

From April 2025, the SMS allocation was reduced to 30p per patient, as agreed by NWL ICB under a three-year business case. This change has been previously communicated via bulletins, emails, and webinars, and shared with the LMC.

The attached June SMS data dashboard shows usage by GP practices across Accurx and clinical systems, including online consultation providers. It excludes self-funded providers and those not on the same gateway. The dashboard also includes NHS App message volumes.

Once practices exceed the 30p per patient allocation, they are likely to be charged for additional SMS use. These charges will appear on your PCSE statement – no payment have been recharged to date. The dashboard provides forecasts to help practices plan ahead, including when and by how much they may exceed the allocation.

NWL ICB will soon request practices to sign an MOU confirming their understanding of the 30p allocation and agreeing to cover any overspend.

Historical data shows SMS volumes peak in October, January, and February. We have factored this into the forecast. Last year's spend is included for reference, informing whether practices exceeded the previous 45p allocation.

NHS App patient and GP practice Videos:

The NHS App team have developed a series of video that's explain how patients can use the app, from the home page to booking seeing messages and switching on notification. These videos would be great for the GP practice reception screen – please ask your provider to upload the videos for patients to view the information while they wait to be seen.

[NHS App walk through videos - NHS England Digital](#)

NHS App Dashboard:

The NHS App allows patients to submit Online Consultations, book appointments, order repeat prescriptions and get advice without directly contacting their GP practice. It also allows GP practices the functionality of sending messages directly to patients without having to pay for the SMS cost, once their NHS App notifications are switched on. NHS England has sent all GP practices the target that 60% of the patient population should have downloaded the NHS App. Please log into the NHS App dashboard to view the NHS App data:

[NHS App dashboard - NHS England Digital](#)

What does the ICB fund for GP Practices?

North West London ICB has committed to fund SMS costs in Primary Care, for 3 years (from April 2023-March 2026). This funding covers:

- License costs for Accurx for 3 years for all GP practices in NWL.
- 67.5 million SMS fragment costs over the 3 years. The number of fragments that are funded reduces each year.

The total ICB budget for text messaging covers various components, including:

- AccurX SMS Fragments
- Clinical system messages (TPP and EMIS)
- PATCHs generated SMS
- eConsult generated SMS (in Ealing only)
- Accurx Plus licenses, AccuBook functionality

National change in pricing per fragment:

As mentioned last month, from April 2024 all messages sent via the clinical system and online consultation providers have been billed at £0.022 per fragment (160 characters), this is a slight increase from £0.0185. This increase will also be applied to Accurx messages from the 31st August 2024. Messages sent from Accurx will be £0.0225. This increase in price is taking place nationally and is not within the control of the ICB to change. This will not change your GP practice allocation but it may mean that the practices reach their allocation at a slightly quicker rate. We have shown a prediction of GP practice usage on the data dashboard provided.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the Digital Transformation and Delivery team via nhsnwl.digitalfirst@nhs.net