Introduction to Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (EPMA)

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What is EPMA?

- Global term for all Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (EPMA) systems
- Lots of different systems in the UK
- Rolled out across many UK hospitals
- Plan is to become completely digital by 2024
What is EPMA?

In the United Kingdom (UK), NHS Connecting for Health, 2007 (cited Tolley, 2012) defined EPMA as:

“The utilisation of electronic systems to facilitate and enhance the communication of a prescription or medicine order, aiding the choice, administration, and supply of a medicine through knowledge and decision support and provide a robust audit trail for the entire medicines use process”.

In its’ simplest form EPMA systems allow doctors to prescribe, nurses to administer medications, pharmacists to clinically review and reconcile medications and pharmacy technicians to input drug histories and order medications. Other members of the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) may also have access to carry out duties within their professional competency.¹
Different EPMA systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allscripts</td>
<td>Carevue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERNER</td>
<td>Civica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EmisHealth</td>
<td>EPIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditech</td>
<td>Medway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NerveCentre*</td>
<td>PICS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SystmOne</td>
<td>System C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPP</td>
<td>Wellsky (JAC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Currently under development

**Note, this list is not exhaustive and there are other systems used/in development**
# Users of EPMA systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dietitians</th>
<th>Dietitian Supplementary Prescribers</th>
<th>Doctors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicines Administration Pharmacy Technicians</td>
<td>Midwives</td>
<td>Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Prescribers</td>
<td>Nursing Associates</td>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Department Practitioners</td>
<td>Pharmacists</td>
<td>Pharmacist Prescribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy Assistants</td>
<td>Pharmacy Technicians</td>
<td>Physiotherapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Registration Pharmacists</td>
<td>Radiographers</td>
<td>Students: Medical, Midwifery, Nursing and Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note, this list is not exhaustive and there will be many staff who use the systems including those who have view only access for example ward clerks, clinical coders and others.*
Benefits of EPMA systems

- Saves time finding & rewriting charts
- Review medication histories
- Improved legibility of charts
- Increased accessibility to charts
- Links with other systems including discharge letters*
- Reduction in prescribing and administration errors**

*Not all systems are linked
**There may also be an increase or introduction of new prescribing and administration errors
***Not an exhaustive list of benefits
Disadvantages with EPMA systems

- It still requires human interaction!
- Alert fatigue
- Introduces new prescribing/administration errors
- Workarounds which aren’t the correct way of carrying out an activity
- Relies on working IT equipment
- Remembering your username and password if not linked to your computer login

*Note this list is not exhaustive*
Tips during COVID-19

If you are deployed to work clinically or have offered to return to service (thank you!) and need to use electronic systems here are some tips:

1. Do not panic. Everyone is here to support each other
2. Speak to your local EPMA team or line manager to ensure you can be trained. This may be face to face or through e-learning. Note, your EPMA team will likely be working clinically too, so may not be contactable via email or usual contacts.
3. After training, ensure you have an username and password. (Keep these details safe)
Tips during COVID-19 cont’d...

4. Login to the application to ensure your details work.
5. Dependent on your role ensure you have a working and charged device.
6. Practice on a test area if possible before carrying out clinical duties on the live system.
7. Use the live system on your ward or in your clinical area. This may seem daunting at first, but remember you are not alone. There will be people who will have used the EPMA system before so ask for help if not sure.
8. Remember to charge your device after use.
Contact Us

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