NHS
Business Services Authority

Annual Review Summary 2007-08

The NHS Business Services Authority - "Supporting the NHS, supplying the NHS, protecting the NHS"

The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) provides supporting NHS services to a variety of customers and clients.

These include:

- NHS Help with Health Costs schemes
- NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Services
- The NHS Injury Benefits Scheme
- The NHS Pension Scheme
- The NHS Student Bursary Scheme
- Processing payments to dentists and pharmacists
- European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) scheme
- Purchasing and supply of products to the NHS.

Our vision is to be the organisation of choice to provide business solutions that deliver service excellence and value for money for the NHS.

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Patient Services

- Patient Services administers a range of schemes to more than 10 million people. These are known as Help with Health Costs and are aimed at helping them to save money with health costs. During 2007/08, we issued:
  - 4.6 million European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC)
  - 3.3 million Tax Credit NHS exemption cards
  - 430,000 Low Income scheme NHS exemption certificates
  - 472,000 maternity exemption certificates
  - 258,000 medical exemption certificates
  - 1.2 million Prescription Pre-payment certificates (PPCs).
- Working with the Department of Health, we increased choice for patients by introducing a three month reduced cost PPC and direct debit options for PPCs, with instalments set at below £10 a month. In the first seven months, 464,000 customers used these options
- We are also improving access to these benefits by improving the availability of direct sales from local pharmacies
- We maintain high service levels, attaining more than 50 targets relating to response and clearance times. PPC, maternity and medical certificates accuracy exceeds 99%
- We have improved online access to these services, resulting in 60% of EHIC applications and 37% of PPC applications being made via the internet
- A programme of customer surveys showed high satisfaction ratings, typically of 90%.

"I have had prescription pre-payment certificates for some years now as I have eczema and asthma and it would otherwise cost me a lot more money for all the different types of prescriptions I need to keep my conditions under control. Nowadays, I renew my certificate online which I find is a quick and easy process and the different payment options give me better choices."

Helen Budd, Prescription Pre-payment Certificate holder, London

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NHS Pensions

- The NHS Pension Scheme provides retirement benefits to NHS employees, family doctors (GPs) and their staff, dentists and employees of other approved organisations in England and Wales
- The Scheme receives contributions from employees and employers which in 2007-08 amounted to approximately £6.7 billion
- Pension benefits payments during 2007-08 amounted to more than £4.4 billion
- Detailed work was undertaken throughout 2007-08 to prepare for the introduction of the new NHS Pension Scheme including introducing major changes to our software systems with our partner Xafinity Paymaster
- Our website was re-developed and we held a series of presentations and workshops across the country in February 2008 to inform pensions officers and others about the changes and what it means for NHS staff
- We successfully cleared a backlog of late payments and administration cases at the same time as our intake of work rose dramatically due to the increasing numbers of enquiries we received about the changes to the pension scheme.

"On 1 April 2008, a new pension scheme for eligible employees joining the Scheme for the first time was launched. At the same time, changes were introduced for people who were already members of the existing Scheme. During 2007-08, a considerable amount of work was undertaken to implement these changes - the biggest since the NHS Pension Scheme began 60 years ago. Work on these changes will continue for the next couple of years as existing scheme members are given the choice to move the new pension arrangements from July 2009."

Chris Sandwell, Head of Member Services, NHS Pensions

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Dental Services

- We provide core services to both pay dentists and support primary care trusts in England and local health boards in Wales to successfully commission dental services for local communities. This includes contract management, clinical services, financial management, risk management and guidance and advice
- During 2007-08, we processed approximately 40 million dental activity forms, and made monthly payments to around 10,000 dentists and corporate bodies that provide NHS dental services
- The annual payments made on behalf of the NHS amount to approximately £2.5 billion in direct contract payments to dentists and approximately £550 million in patient charges
- Customer focus groups help us test and generate new ideas for our services and provide feedback to help take forward our service improvement programme
- Our dental services team is involved with a project which will help decide the future information and business requirements of the NHS for dentistry. We are looking to source a major new contract which will build new dental IT systems and other processes to benefit the NHS.

"I consider the full integration of the Dental Services Division, the Dental Reference Service and the new Dental Fraud Team will be invaluable to the primary care trusts as we move into future commissioning of NHS dentistry.

"Without the backing of the Dental Reference Service and the Dental Services since the inception of the pilot Personal Dental Scheme in 2005, I know our PCT would not have gained the confidence of the local providers."

Janet Prosser, Dental Commissioning Manager,
Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT

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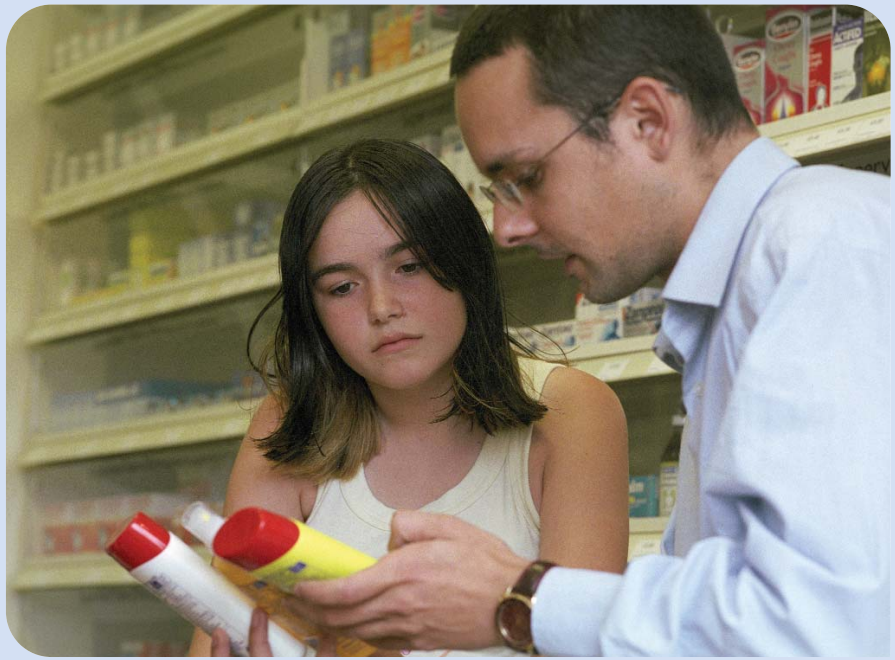
Prescription Processing

- During 2007-08, we processed almost 800 million prescription items (not including hospital prescribing), from which we calculate the reimbursement and remuneration for dispensing pharmacy contractors in England
- We made payments to mainly community pharmacists of more than £8 billion
- In March 2007, we started to introduce new technology to change how we process prescriptions for dispensing contractors. The rollout of this system will remain one of the NHSBSA's main objectives for 2008-09
- This new technology means that we will have the capability to receive and automatically process electronic prescribing messages which will be enabled by Release 2 of the Department of Health's Electronic Prescribing Service
- During 2007-08, we maintained high service delivery standards and processed 6% more prescriptions than in the previous year whilst at the same time delivering efficiency savings of £3 million.



"Over the past 15 years I have always found the staff to be very helpful and although we have had problems, they have always gone the extra mile to help me."

Nicholas Martin, Community Pharmacist

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NHS Student Bursaries

- The NHS Student Bursary Scheme gives varying degrees of financial support to 72,000 health professional students living and studying in England undertaking one of 1,400 NHS commissioned pre-registration training courses at any of 170 approved universities
- The budget for NHS student bursaries amounts to £463 million and sits with the ten strategic health authorities in England
- A new version of the scheme, specifically for students entering training after 1 September 2007 was successfully introduced
- We will continue to seek improvements to the scheme so that applications are processed as quickly and accurately as possible
- Customer satisfaction ratings amongst students are high.

"Following a very stressful first bursary application I was very apprehensive about this year. However, I found the website very easy to navigate and not having masses of paperwork through the post and downloading just the forms personally required, made the process easier. I did get stuck at one stage and I rang the help desk who were extremely helpful and talked me through the problem. Most students, myself included, would not be able to attain their goal of being a nurse, without the contribution the bursary makes to books and cost of living."

Saffron Brown, Student Nurse, Newcastle upon Tyne

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NHS Injury Benefits Scheme

- The NHS Injury Benefit Scheme is open to all NHS staff. It provides an annual allowance for staff who have suffered a permanent loss of earning ability as the result of an illness or injury which is wholly or mainly attributable to their NHS employment
- A review of the administration of the scheme began in 2007 following concerns that some past claims had been wrongly rejected or calculated incorrectly. The correction of maladministered cases will be completed by the end of 2008-09
- In 2008-09, the NHS Injury Benefit Scheme will be subject to a joint review by NHS Employers, the Department of Health and NHS trade unions to ensure it can meet the needs of the modern, 21st century NHS.

Dental Reference Service

- The Dental Reference Service is run by dentists and monitors patients' perceptions of the dental treatment they have received. It also ensures that there is clinical input into the monitoring of the NHS dental contract and effective risk management. This follows a review of the service and the agreement of a new working model.

Throughout the year, we supported our staff to access a variety of learning development activities and qualifications. To celebrate this success, we arranged a national awards event in Blackpool in February 2008. The event was attended by approximately 100 members of staff, and prizes were awarded by Paul Rich, Chair of the NHSBSA.

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Social Work Bursaries

- A Social Work Bursary (SWB) is available to students who are ordinarily resident in England studying on an approved undergraduate course (full- or part-time), or an approved part-time postgraduate course
- More than 13,000 bursary applications, 300 childcare and 135 disabled student allowance forms were processed in 2007-08
- We took over responsibility for the administration of social work bursaries in April 2007 from the General Social Care Council
- We have made a number of improvements to the service which provided better customer service and efficiency savings. A dedicated SWB telephone enquiry line has been established to provide increased accessibility to customers. We have reduced the amount of time for correspondence to be cleared from 20 days of receipt to within just five working days.

Hosted Services

- We also provide a range of hosted and managed financial and human resource services to a number of Department of Health teams and other health related organisations. These include Connecting for Health, Care Services Improvement Partnership and the NHS Graduate Training Scheme.

Customer satisfaction

During 2007-08, we carried out structured customer satisfaction surveys with a variety of stakeholders. These provided valuable feedback to develop action plans to improve our customers experiences. The results were mainly very positive with specific areas for improvement including dental information and pensions' administration. It is hoped the recent improvement in pensions' performance will also be reflected in the next survey results.

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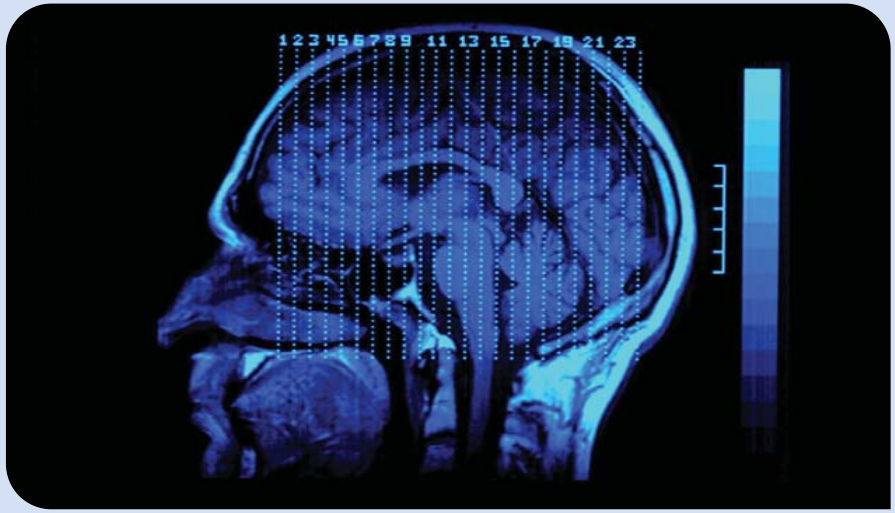
Supply Chain Management

- Our Supply Chain Management Division (SCMD) manages the largest public sector outsourced service agreement with the private sector company DHL on behalf of the Department of Health
- Operated by DHL, the business, known as NHS Supply Chain, provides procurement and logistics services to NHS trusts, helping the NHS to manage its supply chain more efficiently
- The contract will run for a minimum of 10 years and is expected to offer substantial cumulative savings of around £1 billion for the NHS
- So far, savings of £9 million have already been delivered back to the frontline NHS. NHS Supply Chain is tasked with escalating these savings over the next nine years through a programme of growth and service development
- Our supply chain experts also provide expertise to the Department of Health particularly in the areas of emergency preparedness planning, childhood vaccines storage and distribution and flu pandemic planning.



NHS Supply Chain has been supporting the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust to equip its £545 million Private Finance Initiative (PFI) hospital with all its diagnostic imaging needs, such as CT and MRI scanners. The specialist imaging procurement team supported the purchase of diagnostic equipment for the new hospital's 40 specialist imaging rooms. Using NHS Supply Chain's EU-compliant national framework for medical imaging and diagnostic equipment, they provided best value for money for the Trust and ensured timely availability of the equipment.

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NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service (CFSMS)

- CFSMS is responsible for all policy and operational matters relating to the prevention, detection and investigation of fraud and corruption in the Department of Health and NHS
- We are also responsible for the management of security in the NHS
- In 2007-08, 351 cases of potential fraud were detected and investigated with the potential NHS savings amounting to over £7 million. The team achieved a 96% successful prosecution rate
- We have introduced a national syllabus for conflict resolution training which is designed to help frontline NHS staff prevent and manage violence
- We also established the role of local security management specialists to investigate security breaches and implement systems to help protect NHS staff
- We have also prosecuted cases that have not been progressed by the police or the Crown Prosecution Service
- Figures for 2006-07 show that the number of physical assaults against NHS staff in England fell and that the measures introduced by our CFSMS team to protect NHS staff are working. These were:
  - 2,986 fewer assaults on NHS staff than there were in 2005-06
  - 4,676 fewer assaults than in 2004-05
  - 869 criminal prosecutions were brought against people who assaulted NHS staff – a 17 fold increase since 2002-03.*

A campaign to reduce abuse of NHS staff was launched in Kent in March 2008, after statistics revealed that 1,870 members of NHS staff in the region had been physically assaulted in the last three years.

The Your Choice of Treatment campaign targeted the minority of people who are abusive to health professionals with a clear message - if you choose to assault NHS staff, you will face prosecution and possibly prison.

The campaign received strong community support and was backed by NHS trusts, Kent County Council, Kent Police, local MPs and Gillingham Football Club.

* Note: Figures for 2007-08 were not available at the time of going to print.

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Our people

- We held our first NHSBSA wide staff survey in March 2008 with more than half our staff participating in the survey. Areas we can be proud of include: staff have a good understanding of the performance and standards expected of them, the organisation treats all people fairly and with respect and staff reported they have good support from their manager. The key issues that staff would like to see addressed or improved include communication, managing change and offering more career progression
- We are committed to providing equal opportunities for all our staff and potential employees
- By the end of 2007-08, approximately 20% of our entire staff had left the organisation. This was planned as part of the reorganisation of our services two years ago. Outgoing staff were given the opportunity to participate in a range of outplacement and development activities (including achieving recognised qualifications) designed to support them in the future.

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How well did all our services do?

Overall performance during 2007-08 has been good with most targets either achieved or improved on rated on a green, amber, red system. One specific area of improvement is case administration within pensions which started the financial year as red with a backlog of work and ended with all service targets having been achieved.

Key to tables: **Table 1 - KPI performance results:** The results report on RAG (Red-Amber-Green) basis and demonstrate the average performance throughout 2007-2008. **Table 2 - Customer satisfaction results for 2007-08:** Majority of results are green but specific areas for improvement are dental information and pension administration.

Table 1

			Payments		Case Admin		Information	Contact Centre		Supply Chain Management		
			Timeliness	Accuracy	Timeliness	Accuracy	Timeliness	Wait Times	Abandoned Call Rate	Product Availability	Goods/Orders received on time	On time and in full
Contractor Services	Dental	Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										
	Pharmacy	Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										
Patient/Public SGU & Patient Services		Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										
Pensions Division		Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										
SCMD		Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										
Hosted Services		Annual Status										
		Qtr 4 Status										

Table 2

		Payments			Information			Supply Chain Management		
		Timeliness	Accuracy	Case Admin	Timeliness	Accuracy	Contact Centre	Deliveries on time	Deliveries accurate and complete	Overall
Contractor Services	Dental									
	Pharmacy									
Patient/Public SGU & Patient Services										
Pensions Division										
SCMD										
Hosted Services										

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How much money we saved

One of the main roles of the NHS Business Services Authority is to make significant financial savings which can be invested back into frontline, NHS patient care.

By 31 March 2008 the NHSBSA had already achieved efficiencies valued at £19.4m (14.7%) allowing for volume growth and inflation, compared to the costs of the same authorities in 2005-06. This has been achieved by both reducing our costs and also improving our performance. For example, prescription processing cost £0.5m less to operate than in 2005-06 but dealt will 11.5% more prescriptions. Pensions administration has increased by £1.1m in operating costs but is dealing with a 24.8% increase in volume. Dental services have reduced costs by £1.8m and Counter Fraud and Security Management Services have reduced operating costs by £4.5m.

Our key challenges are:

- Building upon our track record – developing our established good record of delivery
- Developing our business model - the skills, expertise and flexibility available within the NHSBSA will allow us to expand current business or take on new business as required by our client
- Developing our new management model – moving away from the current separate divisional arrangement towards a more fluid and flexible organisational structure
- Pursuing business growth opportunities – exploring opportunities where business synergies exist and thereby providing further value for money for the taxpayer.

NHSBSA Gross Operating Expenditure

Looking ahead

2008-09 will be another challenging year for the NHSBSA, our staff and our services. We aim to embrace these challenges positively and proactively.

We have outlined our strategy and plans for delivering our agenda in 2008-09 and beyond in our Business Plan and Strategy – available on our website **www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/bsa.htm**. Our plans centre on our determination to continue to deliver high quality services, building on our track record and ensuring that we meet the needs of our clients and customers.

For further information about the NHS Business Services Authority, visit

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk

In late 2008 we will be launching an exciting new website!

or contact:

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