



Optical Sector NHS Connectivity Project

March 2018



Where are we now?

What a journey this has been for those involved with the project! We would never have believed at the start just how many hurdles there would be to overcome! Obviously there is the IG Toolkit for practices. Then there has been finding contacts to discuss access to the Summary Care Record – that took some time and then it had to go out to consultation with patient focus groups. That’s nearly done. There’s software accreditation in order to access NHS numbers, we’ve had to go hunting for another 6-figure sum to implement the registration of Smart cards and the roll out of NHS Mail – that is now in hand. Various other hurdles, but they were all factored in when the Newsletter went round last September.



At the risk of more excuses, what’s changed since then? The combination of Brexit and GDPR has had an effect believe it or not. As a result, NHS Digital are requiring some changes to the standard Cegedim server hosting arrangement. Finally, the interfaces for connecting 3rd party systems to NHS eRefer have been late arriving from NHS Digital.

Connections

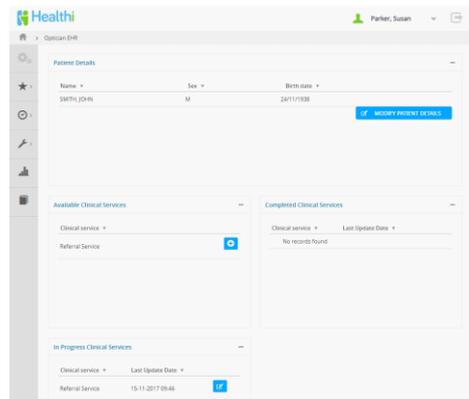
Although most of you completed the IGTK some time ago, our desire has been to avoid anyone paying for a connection until it is needed. However, we are aware that some practices are keen to go ahead because their existing broadband contracts have come to an end. If you are one of these and your connection has not been progressed, please let Trevor (trevorwarburton@tjwarburton.co.uk) or Dharmesh (dharmesh.patel5@nhs.net) know and they will chase it up.



Go Live

So what does this all mean, apart from screaming frustration at the project management end?

The Healthi referral module is now at Beta version two. A decision has been made to roll it out to a very small number of pilot sites in one area but without connecting to the NHS network – this will be a very short phase to pick up any further bugs but will require the final referral to be sent in the current manner. Connection will then follow, with referral direct from the module. This will be followed by the main roll out of connections and access to the module. Smart Cards will follow on – they require face to face meetings for issue and so there will be a number of events arranged. Around the same time, NHS Mail should start to be available – you also need to have completed the IG Toolkit for that.



Healthi Referral System

Referrals

You may have seen that the hoped for funding to replicate the GM project nationally came to naught, but NHS England have committed develop a plan during 2018. This does not affect GM as we are ahead of the game. It also transpires that the requirement for all referrals to be sent by the NHS e-Refer system from October this year only applies to GP referrals. Nevertheless, Trusts are withdrawing fax machines and are pursuing the NHS aim of being paperless quite soon, which has serious implications for urgent referrals.

The Healthi module will, at first, be using NHS Mail to send referrals – this will be seamless to the user – you enter the information, select the destination and Healthi uses a central NHS Mail account to send your referral to the destination. We are working with Trusts to ensure that, as well as central NHS Mail accounts for routine referrals, they have NHS Mail accounts where they currently have fax machines for urgent referrals. When Healthi connects with e-Refer, your user experience will not change, but routine referrals will be transferred using e-Refer. Urgent referrals will still go by NHS Mail

In the light of experience we hesitate to commit, but current projected timescales are:

Mid April	Beta testing
Mid May	Final Testing
Early June	Roll out and go live with electronic direct referral
Early May / late June	Roll out N3 connections
May - Summer	Smart Cards and NHS Mail

Greater Manchester Local Optical Committees