



Ein cyf/Our ref: WQs 86256, 86257, 86258, 86259, 86260

Russell George MS
Member of the Senedd for Montgomeryshire

6 January 2023

Dear Russell,

I am writing to provide further detail on your written questions (WQ86256 to WQ86260) relating to electronic prescribing, which is being delivered by the Digital Medicines Transformation Programme (DMTP). I provided a Written Statement to the Senedd yesterday which addresses a number of your questions, but I also wanted to provide more detailed answers to your specific questions.

The delivery timeframe of three to five years (for the wider portfolio of DMTP delivery), stated in the original launch statement in September 2021, remains unchanged. The Digital Health and Care Wales (DCHW) hosted DMTP has made excellent progress in establishing its key deliverables i.e., 1) Electronic Prescription Service [EPS] (Primary Care), 2) Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration [ePMA] (Secondary Care), 3) Patient Access, and 4) Shared Medicines Record. The Primary Care and Secondary Care deliverables are being enabled by significant and successful engagement across Wales with representatives of General Practitioners Council for Wales and Community Pharmacy Wales (CPW). I meet with DMTP's Senior Responsible Officer and Portfolio Director every two months for them to directly provide me an update, my officials are in weekly contact with the team (so overseeing delivery as planned) given the importance of this Programme for Government priority.

It is important to note that GPs already prescribe via electronic systems in which prescriptions are generated digitally, however there is still a need to print, physically sign and take to a pharmacy for dispensing. The outcome of EPS will be the completion of the digital journey – GPs and other prescribing clinicians will not need to print and physically sign prescriptions, and the prescription can be sent digitally to the preferred (nominated) patient's pharmacy.

Within Primary Care, there are two GP system suppliers and nine pharmacy system suppliers. GPs and pharmacies can choose which supplier they contract with; DMTP is dependent on these commercial suppliers to further develop their systems to work with our services. It is working with all suppliers to align their development with the delivery timeline. One of the challenges in EPS deployment is ensuring both GP and pharmacy systems, in the same geographical area, are able to 'talk' with each other. If not, then EPS cannot yet be rolled out until this is enabled. DMTP is currently identifying where these scenarios exist, and this will inform the phased rollout plan of EPS across Wales.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

DMTP is continuing to work towards a Primary Care Technical Proof of Concept being achieved around the end of this Financial Year. This will technically test an electronic prescription being generated by a GP, routed to a pharmacy for fulfilment by the pharmacy. Subject to this being successful, DMTP will then make it available for a larger number of pilots, in Summer 2023, followed by a national rollout.

To ensure the successful implementation of these pilots and the full rollout, DMTP is also ensuring that GPs and pharmacies have provided the requisite training to their staff – this is a collaborative undertaking with GPCW, CPW and system suppliers.

These are currently the only significant challenges to adoption and are being actively resolved by the DMTP team. I intend to keep the Senedd updated through statements on a half-yearly basis, as well as making any announcements on major milestones as they are achieved.

If you have any further questions on this matter, I will be happy to provide any additional clarifications.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services