

Lay summary for **Investigating and learning lessons from early experiences of implementing ePrescribing systems into NHS Hospitals: a questionnaire study.**

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Electronic prescribing (ePrescribing) systems show considerable promise for making healthcare more safe, efficient and cost effective. ePrescribing systems have been shown to lower prescribing errors and costs. While these systems are not yet in many English hospitals, there are plans to introduce them into most hospitals over the next five years.

Choosing an ePrescribing system is not straightforward. There are many systems available, coming with different capabilities and at varying costs. While one system might work better for one hospital, a different system could work better for another. Currently, there are no standardised guidelines to help hospitals decide which ePrescribing system might be best for them.

This paper looks at the perspectives of health professionals who have a prescribing role in hospitals that already use an ePrescribing system or in organisations that are planning to do so in the near future. We asked such health professionals from all over England to fill out a questionnaire to provide us with their views.

We found that the majority of our study participants felt unclear about which ePrescribing system should be chosen. They wanted guidance on how to choose a system as well as guidance on setting up the systems in their hospitals. They also wanted good communications between an ePrescribing system and the other, local healthcare computer systems.

We conclude that hospitals in England need more guidance on how to choose and to set up a new ePrescribing system. Lessons that have been learned from hospitals that have already set up systems should be shared with hospitals that are soon to go through this process. More research is needed to investigate the outcomes for hospitals of using ePrescribing systems.