ePCR Patient Frequently Asked Questions

What is Electronic Patient Care Report (ePCR)?

An Electronic Patient Care Report (ePCR) is an electronic version of the paper patient record with the National Ambulance Service collect about each patient using their service. All patient information will be captured electronically in a standardised manner via a tablet computer.

Why is it being implemented?

The National Ambulance Service (NAS) currently has over 300,000 patient contacts annually. This involves crews responding from 102 ambulance stations nationally. Currently patient records are collected on paper. This restricts the ability to analysis data or to conduct clinical audits effectively and efficiently. Modern ambulances services must be able to analyse clinical performance. ePCR will give NAS to ability to do this. It will also give NAS information in relation to trends in patient demographics, patient presentations and patient outcomes.

What patient information will be collected?

The patients name and address if known, their presenting medical condition, past medical history, medications they may be taking, clinical signs, mechanism of injury, presumptive diagnosis and treatments administered prehospital. The ePCR will allow a more complete picture of each individual patient's acute episode which can then be provided to the receiving ED.

What are the benefits to patients?

No information is ever lost - it is stored securely and in line with data protection and data governance arrangements

Data is sent to the receiving - location (hospital) within seconds of entry (signal dependant) and whilst the patient is in transit

Data is captured in real time - and can be exported from medical equipment such as LIFEPAK15 or other machines directly to the ePCR

Reports are in a standard - legible format, and can be printed – no need to read handwriting

Staff can view ePCRs of incidents they have been involved with – in line with data governance

More relevant/clinical information can be entered than could be captured on paper record, reducing need for attendance at coroner's inquests etc.

Reference material available to clinical information on the ePCR (Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs), NAS Clinical Policies, etc.)

Will it affect how the ambulance gets to me in an emergency?

No – the closest available ambulance will be dispatched to each emergency call as it is today.

Will it affect the response I get when I ring 999/112?

No – you can ring 999/112 in an emergency as you do today.

Do I have to do anything?

No – you do not have to do anything different. You are currently asked some questions by paramedics when they respond to your emergency – this will still be the situation but instead of recording the information on paper, paramedics will be recording your information securely and confidentially, using a tablet computer.

Who will operate the ePCR?

The paramedic crew that attends your emergency will be using the ePCR to record information about the patient and the care given.

Who will have access to my record?

The paramedic crew who attended your emergency.

Who will my record be shared with?

Healthcare professionals who will be caring for you after the Ambulance Service have brought you to hospital

Will my record be secure and confidential?

Yes – we take data protection very seriously. Your data will be stored securely and confidentially within the HSE. ePCR has a full audit trail function, so we can see who has accessed your information and why. This is so that your information is not accessed inappropriately.

Will ePCR be in every ambulance straight away?

No – it will take a little time for all ambulances to have ePCR. Mallow Ambulance Station will be the first station to have ePCR with other stations in NAS South Area following shortly after. ePCR will have a phased roll out nationally over approximately 12-18 months. Its roll out will be linked to the roll out of Mobile Data Terminal roll out project as the two projects are interdependent.