

To: NHS Trust Chief Executives
PCT Cluster Chief Executives
SHA Cluster Chief Executives
Care Trust Chief Executives
Foundation Trust Chief Executives
Medical Directors
Special Health Authority Chief Executives
Directors of Public Health
Directors of Nursing
Directors of Adult SSs
Chief Clinical Information Officers
IM&T Leads
CCG Informatics Leads

Gateway reference number: 18019
31 August 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Information Sharing Challenge Fund

Seamless, integrated care within and between organisations requires a massive change in the way information is currently shared and used, so that information is available to patients, clinicians and NHS staff, where and when they need it. The public expect, and assume, that the NHS, social care and other organisations are joined up and understand their needs implicitly. For some patients having access to 'their' information and being involved in decisions about their care is very important.

The Information Sharing Challenge Fund is a new scheme designed to improve patient care by stimulating the creation of new and innovative digital services, which are firmly underpinned by robust and effective information sharing based on approaches that are re-usable across the NHS. It is specifically targeted at enabling local information sharing initiatives, which are likely to be part of wider quality and efficiency improvement programmes.

Funding is available to support local information sharing projects which meet the broader challenge of integrating care. Projects would be expected to lead to a successful deployment and use, in an NHS environment, of a solution based on the NHS Interoperability Toolkit by the 31st March 2013. The challenge is open to all NHS organisations, and may be used to support other care providers, including social care, where appropriate local funding arrangements are in place.

The intent is not just to help organisations join up local systems, but to create an environment where technical and commercial barriers to information sharing are reduced across the NHS.

The closing date for submission is 5th October 2012.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ailsa Claire". The script is cursive and fluid.

*Ailsa Claire OBE
Transition Director
Patients and Information Directorate
National Health Service Commissioning Board Authority*