E-Sign (UK) Ltd

Case Study for NCHA

National Clinical Homecare Association

E-Sign

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Industry Healthcare	**Solution** Bespoke integration with Microsoft Power Automate	**1m+** **Usage** 1 Million prescriptions per year
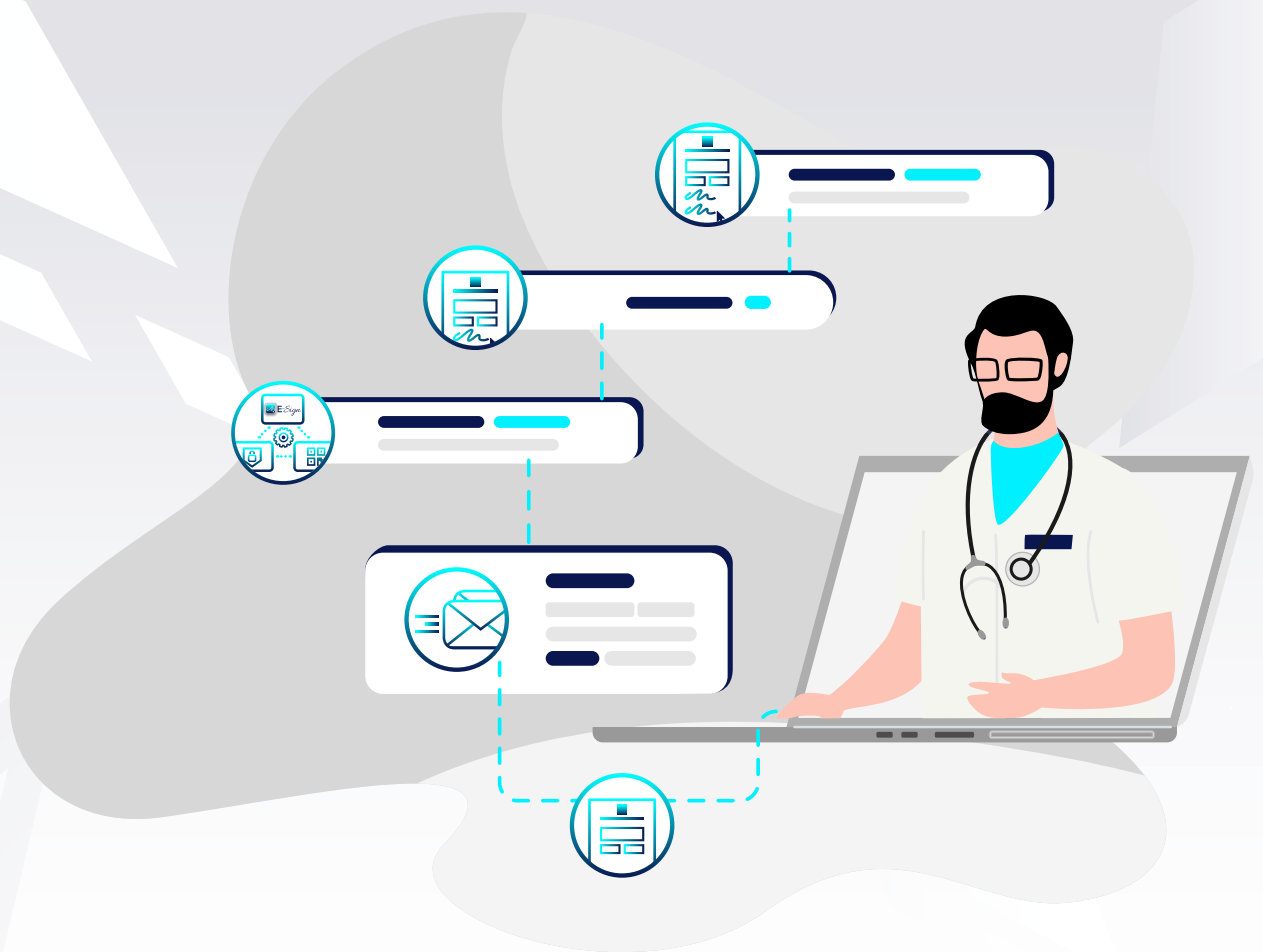
Digitisation of NHS prescriptions using E-Sign secure technology for National Clinical Homecare Association (NCHA)

The National Clinical Homecare Association (NCHA) was established in 2006 to represent and promote the patient-led interests of specific organisations whose primary activity is to provide medical supplies, support and clinical services to patients in the community.

The NCHA is at the forefront of ensuring high standards are applied across the industry working closely with NHS Trusts, NHS Commercial Medicines Unit, NHS England, NHS Scotland, NHS Wales and other commissioners to ensure patients who wish to, are able to access high quality clinical homecare services.

The National Clinical Homecare Association (NCHA) is the trade body for the clinical homecare industry, representing the majority of organisations providing Clinical Homecare Services. Part of its remit is to agree industry-wide positions and solutions that can help to improve clinical homecare for patients. The NCHA had a requirement to harmonise prescription processing for patients in clinical home care. The existing paper-based workflow often led to unnecessary delays in patients receiving appropriate care and medical treatment, especially those patients who were deemed to be 'at risk'. The problems of dealing with physical documents had been exacerbated by staff working from home as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There had, for example, been some high profile cases of NHS prescriptions going 'missing'. The healthcare industry clearly recognised the need to adopt a digital approach to prescription processing, giving operational advantages, regulatory compliance and improvements to patient safety. The NCHA put out a tender for a single, standardised digital solution that would work across all providers and hospitals, with minimum effort from the NHS.
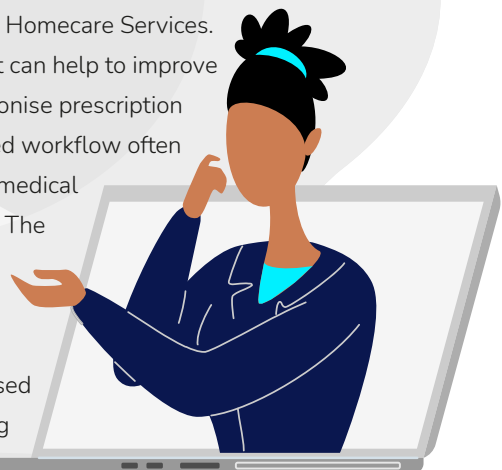
Key issues addressed

- One trust was a 3-site hospital and needed to transfer prescriptions across site as routine process.
- This not only poses a risk for misplacement of documents but also represents a time delay for transport. Mitigating mechanisms and audit logs required huge time investment to complete.
- Paper based prescriptions were slowing down the processing of the prescriptions as it was reliant on the paper copy being available to the correct person at the correct time, i.e. the prescriber, the clinical screening pharmacist, the clinical homecare team and the clinical homecare providers.
- At each step there is time needed not only for the activity but to transfer to the next step in the process, causing delays and potential stress and anxiety to patients.
- Meeting NHS and individual trust requirements in relation to Information Governance and Security.

> *Out of twenty companies who responded, we chose E-Sign because they were the most responsive, understood the challenges involved and helped us to build a robust, persuasive business case behind the project."*
>
> *Given the scale of prescriptions going through, it was also important that a cost effective solution could be delivered.*
>
> **Chris Carver, Chief Operating Officer, HealthNet Homecare**

E-Sign's digital transformation team worked with stakeholders involved in the digital prescription project to generate a business value map. The strategic goal was to have a universal and scalable solution that addressed all of the issues relating to paper-based prescription transport. E-Sign created a functional application to meet the needs of multiple clinical homecare providers, each with differing software and processes. The solution linked E-Sign to Microsoft Power Automate, creating a 'low-code', cost-effective solution that allowed healthcare providers to easily construct their bespoke digital prescription workflows at a departmental level, whilst having a single solution that could be adopted by the different care providers under the NCHA umbrella.

In each case, the Trust made an assessment of the relative risks in relation to Information Governance and Security or similar to reinforce the compliance with NHS data security and privacy requirements.

> *A number of the clinical home care providers were at different stages in their IT maturity and experience, so it was a real learning experience, but there has been support from E-Sign to help people get up and running.*
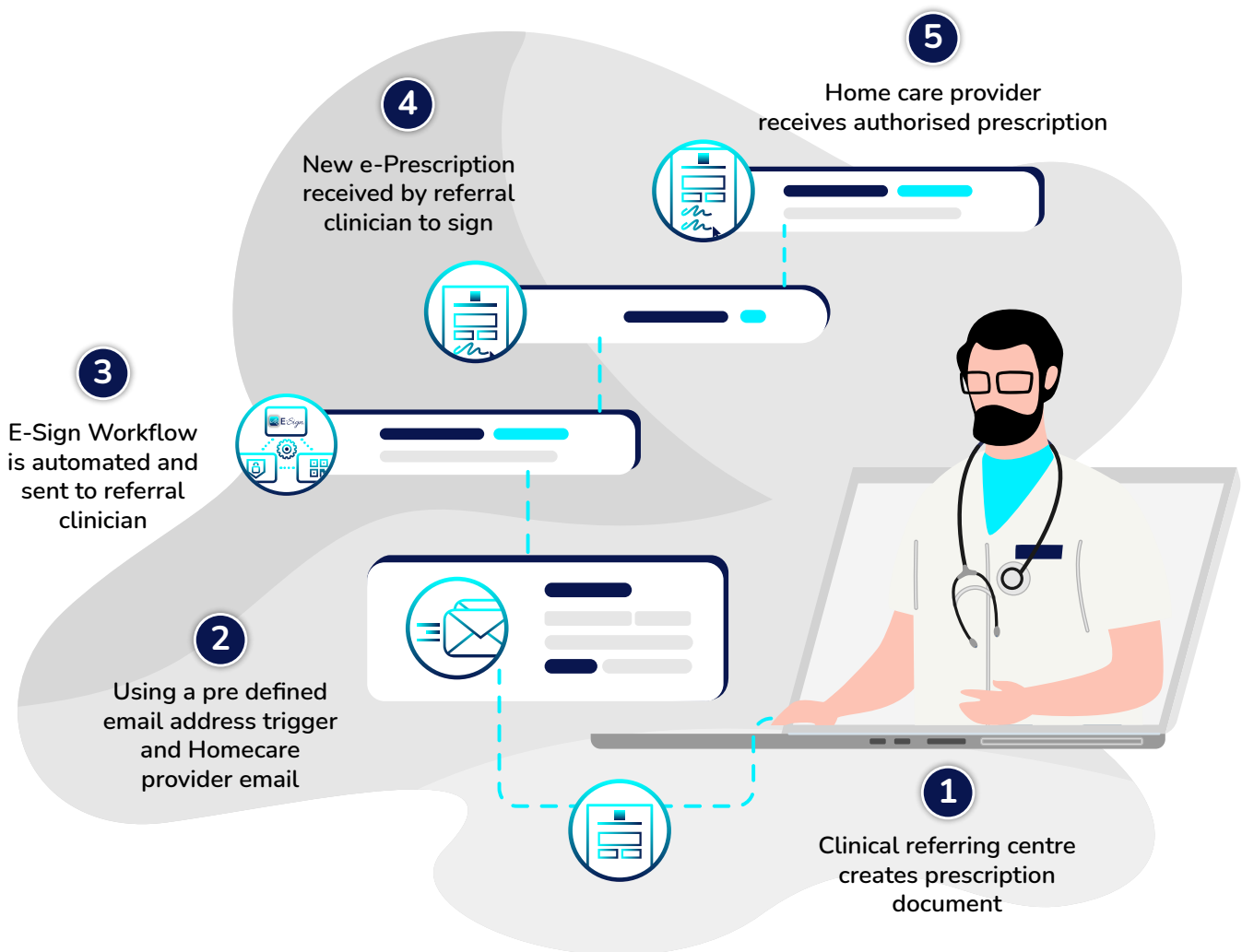>
> **Chris Carver**

Whether introducing people to new technology around Microsoft Flow or providing extra support to smaller members of the NCHA, the E-Sign team is guided by the principles of patience and flexibility to deliver systemic change.

Key successes:

- Prescription process time was reduced from two days to two hours (**80% reduction**)
- **9,172kg CO2 equivalent reduction** over 12 months (inclusive of paper, envelopes)
- **£95,324.44 annual savings** from kWh reduction (based on mailing)
- **510 trees** can work on reducing carbon dioxide emissions from other sources
- Qualitatively, staff have also reported an **improved audit log** and **reduction in delays** due to multiple staff being assigned to prescriptions in case of absence

5
Home care provider
receives authorised prescription

4
New e-Prescription
received by referral
clinician to sign

3
E-Sign Workflow
is automated and
sent to referral
clinician

2
Using a pre defined
email address trigger
and Homecare
provider email

1
Clinical referring centre
creates prescription
document

End user testimonials:

> " *The system is intuitive and very easy.* "
>
> **Monsoor Rabiya (Pharmacist), UHL**

> " *E-sign has made our process more efficient and also quicker; it is helpful to have the various flows to ensure multiple prescribers and professional checkers.* "
>
> **Jemma Metcalfe, Chief Pharmacy Consultant-Severe Asthma**

> " *We wish all our clinical homecare prescriptions were E-Sign.* "
>
> **Anna Murphy, Consultant Pharmacist, UHL**

> " *E-Sign was supportive and responsive throughout the development lifecycle, enabling us to very rapidly produce a working prototype to demonstrate to the hospital customer. The tools are very easy to set up and intuitive to use. When we encountered issues, the E-Sign team was agile enough to respond, usually on the same day. The copy template feature has made setup with new customers much easier.* "
>
> **NCHA clinical homecare provider**

> " *Whilst the NHS are developing an electronic prescribing solution, this is a key interim solution which provides them with real tangible benefits: labour saving, time saving, more security and fewer prescriptions floating around by post. We have stories from trusts who are now able to free more people up from shuffling paper to adding value and focusing on delivering care for patients.* "
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> **Chris Carver, Chief Operating Officer, HealthNet Homecare**

Contact us

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