

NHSmail

Guidance on the use of e-mail for sending personal, confidential or sensitive information



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Background

Where personal, confidential or sensitive information is to be sent via e-mail, the content of the e-mail **MUST** be secured using an **encrypted method of transfer**.

It is policy that e-mails containing any Personal Confidential Data (PCD) or commercially sensitive information should be sent using an **NHSmail account**.

What is NHSmail?

NHSmail is a **secure e-mail service** that is accredited to the NHS secure email standard (DCB1596) and is suitable for sharing patient identifiable and sensitive information. NHSmail users (accounts ending in @nhs.net) can exchange information securely with other NHSmail users, without needing to use the encryption feature. Therefore, if you are e-mailing from your @nhs.net account to another @nhs.net account, then you can be confident that the content of your message is encrypted and secure.

If you are sending sensitive information outside of NHSmail, then the encryption feature should be used. This allows NHSmail users to exchange information securely with users of non-accredited or non-secure e-mail services such nhs.uk, gmail and Hotmail.

REMEMBER - Personal Confidential Data (PCD) should not be included within the subject header of an e-mail.

Accessing NHSmail

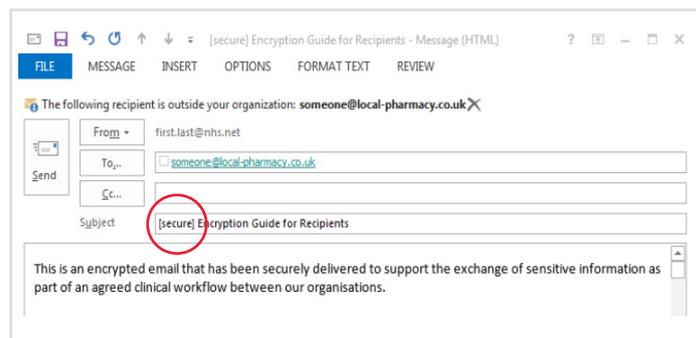
To use the NHSmail service you will need a user account. To set this up, please contact your NHS Informatics Merseyside IT Service Desk on 0151 296 7777 or visit the Self Service Portal at <http://selfservice>. Once authorised, you will be able to sign in to your NHSmail e-mail account online at: <https://portal.nhs.net>

E-mailing non-secure e-mail services

Please be aware that NHS Digital made some changes on NHSmail. As a result, there has been a change in the way that NHSmail sends e-mails with sensitive data to other e-mail systems.

When sending e-mails with sensitive data outside of NHSmail you must use **[secure]** in the subject line of your e-mail. The word secure must be surrounded by square brackets for the message to be encrypted. If square brackets are not used, the content of the e-mail will be sent in plain text and may potentially be exposed to interception or amendment. [secure] is not case sensitive and [SECURE] or [Secure] can also be used.

Please read the guidance and support available on the NHSmail portal at: <https://portal.nhs.net> to ensure you understand how to use the encryption feature.



Accessing encrypted e-mails

An encrypted e-mail sent from an NHSmail address (ending @nhs.net) will contain a link to access the encrypted message. The message reads:

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

You have received an email message secured by Private Post. Please open the file called Encrypted_Message.htm to read the message.



If the person you have sent the encrypted e-mail to has not previously received an encrypted NHSmail e-mail, they will be redirected to an external website to create an account with the NHSmail encryption provider. Once registered, they will be able to view the content of your e-mail message.

Please read the guidance and support available on the NHSmail portal at: <https://portal.nhs.net>, which provides further information on sending and receiving e-mails outside the NHSmail service.

Sending a large amount of data

NHSmail users can securely transfer files up to 1GB in size using the Secure File Transfer (SFT) service. To access this facility, please visit: <https://nwww.sft.nhs.uk/sft/upload1>

Need further guidance?

Exchanging patient identifiable and sensitive information should be done in accordance with local information governance policy/ procedures and the NHSmail acceptable use policy. For guidance, please contact your Information Governance (IG) or IT Security Lead.

To register for an NHSmail account or for help and advice, please contact your NHS Informatics Merseyside IT Service Desk on 0151 296 7777 or visit the Self Service Portal at <http://selfservice>

User guidance and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are also available on the NHSmail portal at: <https://portal.nhs.net>