

Sponsoring Organisation: NHS CFH/DH	Implementation Date:	Immediate
Department of Health	Subject: NHS Number Information Standards: NHS Number Standard for General Practice (England)	
DATA SET CHANGE NOTICE		
<p>This DSCN informs users of the approval of a new information requirement or information standard by the Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care (ISB HaSC).</p> <p>This was approved by ISB HaSC at its meeting on 17 December 2008.</p>		
Summary:		
<p>The NHS Number Standard for General Practice (England) is one of many standards which will mandate the use of the NHS Number in different sectors of the Health Service and Social Care.</p> <p>The Standard is required to reflect, support and enable the mandated use of the NHS Number as set out in the NHS Operating Framework 2008/9 and 2009/10.</p> <p>This Standard addresses the needs of the following stakeholders related to General Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patients• NHS staff (directly or indirectly involved in patient care)• Staff contracted to, or in organisations contracted to, the NHS (directly or indirectly involved in patient care)• NHS CFH staff• Suppliers providing IM&T systems and services for NHS care		
Scope:		
<p>Primary Care General Practice (medical).</p> <p>The following care settings, of which some are considered General Practice, are out of scope for this Standard and will be covered in future Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Care (provided outside of the practice)• Social Care• GP Out of Hours services• GP services provided in any care setting outside of the practice (other than home visits) <p>The Standard details Compliance Requirements which are divided into three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IM&T Systems• Human Behaviour and Business Processes• Awareness, Communications and Training		
Timelines:		
<p>Implementation to begin immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IM&T Systems that do not conform to the Standard must not be procured after 30 June 2009.		

- IM&T Systems that do not conform to the Standard must not be installed after 31 December 2009.
- IM&T Systems must conform to the Standard by 31 December 2009.
- The NHS has a corporate duty to use technology effectively and safely. In this context, where a General Practice has an information system that fully conforms to the NHS Number standard prior to 31 December 2009, it is the expectation that full Human Behavioural and Business [Organisational] process conformance will be achieved within 12 months or less of the information system becoming operational, with all General Practices being conformant by 31 December 2010.
- General Practices must conform to all Awareness, Communications and Training Conformance Requirements by 31 December 2009.

Datasets / return affected:

There are no datasets specifically addressed in the Standard.

Related DSCNs:

Advance Notification AN/0803

Impact of Change:

Service: Dependent on current conformance

System Suppliers: Dependent on current conformance

The Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care (ISB HaSC) is responsible for approving information standards. Submission documents and the ISB HaSC Board output relating to the approval of this standard can be found at:

<http://www.isb.nhs.uk/docs/instantiations/nhs-number>

DATA SET CHANGE NOTICE

Reference No:	31/2008
Version No:	1.1
Subject:	NHS Number Standard for General Practice (England)
Type of Change:	Introduction of a new approved information requirement or information standard
Implementation Date:	Immediate
Business Justification:	Improved patient safety through the use of the NHS Number as a unique patient identifier. Support for the mandation of the NHS Number in the NHS Operating Framework 2008/09 and 2009/10, and the NHS Number Safer Practice Notice.

Introduction

Purpose

The NHS Number has been defined in the NHS Data Dictionary, is in use within the NHS and is used as the primary identifier for patients in General Practice. However, there is no clearly defined guidance or standard indicating how, when and why the number should be used. The use of the NHS Number is inconsistent, both in quality and quantity, across NHS organisations. NHS Numbers are not always used in the way required to reflect, support and enable the requirement set out in the NHS Operating Framework 2008/9 and confirmed in the NHS Operating Framework 2009/10.

This standard seeks to explain what is required to address the Customer Need, detailed in section 1.5, and to give guidance to primary care providers in General Practice and IT system suppliers on how this can be achieved.

This Standard forms part of a wider initiative: the NHS Number Programme has been set up to provide information, guidance and support to the NHS, to effect the necessary business change across all care settings.

Scope

Use within General Practice

- The use of the NHS Number is fundamental to the operation of the NHS Care Records Service (NHS CRS), as well as NHS operations in general, and must be used in all NHS care settings as the National Unique Patient Identifier. Additionally the NHS Number must be included on all patient level communications that transfer/cross NHS system or organisational boundaries.
- This Standard is applicable for use in any General Practice setting. This Standard should be applied to all Patient Identifiable Data and records regardless of their retention form, i.e. hard copy or electronic.
- This Standard is applicable to all General Practice staff who must ensure that any Patient Identifiable Data, be it clinical or administrative, has an NHS Number attributed to it.
- The use of the NHS Number will be mandated in all (appropriate) processes, procedures and systems, in General Practice.
- It is recognised that there is an educational element to this requirement. The introduction of the NHS Number will require a comprehensive communication campaign to highlight the value

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of this data element to patients and clinicians alike. The campaign will include an awareness campaign aimed at both administrative and clinical staff.

Use by Suppliers and Infrastructure Support

- The use of the NHS Number will be mandated in all (appropriate) processes, procedures and systems as defined in the NHS Care Records Service (NCRS), NASP (National Application Service Provider) and Local Service Provider (LSP) Contract Schedules, and for all other purposes where Patient Identifiable Data is stored, communicated or processed.
- The use of the NHS Number will be mandated in all (appropriate) processes, procedures and systems as defined within the Existing Systems Programme (ESP), part of NHS CFH, and for all other purposes where Patient Identifiable Data is stored, communicated or processed.
- In support of mandating the NHS Number in NHS business and clinical systems, the Common User Interface (CUI) Programme within NHS Connecting for Health has submitted a display standard to the Information Standards Board for Health and Social Care (ISB HaSC). At the time of submission of this Standard, the CUI Display Standard has been approved at the requirement stage.
- It is recognised that there is an educational element to this requirement. The introduction of the NHS Number will require a comprehensive communication campaign. Supplier organisations should ensure that all users are aware of the NHS Number and the links to patient safety, where possible these messages should be included in training manuals.

Out of Scope

The following care settings, of which some are considered General Practice, are out of scope for this Standard and will be covered in future Standards:

- Community Care (provided outside of the practice)
- Social Care
- GP Out of Hours services
- GP services provided in any care setting outside of the practice (other than home visits)

NHS practice is to not issue identifiers to foetuses in utero; therefore foetuses in utero are out of scope for this Standard.

Details of Change

The specification for this standard is described below in the form of conformance requirements, i.e. what needs to be done in order to conform to the standard.

These requirements are either mandated requirements (i.e. "**must**") or recommended requirements (i.e. "**should**").

- **must**: This word means that the definition is an absolute requirement of the specification.
- **should**: This word means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications **must** be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course of action.

Note: Some requirements that are a **must** may also have a caveat, exception or other clause indicating specific cases where the requirement may not be applicable.

These conformance requirements apply, as appropriate, to:

- All staff in NHS organisations involved in patient care in General Practice
- All staff contracted to the NHS involved in patient care in General Practice

- All staff in organisations contracted to the NHS involved in patient care in General Practice
- All staff working in, or contracted to, organisations involved in the delivery of systems, services or infrastructure support for General Practice
- All “Applicable Systems” (see below)

Please note: “involved in patient care” refers to those directly or indirectly providing patient care and those providing administrative, clerical, strategic or managerial support directly or indirectly related to patient care.

The following conformance requirements relate to “Applicable Systems”. The determination of an Applicable System will be the subject of a local clinical risk assessment:

It is expected that not all systems within an organisation will need to conform to the Standard; each General Practice will need to undertake a local safety risk assessment which will identify which systems need to conform.

This assessment will need to consider the following criteria for any system that holds patient demographics:

- Does the system act as a master index to flow Patient Identifiable Data and NHS Numbers to other systems?
- Will the system be used to produce hard-copy outputs containing Patient Identifiable Data? (this includes patient facing information such as appointment letters)
- Does the system need to transfer information between organisations?
- Will the NHS Number ever be required to be stored against Patient Identifiable Data in the system (e.g. for audit purposes)?

If the answer to any of the above is Yes then it is an Applicable System.

IM&T Systems Conformance Requirements:

NN-GP-SR-01	<i>Applicable Systems must be capable of storing the NHS Number on patient records.</i>
NN-GP-SR-02	<i>Applicable Systems must allow users to find a patient record using the NHS Number as the only search criterion.</i>
NN-GP-SR-03	<i>Applicable Systems must allow users to find a patient record using the NHS Number as part of the search criteria in conjunction with other demographic information.</i>
NN-GP-SR-04	<i>Applicable Systems must allow users to find a patient record without using the NHS Number as part of the search criteria.</i>
NN-GP-SR-05	<p><i>Applicable Systems must include the NHS Number in any Patient Identifiable Data sent electronically, with the following exceptions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the NHS Number is not available at time of transmission</i> • <i>it is not possible for the receiving system to be developed/configured to accept the message</i> • <i>the use of the NHS Number is not in conflict with other requirements or policies*.</i> <p><i>Only verified NHS Numbers should be sent electronically.</i></p> <p><i>*Other requirements or policies may relate to, for example, sexual health, where the NHS Number is not included in order to secure patients’ identity.</i></p>
NN-GP-SR-06	<i>Applicable Systems must display the NHS Number on any screen showing Patient</i>

	<i>Identifiable Data (if available).</i>
NN-GP-SR-07	<i>Applicable Systems must include the NHS Number on all hard-copy outputs containing Patient Identifiable Data (if available at time of output). Additional patient demographic information must also be included.</i>
NN-GP-SR-08	<i>Applicable Systems must only display and print the NHS Number in 3 3 4 format (e.g. 123 456 7890).</i>
NN-GP-SR-09	<i>Applicable Systems must allow the NHS Number to be input, into the appropriate data input field on the screen, as 10 digits with or without spaces.</i>
NN-GP-SR-10	<i>Applicable Systems must validate (both format and check-digit) the NHS Number when input.</i>
NN-GP-SR-11	<i>Applicable Systems should be capable of reporting patient records without an NHS Number recorded.</i>
NN-GP-SR-12	<i>Applicable Systems should also include a bar coded or RFID equivalent of the NHS Number on all hard-copy outputs containing Patient Identifiable Data.</i>

Human Behaviour and Business Process Requirements:

NN-GP-BR-01	<i>The patient's NHS Number should always be included as part of all communications, correspondence and filing systems involving Patient Identifiable Data. Additional patient demographic information must also be included with the NHS Number.</i>
NN-GP-BR-02	<i>When supplied, the NHS Number should be used to find a local electronic patient record.</i>
NN-GP-BR-03	<i>When the NHS Number is used to retrieve an electronic record other demographic information supplied must be used to confirm the patient's identity and that the record retrieved belongs to that patient.</i>
NN-GP-BR-04	<i>Patients should be asked for their NHS Number when contacting the practice.</i>
NN-GP-BR-05	<i>When an NHS Number is allocated it should be given to the patient in writing.</i>

Awareness, Communications and Training Requirements:

NN-GP-CR-01	<i>Practices must promote the importance and use of the NHS Number to all staff.</i>
NN-GP-CR-02	<i>Practices must promote the importance of the NHS Number to all patients.</i>
NN-GP-CR-03	<i>Practices must have processes in place to ensure that patients know their NHS Numbers and are able to supply them when presenting to or contacting any NHS provider organisation.</i>
NN-GP-CR-04	<i>Practices must ensure all staff are trained in the correct use of IM&T systems, human behaviours and business processes required to support this Standard.</i>

Note: The Standard contains full details of the Conformance Requirements, with notes and references to relevant sections in the Standard.

Timescales for Implementation / Change

FRAMEWORK	Health and Social Care Personnel	Organisation ^{Error!} Reference source not found.	IT Suppliers ^{Error!} Reference source not found.
Effective Date ^{Error! Reference source not found.} "may use"	Immediate		
Implementation Date ^{Error! Reference source not found.} "must use"	Immediate		
Conformance Date ^{Error! Reference source not found.} "must be used effectively and assessed for use"	(as per Organisation)	<p>The NHS has a corporate duty to use technology effectively and safely. In this context, where a General Practice has an information system that fully conforms to the NHS Number standard prior to 31 December 2009, it is the expectation that full Human Behavioural and Business [Organisational] process conformance will be achieved within 12 months or less of the information system becoming operational, with all General Practices being conformant by 31 December 2010.</p> <p>General Practices must conform to all Awareness, Communications and Training Conformance Requirements by 31st December</p>	<p>IM&T Systems that do not conform to the Standard must not be procured after 30 June 2009.</p> <p>IM&T Systems that do not conform to the Standard must not be installed after 31 December 2009.</p> <p>IM&T Systems must conform to the Standard by 31 December 2009.</p>

		2009	
Superseded Date (of prior standard) <small>Error! Reference source not found.</small> "stop using prior standard"	N/A	N/A	N/A

Effects on Other Information Standards

This Standard has been developed alongside the NHS Number Standard for Secondary Care (England).

Sponsor Details

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Further Information and Support

The NHS Number Programme Guidance, available at the website below, has been issued to support this Standard.

Further information can be obtained from the NHS Number Programme:

Website: <http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/systemsandservices/nhsnumber>

E-mail: nhsnumber@nhs.net