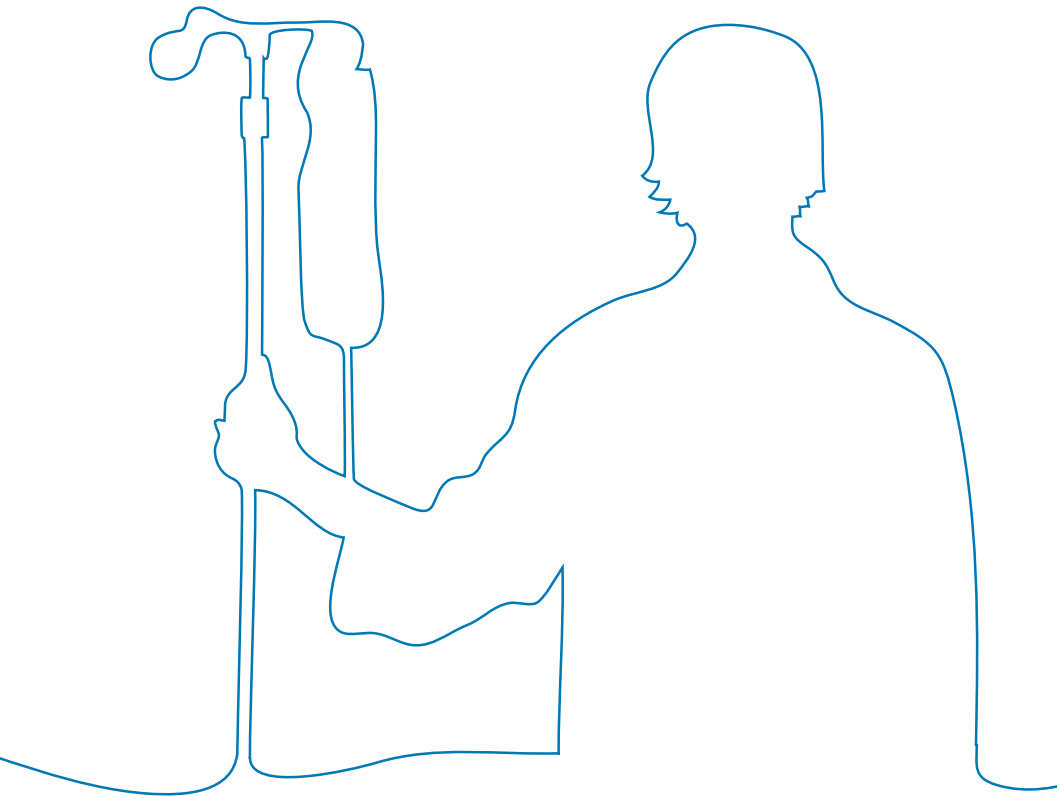
Alexander Baker
NHS patient

“This is going to be a safer system for patients. At the moment records are kept in separate places so it’s difficult for me to know what’s happened to a patient elsewhere. With the new system I will be able to find out.”

Dr Brian Fisher
GP
Lewisham PCT

“Being able to access patients’ information is going to help us save lives. At the moment if an unconscious patient presents to my department we don’t know if they have diabetes or a heart condition or what medication they are on.”

*Mr Sreenath Reddy
A&E Consultant
Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading*



Getting the best from new technology

Our work is more than a project to develop a very big information system. It also involves major changes to the way NHS clinicians and managers carry out their jobs. Our Service Implementation team helps the people who will actually use the technology to achieve the greatest benefit from it.

“New technology has massive potential for the NHS. We acknowledge that changes on this scale mean there will inevitably be challenges to overcome and some things will not go to plan. We’re therefore supporting local health communities to plan for, deliver and maximise benefit from IT investment as part of their overall Integrated Service Improvement Programme.”

Alan Perkins

Group Director, Service Implementation

Developing new skills

We are committed to making sure that staff have the skills they need to use new systems and services. Local organisations will give this training with national support.

“We’re relying on staff to understand, seize and exploit the opportunities that will come from implementing new IT and the better use of information in the NHS.”

*Richard Jeavons
Director of IT Service Implementation
Department of Health*

Communicating about change

We have a large programme of activities to get people involved and tell them about the changes. We are informing and listening to NHS staff and patients to make sure that changes are based on their needs and that they fully understand the choices and opportunities that new systems bring.

“The NHS Care Records Service will make a difference to how patients are cared for and how they care for themselves. We’re committed to making sure we understand what people want and helping them get maximum benefit from the changes.”

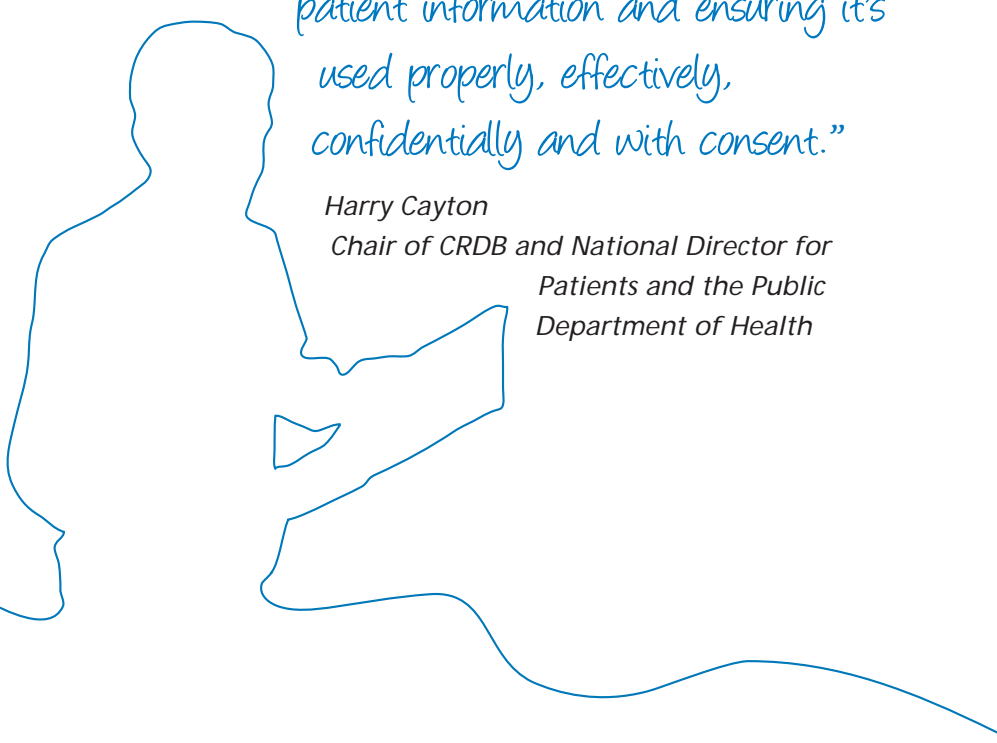
*Marlene Winfield
Head of Public Engagement*

Connecting with clinical staff and patients

Care Record Development Board (CRDB)

The CRDB is independent from us. It offers us advice on ethical matters like the confidentiality of the NHS Care Records Service and how it can best be used to help patients and the NHS staff caring for them. The CRDB has published the NHS Care Record Guarantee for England which tells the public about how their records will be used and kept safe as well as when and how patients can agree to them being shared.

The board gives clinicians, patients and the public a chance to help us improve safety, confidentiality and care in the NHS by developing the NHS Care Records Service.



“We’re protecting the NHS and patient information and ensuring it’s used properly, effectively, confidentially and with consent.”

Harry Cayton

*Chair of CRDB and National Director for Patients and the Public
Department of Health*

Do Once and Share

The 'Do Once and Share' programme is creating national, best practice approaches to care. It brings together teams of clinicians, health care providers and patients to share their knowledge, skills and experience about a particular condition or topic, such as diabetes or maternity.

These new standard approaches to care, which aim to make the best use of new IT, can then be shared across the NHS. The teams also make recommendations on the new IT systems we are developing.

National Clinical Leads

We have national clinical leads for nurses, GPs, hospital doctors and allied health professionals. They work closely with the clinical professional organisations and other organisations such as: the Royal College of GPs; the British Medical Association; and the Royal College of Nursing as well as the clinical chief officers at the Department of Health.

“It’s our role to develop and maintain two-way communication between NHS clinicians and NHS Connecting for Health. We’re making sure clinicians are involved at every stage in designing the new computer systems and developing new working practices.”

*Professor Mike Pringle
Joint GP National Clinical Lead*

What is NHS Connecting for Health?

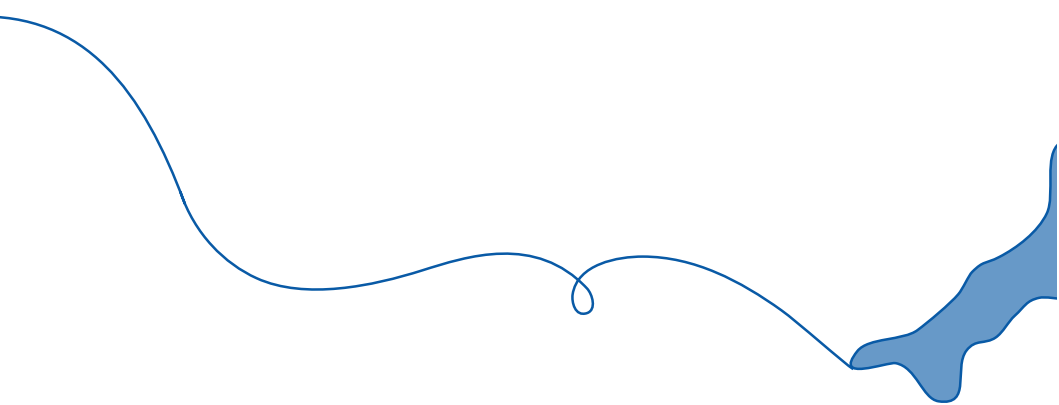
We are the agency of the Department of Health responsible for the National Programme for IT. Our main role is to deliver new, linked IT systems and services to help modernise the NHS and make sure care is centred around the patient.

Suppliers

We work with suppliers and local NHS organisations to put in place new systems and services in planned stages.

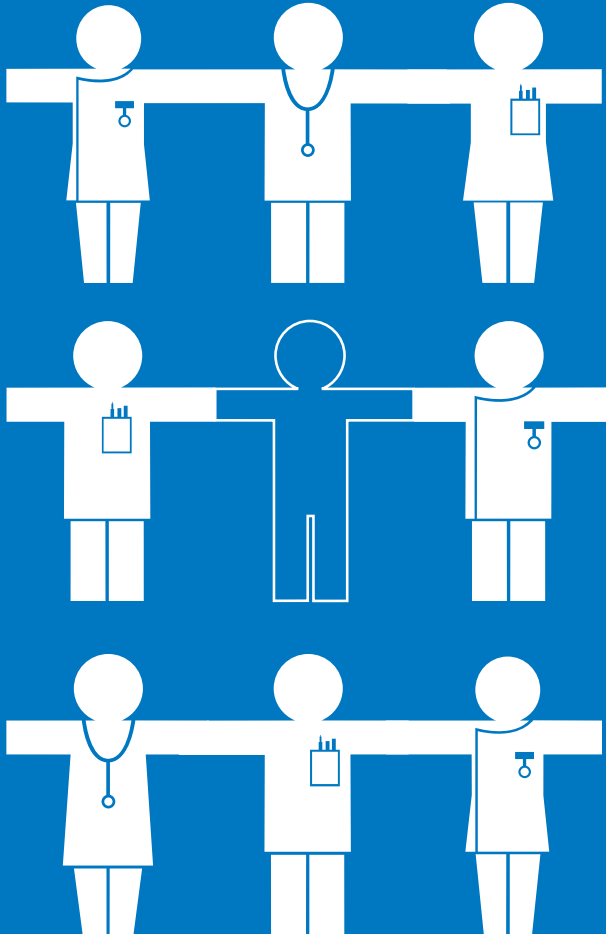
National application service providers are in charge of buying IT systems which all users across England can use.

Local service providers are responsible for IT systems and services in five regions – London, North East, North West and West Midlands, Eastern and Southern. They supply systems to carry out functions locally, and link with the national systems.



NHS Connecting for Health regional clusters





How do I find out more?

We have created a detailed website to provide information. To find out more, please visit www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk.

To get more copies of this brochure, please visit www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/publications, or call 08453 700760 and give reference number 2247.

