Electronic Test Requesting in GP PRACTICES

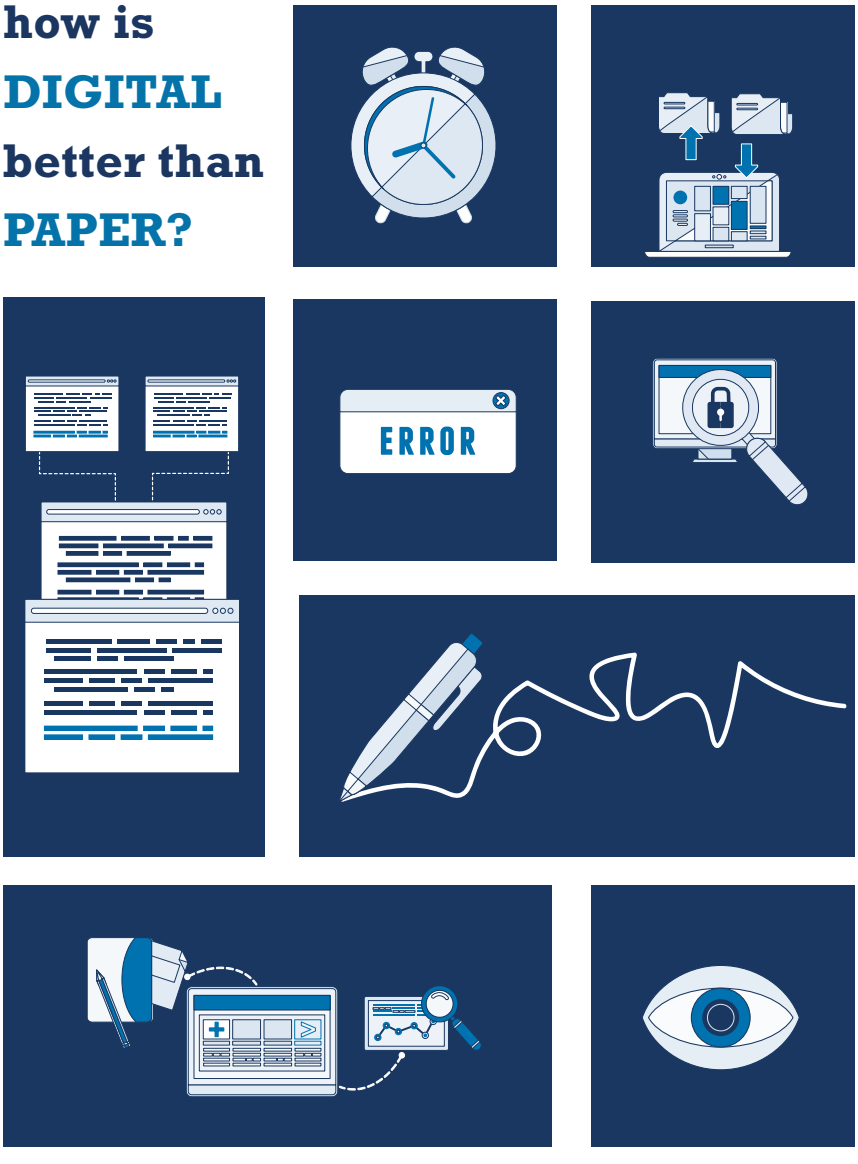
GP practices in Wales are replacing paper test requests with a digital system. The electronic requesting system – known as GPTR - is being introduced into practices across the country.

With thousands of blood tests being performed in Wales every week, GPTR is helping to process results quicker. Up until recently, test requests have been made mostly on paper, but GPTR means staff can process the requests and receive the results digitally.

"Everyone in the practice is very pleased we switched and wouldn't want to be without it now"

Gaynor Pick
Practice Manager
Underwood Health Centre
Newport

how is DIGITAL better than PAPER?



STANDARDISES information

QUICKER delivery

EASIER TO SHARE information

REDUCES errors

MORE secure

no more **ILLEGIBLE HANDWRITING**

all actions are **RECORDED AND AUDITABLE**

better **DATA PROTECTION**

no identifiable **PATIENT DATA**

How does it WORK?

01 A GP, nurse, or practice pharmacist, will decide what tests a patient needs.

02 The system recognises the required test ; and checks all primary and secondary care tests in Wales – checking if the test has already happened.

03 The requester completes an online request form.

04 Patient details are automatically taken from the GP record and inserted into the electronic request form.

05 The number and type of specimens required for each test is pre-defined in the system.

06 Labels are printed in the GP practice and attached to the anonymised samples.

07 The laboratory receives the sample and scans the label, which contains all the patient and clinical information.

08 The test is conducted and the results are sent directly back to the GP practice.

Using GPTR a story from Ebbw Vale

Pen-y-Cae Surgery in Ebbw Vale went live with GPTR in June 2019. During the first three months its use of electronic requests went from 5% to 85%. Practice Manager Robert Attridge put the success of the launch down to making sure his staff knew why the system was so important, and encouraging them to ask for help and training where they needed it.

"It's been fantastic to have the results tables every month, it really gives us something to aim for"

Robert Attridge,
Practice Manager
Pen-y-Cae Surgery

The setting of targets was another useful tool for increasing the numbers of electronic requests. Aneurin Bevan Health Board publish figures of the top performing practices in the area every month, and Robert encouraged the staff in Pen-y-Cae to outperform their neighbouring practices.

Daily 'huddles' - or short meetings - have also been an important part of the success of the system. Robert explained,

''We've moved from a team that sporadically uses test requesting, where not everyone in the team would use it, to where the whole team is now consistently delivering, believing and using that process. We've done that by using daily huddles to talk about it, to talk about why we're doing it''

Training and support offered to the team has also been crucial, ''John Pheasant, from the health board, has provided great, bespoke training for individuals who might have needed more support'' Robert explained, ''and we've used some fantastic tools that have been provided for us like the GPTR WhatsApp group, it's given someone like myself, that's been in primary care for just afew months, some fantastic knowledge, and depth of knowledge that I wouldn't normally have''

More good reasons to use the GPTR

Clinical details included with the request will be included in the results report, improving the quality of information, and giving the clinician a fuller picture of the patient.

Reduction in unnecessary tests on patients, so less bleeding for the patient, as the required tests are pre-defined - and linked to the pathology handbook.

Requests give the 'full picture' - No forgotten medicinal information or qualifying information.

Transcription errors are reduced as patient details are automatically taken from the GP records and included in the test request.

The results go directly back to the requestor, and can be easily located.

The GPTR joins up with other GP systems, giving GPs a better knowledge of the patient history.

GP staff can view results from both primary and secondary care, anywhere in Wales, giving them a more thorough picture of the patient.

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