**Somerset EPaCCS FAQS December 2016**

**What is EPaCCS anyway?**

The Electronic Palliative Care Coordination System, (EPaCCS), is a secure web based information sharing tool to ensure that important information about patients end of life care wishes, including information about their illness; important contacts; health professionals involved; availability of anticipatory prescribing medication; DNAR status, and Advance Care Planning details, is available to all those involved in their care, particularly during Out of Hours periods. Access can be available on an individual basis to staff from South West Ambulance, 111, OOH, Hospices, Somerset Partnership Community Nurses, GPs, and Acute Hospitals.

**Does it make any difference?**

EPaCCS makes a big difference out of hours, and is highly valued by the OOH services. Patient’s wishes are far more likely to be fulfilled if they are recorded on EPaCCS - only about 7% of patients who have been added to the Somerset EPaCCS will die in an acute hospital.

**How do I get a login?**

Please complete this form and email to [somersetspn@vocare.nhs.uk](mailto:somersetspn@vocare.nhs.uk)



**Is there a 1 page guide to using it?**

Yes! Please have a look at



**There are so many templates as well as the basic note – which should I use?**

When we login to Adastra, we see all the templates that nationally Vocare use across the country. Confusingly there are templates titled 'end of life', 'palliative care' 'CMC Register EOL' and 'Somerset EPaCCS'.

PLEASE ONLY USE THE SOMERSET EPACCS TEMPLATE, and choose this from the drop down menu 'Alter template'.

Writing on one of the others will overwrite anything entered on the Somerset template, and the other templates have inadequate information.

Please don't just add a 'Basic note' for a palliative care patient - this will not come up as an alert to 111 or OOH that the patient is on the palliative care register.

**How do I see my practice’s patients?**

When you open the Somerset EPaCCS choose your surgery from the 'Provider Group' drop down box. If you can’t find the patient you want you can also search by choosing 'all providers' at the bottom of the list.

**What do I do when a patient on the EPaCCS dies?**

When a patient dies, please complete the date of death, and mark the note as hidden. Details are in the user guide above. There are many patients still on the register who have died – it would be very helpful if one of the admin team at the practice could check your patients who are on EPaCCS and mark off those who have died.

**It is slow to use, how can my practice use it more easily?**

Some practices have trained a member of the admin team to add patients to EPaCCS. This means 1 person gets used to the website, and GPs don't need to access it themselves.

There is now an electronic 'EPaCCS additions form' in EMIS, available on the templates website, that can be used from the patient's record. This will add the demographics and some of the clinical detail. The GP can then type onto the form or print it out and hand write any further details about the patient that needs to be added to EPaCCS. This form could then be given to the admin person responsible for EPaCCS who could make the entry.



**Is it only GPs who add patients to EPaCCS?**

No - Specialist Palliative Care teams, Community Nurses, and increasingly teams in Acute Trusts are adding patients. Care Homes do not have direct access, but can use the additions form and then send this to the Care Coordination Centre in Wells. who will add patients for them.

**Will 999 crews be able to see EPaCCS? How do I inform SWAST about DNAR and other care plans?**

The SWAST hub can see EPaCCS records, but only limited information is available to 999 crews in their vehicles. If you complete a DNAR form, Treatment Escalation Plan, Clinical Communications Document, or other care plan, SWAST would like to have these emailed (not faxed!).

From an nhs.uk account email to:    [features@swast.nhs.uk](mailto:features@swast.nhs.uk)

From an nhs.net account email to: [swasnt.clinical-alerts@nhs.net](mailto:swasnt.clinical-alerts@nhs.net)

The SWAST’s special patient note (SPN) system is address-based: the note will be attached to the patient’s address, which will then be flagged when a calls comes in. It is, therefore, important for services to update existing SPNs when a patient moves home. Such an address-based system does mean that although an SPN may be in place for a patient’s home address, this will not be flagged if an ambulance is called to that patient when in a public place.

On the settings page of EPaCCS the boxes ‘share with an external agency’ should be automatically ticked to allow SWAST access – do please check that this is the case.

**Why can’t it be launched from within EMIS?**

The current system is frustrating, and at the moment it is not possible to launch it from EMIS. The CCG is looking at alternatives for a more suitable system which could be incorporated in EMIS, but for the time being please be patient!

**It is slow and difficult to use – isn’t there a better system available now?**

Since Somerset started using EPaCCS in 2010, IT has developed a lot, and there is currently a big emphasis on interoperability. There are now a number of alternatives that the SIDER group is looking at to deliver not only a better EPaCCS, but also ways to share other types of care plans. While the CCG works on this please continue to use our current system.

**I took the time to fill it in but the patient’s wishes were ignored, why should I bother another time?**

Disappointingly this has happened a few times, even when EPaCCS has been correctly used. Although we need to respect clinical decisions taken by colleagues OOH, if you feel that EPaCCS could have made a difference for a patient and wasn't used, do please let us know by using <http://nww.gpit.somersetccg.nhs.uk/feedback-to-the-patient-safety-team-at-the-ccg/>

Please don't let this put you off using EPaCCS another time - for most patients it does make a significant difference. Thank you for using Somerset EPaCCS.

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