



Ein cyf/Our ref: EM/02139/22

James Davies MP
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House of Commons
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Dear James,

Thank you for your letter of 23 May regarding Digital Medicines Transformation in Wales.

As I announced on 27 May (my statement is available at <https://gov.wales/written-statement-update-progress-digital-medicines-transformation-portfolio>) my officials have been working with NHS Digital to agree the implementation of the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) within Welsh primary care settings. Whilst this necessitates the linked implementation of the NHS Spine into Wales, the intent is not to synchronise Welsh patient data over this for NHS England access. The use of the Spine will allow pharmacies in Wales to dispense English generated prescriptions, and vice-versa.

In terms of timelines, my statement above sets out the timelines for the rollout of EPS and other Digital Medicines outputs. Unfortunately, the operation of EPS in England does not afford Wales any increase in speed of deployment, as we are dependent on GP system suppliers, and pharmacy system suppliers, to implement EPS compatibility into their systems utilised in Wales. Whilst these systems are broadly similar, there are separate deployments and so the changes need to be engineered into the Welsh systems. We are working with these companies to progress this as quickly as possible, with engagement to date being extremely positive.

As soon as the dependent software is available, a short pilot will be conducted with a small group of GPs and community pharmacy providers in a small number of geographic areas to ensure it works as expected for the people of Wales, before a rapid all-Wales rollout is commenced. We then plan to extend the rollout of EPS to other primary care prescribers in Wales, such as dentists and optometrists, to give Welsh patients a complete picture of all medicines they are prescribed, not just those from GPs.

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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.

I made a further announcement on 17 June, my statement is available at <https://gov.wales/written-statement-transforming-health-and-social-care-using-digital-and-data-services> illustrating that Wales is making good progress in implementing its National Data Resource (NDR). The NDR will be the single health and social care dataset across Wales, spanning health board and application/digital platform boundaries – sharing primary care, secondary care, and social care data throughout Wales. Our implementation of the NDR negates the need for the Spine, as our data will be held in a single central location - rather than in disparate locations connected via the Spine as it is in England.

Our NHS Wales App, which is due to be launched later this year, allows patients to update their own contact details including postal address; updated details will then be fed into the NDR for onward sharing to all clinical applications across Wales.

There is work currently ongoing, led by Powys Teaching Health Board with Digital Health and Care Wales and working closely with the “Offa4” group of NHS England Trusts that cover the Welsh border areas, on data flows from England to Wales and vice-versa for patients that receive diagnosis or treatment in the neighbouring health service. Engagement between the health services has been positive to date, with all teams involved agreeing on the approach and direction of the work.

I appreciate your offer of assistance in maintaining our existing working relationship with NHS Digital and DHSC. I regularly meet with Lord Kamall, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Technology, Innovation and Life Sciences at DHSC, this subject is one of the agenda items for our next discussion; I will ensure if there is anything I feel you are able to assist with then we will engage with you.

Yours sincerely,



Eluned Morgan AS/MS

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