

Important Communication

To: All GP practices in Southampton, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight

From: University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust Emergency Department

Date: Friday 12th November 2021

Re: Electronic system failure in sending ED attendance summaries to GP practices

In May 2021 we notified you of an issue within the IT system, Symphony, used by our emergency department (ED).

EMIS Health, the third-party supplier of the system, had identified a problem affecting several healthcare organisations across the country. The intermittent problem meant that some ED attendance summaries over the past five years had not been electronically transferred to GPs so you may not have been informed that a patient registered at your practice had presented at our ED.

We are writing to you again to update you on the progress we have made since our last communication and to provide assurance that this issue has now been resolved.

Our IT department and EMIS Health have worked together to develop and install a 'patch' which rectifies the cause of the problem. Additionally, this resolves a secondary issue reported to us by a small number of GP practices whereby some attendance summaries were being generated multiple times resulting in the receipt of duplicate documents. We are also continuing to review the historic documents individually and are pleased to confirm that, as yet, we have not identified any instances of patient harm as a result. If any patient harm is identified as a result of our review we will contact the patient concerned and explain what has happened in an open and transparent way. Should any further follow-up be required then we will ensure that the patient's GP is kept informed. Any claims that arise will be dealt with by the Trust on an individual basis as the circumstances will vary from patient to patient.

We have also worked with a local GP practice to trial resending a sample of historic documents, as well as with the Southampton Primary Care Quality Lead to ensure that these contain the appropriate information and that they merge into the correct patient record. To aid this we will use the NHS Spine to ensure that the document is sent to the patient's most recently recorded GP practice. Historic summaries for patients who are since deceased will not be sent.

This means that from Monday 15th November we will be able to start sending the historic documents to you. A batch of documents will be generated daily over the coming weeks with no more than 10 documents per GP practice each day to ensure that no single practice is overloaded with an unmanageable amount to acknowledge at any one time. These will be clearly marked as a historic document to ensure that you can distinguish these from any current ones you are receiving.

Approximately 50% of practices will have received all outstanding notifications within one week, and 70% of practices within 4 weeks. There are a small number of practices which will take over 10 weeks and we will be contacting those practices individually to discuss this further.

You are not required to do anything with these records beyond acknowledging them and incorporating them into your patient record as we continue to review these to identify if any clinical action is still required.

Should you have any queries regarding this matter please email this designated email address:
EDGPQueries@uhs.nhs.uk.

Thank you for your patience and understanding whilst we resolved this issue.

Kind regards,

Sarah Herbert
Deputy Chief Nursing Officer

Patients First, Working Together, Always Improving

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust