

**Primary Care Support Services provided by Capita**

**Briefing for (insert name of committee or organisation)**

1. **Introduction**

The contract with Capita started on 1 September 2015 and involves Capita transforming PCS services over the early years of the contract. These services were previously delivered through local offices with significant variation across the country, and under-pinned by out-dated technology at the end of its useful service life. The service has badly needed modernisation and improvement to provide users with much more consistent and effective services, which are also financially sustainable. The contract is saving the NHS and taxpayers tens of millions of pounds a year for reinvestment in frontline NHS care.

Since the contract started there have been a range of changes towards achieving a national service including: standardising work in national PCSE delivery centres; creation of a new Customer Support Centre to handle telephone and email enquiries; a PCSE website has been launched; a portal for primary care contractors to order supplies has been implemented; a new approach to the movement of medical records is being piloted.

While some of these changes have been delivered effectively, we recognise that some have resulted in significant operational issues which have impacted your services. NHS England has been challenging and working closely with Capita over recent months to address concerns and improve the performance of the service. Progress in many areas has been made but we know that there is much more to do until the recovery is fully completed.

1. **Purpose**

NHS England has, to date, held two risk summits, chaired by Dr David Levy, Regional Medical Director, NHS England Midlands and East, to review the risks and mitigations associated with the PCSE contract delivery. The participants from the last risk summit, held on 17th May 2017, requested that a generic update was produced for CCG boards.

This briefing has been prepared to provide CCG Governing Bodies or Quality Forums with reassurance and confidence that the recovery of PCSE services is nearing completion. It also provides detail on next steps and plans for transformation.

We know that many stakeholders have experienced significant issues over the past nine months with the primary care support (PCS) services provided on our behalf by Capita, under the name Primary Care Support England (PCSE). We are sorry that practices, primary care contractors and CCGs have experienced problems with these services. We can assure you that NHS England takes these performance matters very seriously. We recognise that Capita has not been providing the standard of service that both we and you should expect, and my team has been working with Capita to affect improvements to rectify the underlying problems causing the issues.

1. **Supporting Improvement – action taken**

NHS England is committed to supporting Capita in resolving all the remaining issues until PCSE is fully recovered. Capita have reconfirmed their commitment to make every effort to complete the recovery of all PCSE services.

Since the summer of 2016, NHS England has overseen the recovery of Primary Care Support England (PCSE). Although this has been challenging and has required a considerable amount of intensive support from NHS England teams, external stakeholders and subject matter experts, we have continued to see progress and improvements across all Primary Care Support England services. However, there is still more work to do in some areas as service improvement plans and actions are being completed.

Capita have taken significant steps to bolster their operational capacity and capability within PCSE, and have reviewed their processes. A new managing director is now in post to oversee implementation of the operational improvement plans and to restore the on-going stability of the services. In addition, Capita have employed a Chief Medical Officer (Dr Charles Young), to provide clinical oversight and ensure root causes are addressed.

To assist them in this recovery, a team of NHS England experts has been embedded and are working alongside the Capita team to help advise, provide necessary business knowledge and more quickly identify and resolve issues. This team of senior staff is led by Jill Matthews, who previously managed the primary care support service for NHS England.

Whilst NHS England appreciate and regret the disruption these issues have caused for practices, they are confident that the recent short-term difficulties caused by the changes should be more than offset over the medium-term by the efficiencies and improvements which will be delivered through this new contract.

1. **Key Facts by Service Line**
* **National Performers List** (NPL) – improvements are being made to the NPL but this service is now expected to need additional support through to end of August 2017.  NHS England is working closely with Health Education England and membership bodies to ensure that the systems and processes in place continue to support full recovery in this area.
* **Payments and pensions** – general payments are being processed in business as usual timescales.  However, the pace of clearing backlog queries is slower than planned. NHS England is working with Capita to ensure that resolution of outstanding issues is prioritised. Targeted work on pensions is also being delivered with input from NHS Pensions.
* **Patient Registration –** This service line is operating within business as usual timescales
* **Medical Records –** NHS England continues to see positive progress to stabilise the medical records service. For routine record movements, records are now being processed in the central PCSE office within expected timescales and acceptable standards. 98% of requests for urgent medical records requests are being actioned within two days.
* **Customer Support Centre –** NHS England continue to see an improved level and quality of call handling from PCSE’s Customer Support Centre (CSC), and more work remains to be done.  We know that timely acknowledgement and response to queries is a key expectation that is not yet being achieved in all cases. Work is underway to roll out an improved information management system which will support CSC staff and further improve the customer experience.
* **Supplies –** Orders for medical supplies are generally being fulfilled within agreed timeframes.
* **Screening –** PCSE has continued to deliver generally acceptable performance on screening though stakeholder concerns remains about the timeliness and effectiveness of Capita’s responses to screening incidents.
* **Market Entry – Pharmacy** Market Entry service has improved in recent months. However, absolute performance is below expected levels and a joint action plan has been developed with NHS England Local teams to focus on the necessary improvement.
* **Ophthalmic payments –** This service line remains on track but NHS England are aware of some concerns from stakeholders about the accuracy and quality of processing. A significant legacy reconciliation exercise is underway.
* **Complaints and Escalations –**Good progress is being made each week and the number of escalations coming into NHS England from CCGs and practices hasdeclined considerably. For historical and current complaints, PCSE are conducting root cause analysis to identify themes and to put solutions in place to ensure no reoccurrence. PCSE have committed to using data from complaints to influence service improvements which will improve quality and the overall customer experience.
1. **Further plans**

NHS England will continue to hold regular, detailed reviews of the PCSE services with Capita and holds them to account and ensure that every possible effort is being made to deliver the improvements that are needed. There are now service line boards established to oversee detailed operational delivery at a service line level. These boards feed into the overarching Service Management Board which provides the overall oversight of the service. In addition, representatives from NHS England have met with representatives of the BMA and GPC to keep them apprised of developments and the steps they are taking to hold Capita to account and improve performance. NHS England also communicates, on a regular basis, with other membership bodies, NHS England Heads of Primary Care and Communications Leads about progress so that information can be cascaded to CCGs and practices as appropriate.

**Transformation**

The transformation plan for PCSE has been refreshed to reflect the recent operation learning. Each transformation workstream has a project board with stakeholder membership. These project boards review the transformation plans and assesses the operational readiness of the existing services as part of a go-live decision on any new services.

This operational readiness assessment has included confirming that the existing operation is stable and backlogs have been addressed.  This approach will be applied to all future changes.

The next phase of transformation has recently begun with the rollout of the national records solution following a pilot phase in Yorkshire and Humber.

In parallel, NHS England will continue to work with Capita on the delivery of transformation which has already started with the roll out of the national medical records solution.

1. **Clinical Oversight**

Capita have recruited a chief medical officer, Dr Charles Young to provide clinical oversight, advice and guidance to all service line leads. Dr Young is supported by a team of specialist advisors in areas of information and clinical governance, patient safety and risk management

1. **Risks and Mitigations**

NHS England has seen good progress in many areas and confidence is drawn from seeing incremental improvements week by week in the delivery of the rectification actions and clearance of backlogs.  The exceptions to this are the Performers List and GP Payments and Pensions. NHS England’s Audit and Risk Committee receive regular update papers on the risks and mitigations connected to the PCSE contract.

1. **Communications and portal registration**

PCSE produce a series of monthly updates for GPs, dentists, pharmacists and optometrists. These updates, which are sent to a named contact within each practice, contain practical and useful information about the service lines and are tailored for each sector. PCSE also conduct regular user satisfaction surveys and invites practices to take part.

We understand, from PCSE, that some practices are not registered on the portal and won’t therefore receive these updates. The portal is now the quickest and easiest way for ordering and tracking supplies from PCSE, including prescription pads and other NHS stationery, pre-printed forms, needles and syringes.

NHS England and Capita would encourage any practice, not yet registered on the PCSE Portal, to do so.  GP practices will also be able to track the movement of records on the portal as the new service is rolled-out across England.

Once registered on the portal, practices will receive regular email updates on any changes to services.  Information on how to register to use the portal can be found on the PCSE website: [www.pcse.england.nhs.uk/register](http://www.pcse.england.nhs.uk/register). Please ensure that, when registering, NHS.net email addresses are used.

1. **Additional concerns**

If practices have any concerns, we suggest they raise these with the PCSE National Engagement Team local managers. A list of these people can be found at http://pcse.england.nhs.uk/net/. If a satisfactory resolution to any issues is not achieved, then concerns can escalated to NHS England’s Service Management Team at england.smtinfo@nhs.net.

**End of briefing.**