

HSCN – Your future GP Connectivity

What is HSCN?

The Health and Social Care Network (HSCN) is the replacement connectivity solution for healthcare, providing a solid backbone for the delivery of digital care services. This is replacing the old N3 network - also called the transition Network (TN).

HSCN will provide several advantages over your current connectivity;

- Faster connectivity at reduced prices, thus supporting initiatives such as Digital First, as well as improved performance for primary care systems, e-prescribing etc
- Simplified connectivity with third sector providers, for referrals and discharge notifications

What will happen?

Your CCG HSCN project team will work with your IT supplier / CSU to develop plans for your migration to HSCN. NHS Digital's local HSCN project teams will provide additional guidance and support and ensure all parties understand the various activities required to prepare for a successful migration.

Preparatory Site Visits

Prior to migrating to HSCN, your new connectivity provider will need to visit your premises to carry out preparatory work. These visits will be scheduled with you in advance so there will be time to make staff aware of what is happening. The number of visits will vary from site to site depending on requirements, but your CCG HSCN project manager will provide this information in order to manage expectations. **These preparatory visits will not involve any down-time or loss of connection.**

Migration

The migration itself will require a short period of 'downtime', during which you will not be able to connect to external IT systems. Typically, this lasts about 15 minutes or less.

Over 7000 connections to NHS sites will be migrating between now and August 2020 and migration 'slots' will be limited. In order to avoid delay you should aim to be as flexible as possible when scheduling your migration with your CCG HSCN project lead.

There are options to migrate out of normal working hours. However, these slots are limited, costly and have a higher chance of failure because of reduced technical staff availability.

In the unlikely event that your migration fails, you will be rolled-back to your old connection and **you will not be left without connectivity**. The best way to ensure migration to HSCN is successful first time is to prepare well, following the guidance provided by your CCG HSCN project lead.

Timescales

It is vitally important that you complete your migration to new HSCN connectivity and vacate the legacy Transition Network (previously known as N3) as a matter of urgency and no later than August 2020. Failure to migrate and vacate the legacy network on time will not only delay your access to improved connectivity, it will also require legacy infrastructure to be maintained longer than planned at a cost to the NHS of circa £3m a month. These costs will need to be recovered from organisations with sites still connected to legacy Transition Network services after August 2020.

In order to mitigate any risk of you missing the August 2020 deadline, we are asking you to:

- Be flexible to accommodate the required preparatory site visits by network connectivity engineers;
- Ensure engineers are allowed access as required when they attend scheduled site visits;
- Co-operate with your CCG HSCN migration project team and report any issues or concerns to them;
- Ensure practice staff are aware of preparatory activities and scheduled site visits.

Migration to HSCN is vitally important to the modernisation of the NHS. Those who have already migrated (circa 54% as at end December 2019) are benefitting from significant advances in digital capability as well as saving money for the system. Your support for this work is very much appreciated.

If you have any questions about any of the above please contact your CCG HSCN project lead in the first instance, or contact your local NHS Digital HSCN project lead at hscn.migration@nhs.net .