

Briefing:	E-Briefing to Public Representatives 7 April 2025
Director:	<p>Teresa Molloy, Director of Planning, Performance & Corporate Services, Western Trust (SRO for encompass)</p> <p>Dr Neil Black, Consultant, Western Trust (Chief Clinical Information Officer and medical lead for encompass)</p>
Issue Title:	Encompass Project – update briefing
Regional context	<p>encompass is a Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI) wide initiative that will introduce a clinically and operationally led integrated electronic care record to every citizen in Northern Ireland. It is being introduced to help improve Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland. Having one record will reduce the need for information to be stored across a lot of older systems. It will also allow healthcare staff to see the right information at the right time. Staff will be able to work more effectively because they won't need paper forms and will be able to spend more time with patients, clients, and services users. encompass will help contribute positively to patient safety as the system will help prevent mistakes being made.</p> <p>The encompass programme is a long standing DoH Strategic Transformation Programme, and a flagship of the Digital Transformation of HSCNI. The encompass system is procured from a 3rd party vendor - EPIC – who have supported health systems across the globe to introduce integrated electronic health and care records.</p> <p>encompass was implemented in the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (SEHSCT) in November 2023, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) in June 2024 and Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) in November 2024. Western and Southern Trusts are in preparation for the final encompass Go-Live on 8 May 2025. At this point Northern Ireland will be the first nation with a fully integrated health and social care patient record.</p>
Project plan and readiness assessment	<p>The first Go-Live Readiness Assessment (150 day) was held on 19 December 2024. This was a pivotal event for the Western Trust and each responsible owner reported on their assessed status for readiness, including any identified risks and mitigations. Formal Go-Live readiness assessments have been approximately every 30 days since then to assess readiness and address any potential risks to the plan.</p> <p>A Readiness Checklist is provided by the Trust PMO (Project Management Office) to each Directorate Operational Readiness Assurance Board, chaired at Director level. This is a measurement tool to assess ongoing readiness and provide updates at the Go-Live Readiness Assessment events. Activities remain on track against the project plan at this point.</p> <p>The final 30 day Go-Live Readiness Assessment will be held in April 2025.</p> <p>At this point, the Western Trust is on track for the planned go-live.</p>

Enabling activities in the programme

TRAINING

Training of all staff who will use the system is critical to the success of the project and EPIC have a requirement that all staff are trained and formally accredited prior to using the system. Their mantra is “no training, no access, no kidding”.

Each Trust is required to train a high proportion of staff early as “super users”. These staff are team members who have more advanced training and exposure to the system prior to go live, and can provide “at the elbow” support to the End Users over and after go-live.

Over 11,000 Trust staff will be trained during the preparations for go-live.

ENABLING WORKS

A range of estates and ICT enabling works were undertaken during 2024 and early 2025, to ensure readiness for the additional digital devices, with new cabling, power and data points, and considerable network investment. This work is largely complete and is focussing on change requests from services currently.

END USER DEVICE DEPLOYMENT AND TECHNICAL DRESS REHEARSAL (TDR)

As the patient record will become fully electronic, a significant uplift in the number of devices across all services has been required, with over 10,000 unique devices rolled out, increasing the digital asset base of the Trust significantly.

TDR is an exercise to ensure every device is tested in situ by logging on, printing and encompass applications opened. TDR commenced on 3 February 2025 and has been a challenging programme of work to complete, however all priority areas will be encompass go-live ready in time.

DATA MIGRATION

Thousands of patient records will be migrated from “legacy” systems to encompass and most of these will be done through a structured electronic data migration (eDM) programme. There will also be a significant manual data migration (mDM) required, particularly where information will need to be drawn across from non-electronic systems of patient booking. Patient and client booking and workflow will move onto new encompass clinic templates and away from legacy electronic or paper based systems.

This will involve a significant workload for services and they are being supported with “big weekends” where additional resources are being brought in to supplement the data transfer with manual data input.

BEDDED CUTOVER

This will involve the formal transfer of patients in our hospitals onto the encompass system in the days prior to our go-live

	<p><u>BUSINESS CONTINUITY</u></p> <p>Business Continuity Access Strategy has been agreed, and will move to implementation. This will cover planned and unplanned downtime on the encompass system.</p>
Service assessments	<p>Each service formally assesses progress through an “Operational Readiness Board”, and applies a Red/Amber/Green assessment for each GLRA.</p> <p>At this stage of the Western Trust project there are minimal areas assessed Red, which gives confidence in the readiness of that service to go-live successfully.</p>
Governance & Oversight	<p>There have been robust governance processes in place throughout the encompass programme, and it has been subject to Gateway Reviews and an Internal audit in each Trust prior to their go live.</p> <p>Each Trust monitors progress through formal project board arrangements, and currently holds a weekly meeting of its CMT to oversee the key areas and whether milestones are being met.</p> <p>GLRAs are the formal mechanism to assess progress and risk each 30 days, and give assurance that delivery is on track and risk is being managed.</p>
EPIC Care Link	<p>The health and care information held about you on the electronic record will be available to your GP once you have been seen or treated in the Western Trust post go-live, on a “read only” basis. GPs will not be able to change or add to the electronic record.</p>
MyCare	<p>encompass will make it possible for patients, or a relative or caregiver acting on their behalf, to access their electronic record, they will be able to view appointments and view health and care information about them and their condition.</p> <p>This is done simply though the EPIC MyChart app, and the identification and registration process is completed using secure identification via NI Direct.</p>
Impact on activity and efforts to stabilise post go-live	<p>As each Trust goes live, steps are taken to maintain 24/7, unscheduled and crisis services, where necessary through collaboration with neighbouring Trusts.</p> <p>There is also a process to examine the potential impact of red flag referrals for planned care, and how these can be best managed.</p> <p>This planning work is underway currently, and achievable activity levels have been agreed with services on the days and weeks after go-live, while staff become familiar with the new system and workflows.</p> <p>There will be a process to formally monitor stabilisation of services over the 6-8 weeks after go-live and to continue to monitor and problem solve with issues that arise thereafter.</p>

Benefits

Benefits for Everyone:

encompass will make it possible for patients, or a relative or caregiver acting on their behalf, to stay better informed. It will also enable them to manage their own health and social care experience.

encompass will allow patients or their carers to:

- View, make, and manage their appointments
- View test results
- View health and wellbeing information about them and their condition
- Manage medicines and prescriptions
- Choose how they want to communicate to health and social care staff
- Contact health and care professionals directly
- Provide information before going to appointments, allowing for more time with care professionals

encompass will provide improved continuity of care for HSC patients, clients and service users.

- Those who deliver care will have secure access to real-time patient information, helping to reduce duplication of services and minimising the risk of errors
- Patients will not have to repeat information to different professionals providing care or have to repeat tests in different locations
- Patients will be able to provide relevant, up-to-date information to support the professionals looking after them to manage their condition better

Benefits for HSC staff:

Staff will be able to work more effectively because they will be able to spend more time with patients, clients, and services users. encompass will help contribute positively to patient safety as the system will help prevent mistakes being made.

One patient, one record, one system, one place

- A new electronic system with all patient information in one place
- No paper files and a single spot for information as encompass replaces many old computer systems
- Improved patient safety and quality of care
- Safe and private patient information
- Patients will not have to repeat their stories or have repeated tests
- Improved outcomes and preventative care to prevent ill health
- Information to help give patients with long term conditions the ongoing support they need.
- Better planning for services by giving us good quality information

Improved patient safety and quality of care

- Fewer mistakes when prescribing medicine
- Fewer mistakes when giving medicine
- Lower risk of hospital acquired venous thromboembolism (VTE)
- Fewer deaths from Sepsis

- Lower Risk Adjusted Mortality index scores
- Better access to information on mobile technology while in the community
- Faster access to information no matter where care takes place

Better access to patient and client information at point of care

- Many staff will have mobile technology. This means that they can see the information they need wherever they are. It also means they can record any new information right away.
- Health care staff will be able to order tests, write notes, record diagnoses, prescribe medicine, refer, and send messages to their patients in one system.

Improved work processes for those providing and supporting care

- Teamwork is easier, handovers of care are safer and quicker.
- Less duplication and form filling.
- Less money will be spent on producing, storing, and managing paper records and forms.
- More time spent caring for patients and clients.