

Getting the most from EPS

This document will help your pharmacy reap the full benefits of the NHS Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) and show you key tools and techniques.

About EPS

EPS enables prescribers – such as GPs and practice nurses – to send prescriptions electronically to a pharmacy of the patient's choice. This makes the prescribing and dispensing process more efficient and convenient for patients and staff. Dispensing contractors can dispense electronic prescriptions as soon as they are EPS Release 2-enabled. Currently, patients cannot have electronic prescriptions unless they have nominated a pharmacy, although this may change in the future.

Supporting patient nominations

Healthcare professionals need to ensure patients have timely and sufficient information when obtaining consent for services. EPS is no different and we would encourage pharmacy team members to gain written consent for patient nominations, although there is no formal requirement for this. If written consent is not possible, team members should document obtaining verbal informed consent in the PMR in case future queries arise.

We would encourage pharmacies to support the increase of nominated patients to enhance prescription management by the pharmacy team. This NHS Digital information bulletin provides further information about the nomination process:

[https://digital.nhs.uk/media/783/nomination-factsheet/pdf/nomination -
what you need to know Dec 2016 v0 10](https://digital.nhs.uk/media/783/nomination-factsheet/pdf/nomination_-_what_you_need_to_know_Dec_2016_v0_10)

Benefits of EPS for community pharmacies

EPS gives pharmacies a better audit trail for prescriptions. It can reduce the time delivery drivers spend visiting GP practices because prescriptions are sent to you electronically when signed by a prescriber. This can also help you better plan workflow and resolve potential prescription-related issues more quickly.

Pharmacies, patients & prescribers all benefit when EPS is used well:

- Prescribers can process prescriptions more efficiently and spend less time dealing with prescription queries.
- Dispensers can reduce use of paper, have improved stock control, and provide a more efficient service to patients.
- Patients can collect repeat prescriptions from a pharmacy without visiting their GP, and won't have a paper prescription that they may lose.

New EPS 'benefits estimator' tool

NHS Digital has released a new EPS benefits estimator that helps you see how much time and money you're saving by using EPS. It can also identify what additional benefits you could achieve if you used EPS more: <https://epsestimator.digital.nhs.uk/#!/dispenser>

For example, if your community pharmacy does 5,500 items per month and 50% of prescriptions are sent via EPS, this is how you could benefit:

Dispenser Benefits Estimator

How many items are dispensed by your pharmacy/Dispensing Appliance Contractor(DAC) each month (EPS Release 2 + FP10)?

5500

What percentage of items that you dispense are sent from the GP practices using EPS Release 2?

50

Who do you represent?

☒ I represent a community pharmacy

☐ I represent a distance pharmacy

☐ I represent a dispensing contractor

Based on the figures provided, we estimate that a typical dispenser (of your size and volume of EPS Release 2) should achieve the following benefits by using EPS Release 2 instead of paper FP10s. These may be efficiency benefits as well as monetary.

Community Pharmacy

£6,123
per year

This is the amount that we estimate you could benefit if ALL prescription items(repeat and acute) were received via EPS Release 2.

17.6hrs
per month

Based on the figures provided, we estimate the above total monthly benefits that a typical dispenser (of your size and volume of EPS Release 2) should currently be seeing. These may be efficiency benefits as well as monetary.

£255
per month

EPS prescription tracker

The EPS tracker lets you check the status of a EPS prescription as its progresses through the system. All dispensary team members should have a working knowledge of how to use the tracker and have that documented in their training record. We recommend always checking the tracker before contacting a practice about an EPS prescription:

- Quick reference guide to using the tracker:
[https://digital.nhs.uk/media/32485/EPS-Prescription-Tracker-Factsheet-Sep-17/pdf/EPS_Prescription_Tracker_Factsheet_Sep_17_FINAL_\(PL\)](https://digital.nhs.uk/media/32485/EPS-Prescription-Tracker-Factsheet-Sep-17/pdf/EPS_Prescription_Tracker_Factsheet_Sep_17_FINAL_(PL))
- More detailed guidance:
https://digital.nhs.uk/media/32447/Electronic-prescription-tracker-guidance/zip/EPS_prescription_tracker_guidance_18_September_2017

Business continuity

The latest version of the EPS tracker (Sep 2017) introduces a 'Business Continuity Mode', which lets users view prescription information such as medication details. This can be used to aid clinical decision-making when the pharmacy dispensing system is not available, but the site still has an N3/HSCN connection.

Business Continuity Mode should only be used when the site is in a real business continuity situation:

- Access Business Continuity Mode using the new 'Change Mode' feature.
- It provides access to prescription content information (some functionality is unavailable to locum users).
- A Spine alert is generated and sent to the governance person of the affected site each time Business Continuity Mode is entered, providing robust data security.

It also includes the following new features:

- Personal declaration confirming responsibility for entering Business Continuity Mode.
- Locum 'find a site' feature.
- Enhanced level of information on patient, organisation and prescription details.
- A 'search for a patient' feature, which can be used to find an NHS Number.

If you have any problems with the tracker, please contact your EPS System Supplier.

Supporting new staff

New staff should be trained on EPS. Contractors should ensure they help dispensary team members obtain a smartcard promptly and learn how to optimise EPS in regular workflow and use the tracker. (See the guidance above on how to use the EPS tracker.)

Recent EPS updates

The latest EPS Pharmacy Bulletin is available here:

<http://link.ict.hscic.gov.uk/m/a43933fd20344188a0678ed63f5da421/3299A19D/5749107D/072017n>

We would also encourage you to subscribe to the NHS Digital Bulletin Updates by emailing enquiries@nhsdigital.nhs.uk

Resources

You can check your progress at the NHS Digital website:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/eps/stats>

Bookmark the main NHS Digital EPS website:

<http://systems.digital.nhs.uk/eps>

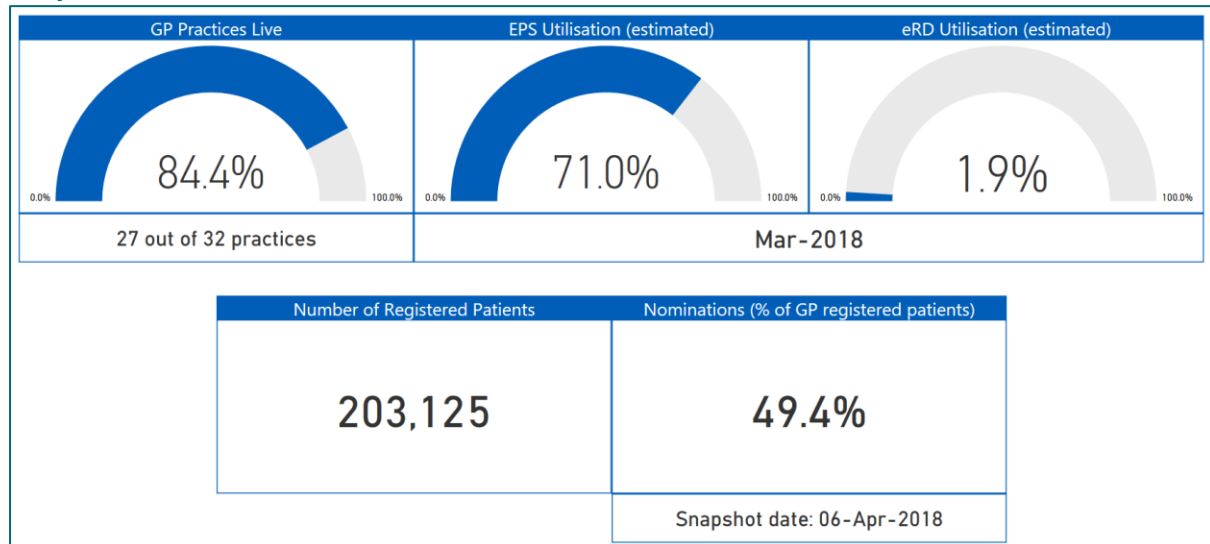
We hope you have found this briefing useful. You can see key EPS data for your local area on the following pages. If you have any EPS queries or topics you'd like us to cover in future briefings, please contact us on:

enquiries@gmlpc.org.uk or 0161 228 6163

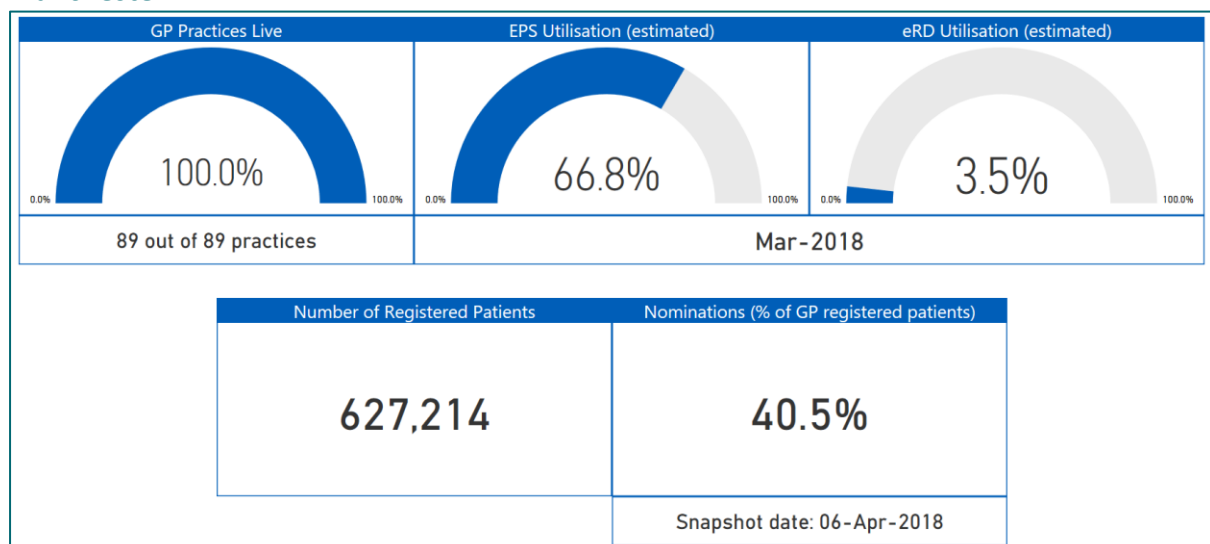
EPS data for each locality incl number of active GP practices

This snapshot data shows (left to right) the number of GP practices that are live with EPS, the average percentage of prescriptions sent by EPS from live GP practices, and the average percentage utilisation of electronic repeat dispensing (eRD). The figures on the second row show the number of patients registered and the percentage of patients nominated.

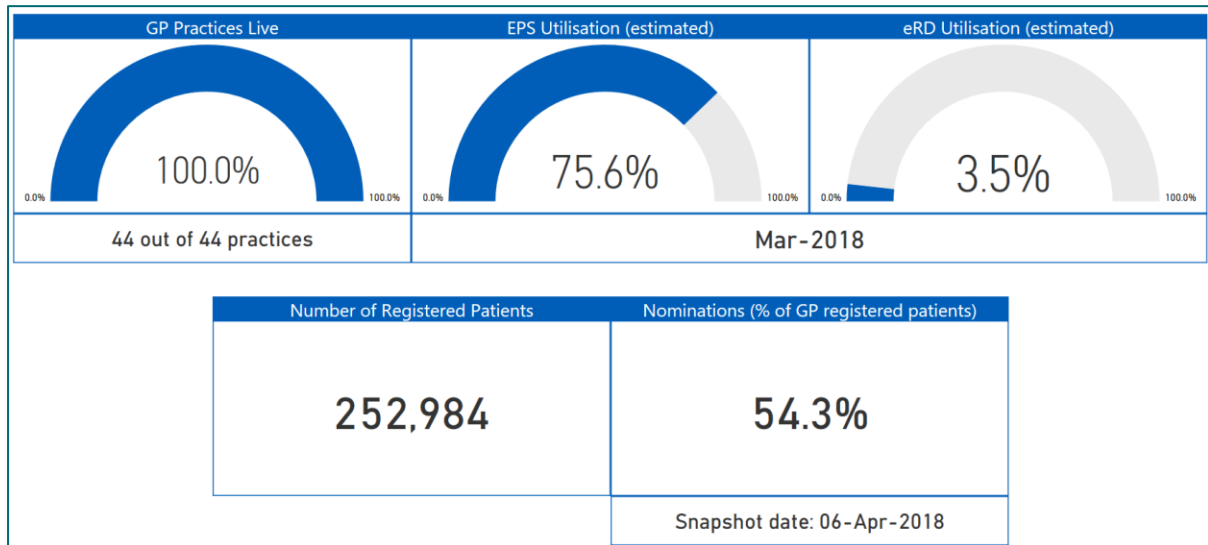
Bury



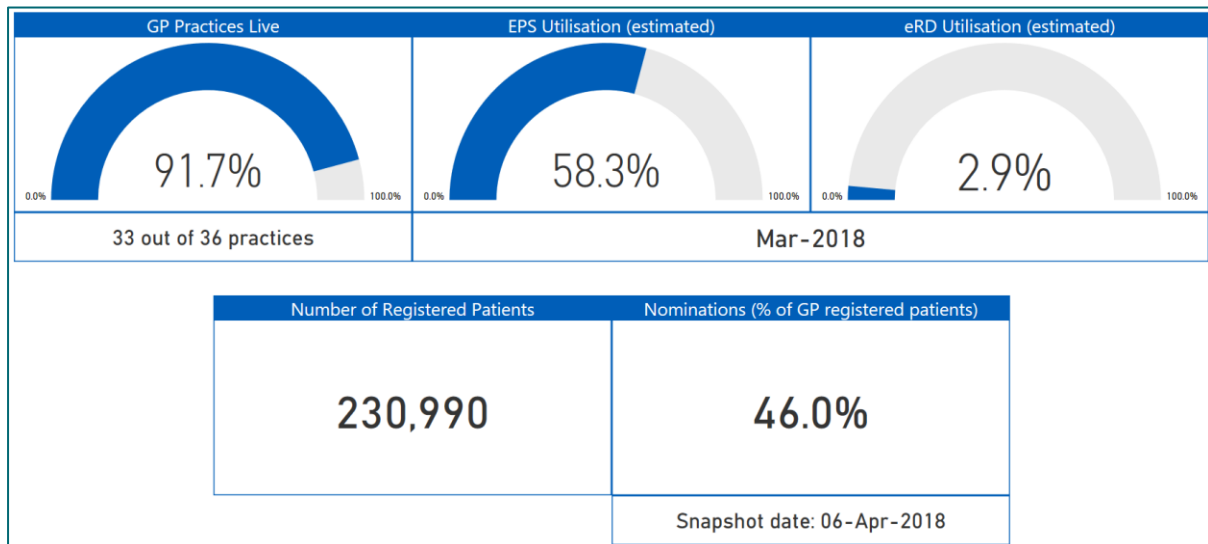
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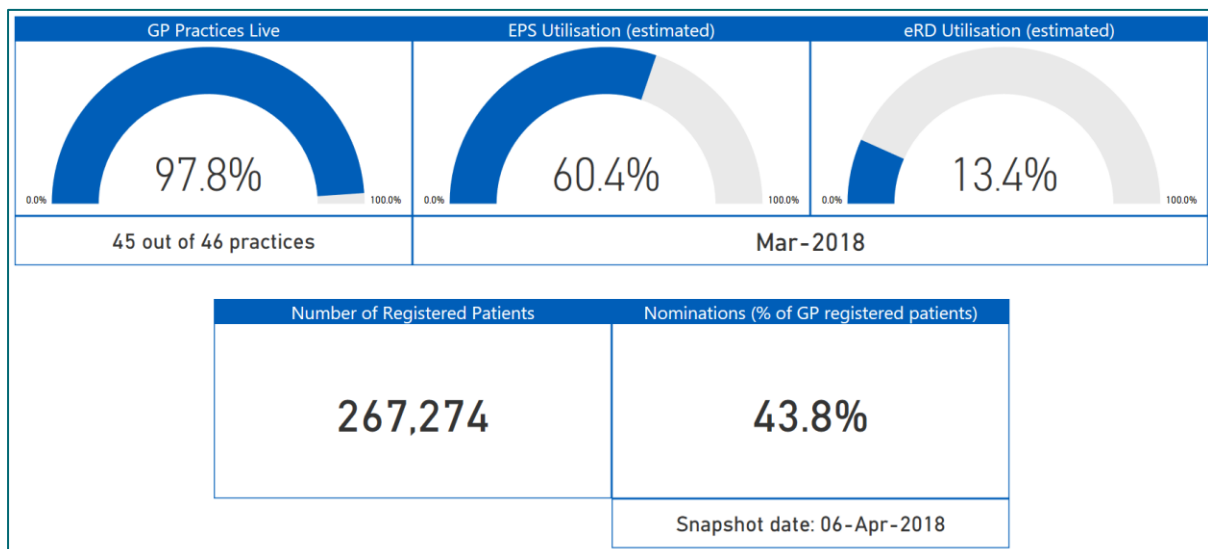
Oldham



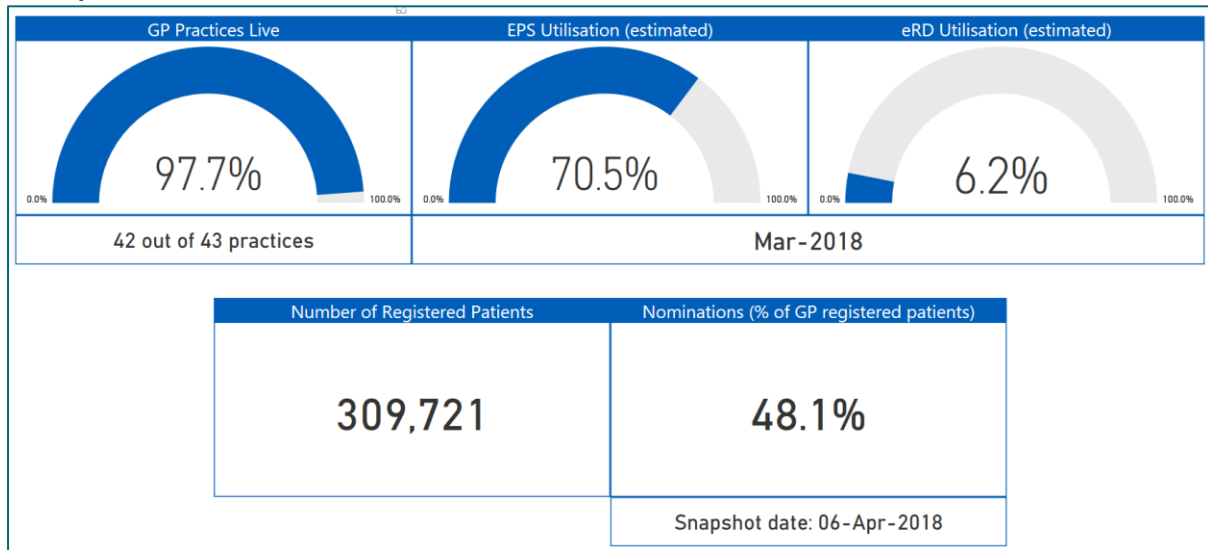
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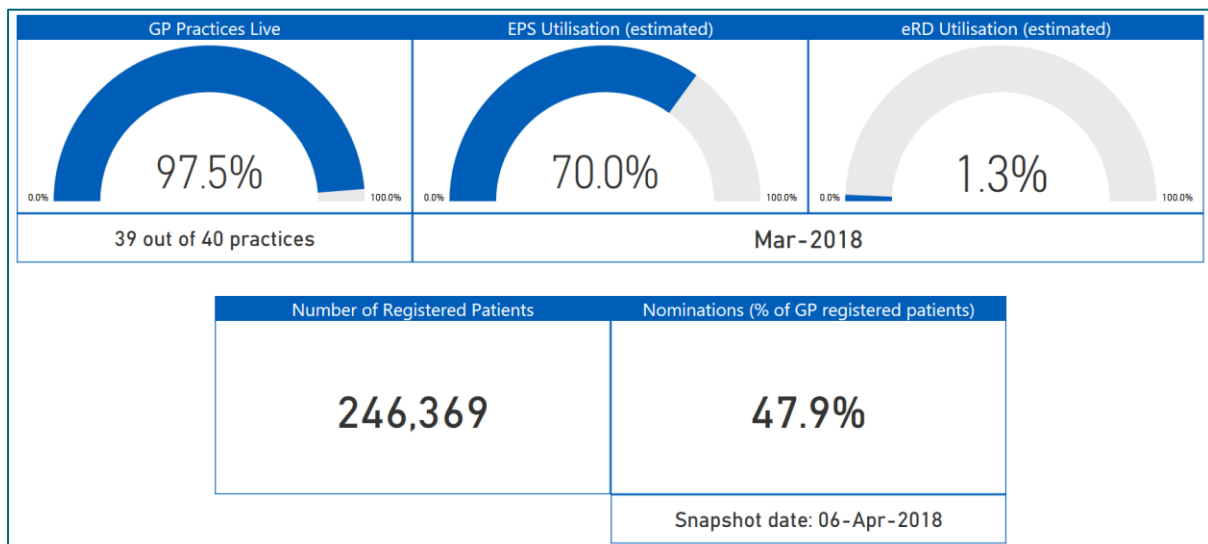
Salford



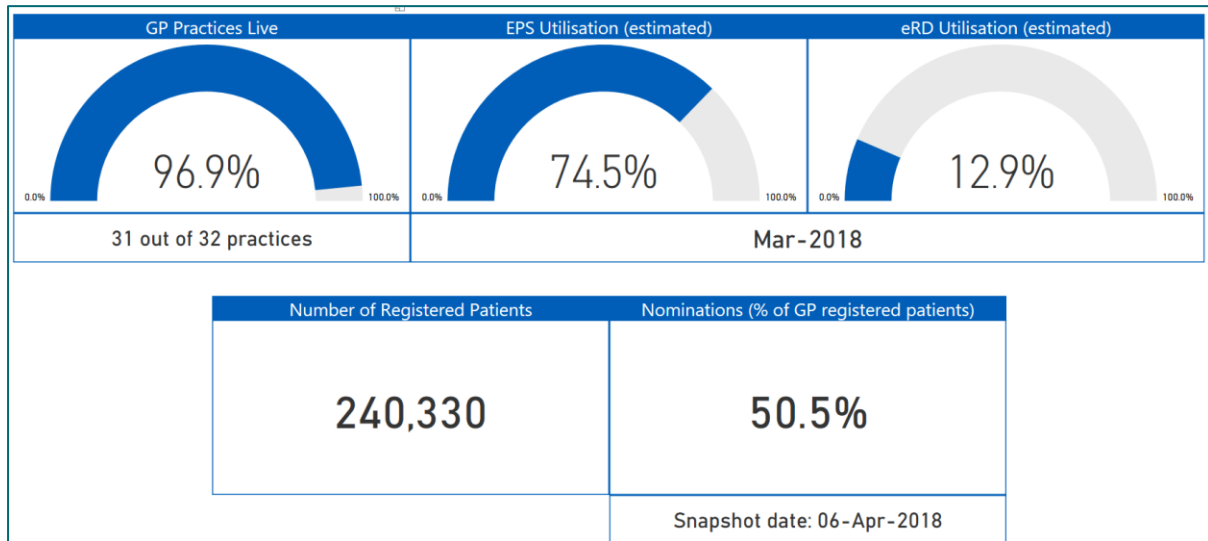
Stockport



Tameside



Trafford



Wigan

