

# Improving school vaccination rates with revolutionary eConsent forms



Hertfordshire Community  
NHS Trust

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) provides 48 CQC registered services to 1.2 million residents – facilitating 1.6 million appointments every year. A substantial portion of those services take place within the community, including several immunisation projects across Hertfordshire’s local schools. To ensure vaccination uptake rates remain as high as possible, the Trust spent numerous years streamlining its immunisation consent process.

## The Challenge

Back in 2017, HCT identified its school immunisation consent process as one that would benefit from digitisation. Originally, this was a paper-based process - requiring input from parents, teachers, pupils, and healthcare staff at multiple touchpoints:

1. Clinicians provided consent templates to participating schools, which would then be printed for each pupil
2. Forms were distributed in-class by teaching staff
3. In most cases, pupils were then responsible for delivering this paper consent form to parent(s)/guardian(s)
4. Parent(s)/guardian(s) would then sign paper consent forms by hand, and return them to school via pupils
5. Teachers staff would then return signed forms to healthcare staff
6. Healthcare staff then collated and sorted the forms as required (alphabetically, by class, by consenting or non-consenting, etc) prior to immunisation sessions, before transporting forms back to base for storage.

## The Solution

This process was revolutionised with the adoption of HCT’s Immunisation Management Portal – a series of digital eForms reviewed through a bespoke Consent Management dashboard. Created with NDL’s eForm platform, the process allows healthcare workers to share digital consent forms with parents and guardians

## Key Benefits

Improved vaccination uptake & reduced wastage

Faster immunisation mobilisation

25,000 sheets of paper saved across 250 schools

Enhanced data accuracy and GDPR

Risk of data loss reduced



**eConsent has revolutionised the Immunisation Service allowing us to interrogate health information in advance of sessions, increasing uptake rates, reducing health inequalities as we can support those who have not returned a consent and reduce vaccine wastage. We could never go back!**



Caroline Shepherd  
Associate Director COVID 19  
Vaccination programme



The Solution (cont.)



through a secure URL link – as well as update clinical review and vaccination status.

The first eConsent process was used for flu immunisations, but the same system has since been applied to a further 10 processes and counting - including HPV, COVID-19, DTP, MenACWY and MMR vaccinations across all schools in Hertfordshire and East Anglia, as well as Hepatitis B vaccinations in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) schools.

Due to this experience, HCT's project team are now able to create new eForms within a matter of hours, and eConsent forms are now the standard for all immunisations. Existing eForms have been easily adapted for repeated use - the Trust even implements eConsent forms internally, allowing staff to receive at-work vaccinations.

## The Benefits

Since implementing eConsent forms across a wide range of school and staff immunisations, clinical teams can now triage in advance, acting to increase consent response rates well before a planned visit. The project has delivered several other benefits, such as:

### Improved vaccination uptake

HCT report that vaccination **uptake rates have improved** since implementing the eConsent system. Healthcare staff can now monitor the number of eConsents submitted, and accordingly request schools to send reminders to parents and guardians.

### Decreased vaccination wastage

With easy access to digital consent rates, vaccination ordering is now planned with greater accuracy, **reducing wastage** – a particularly useful benefit when vaccinations must be kept under certain conditions, such as the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

### Faster mobilisation

Once the government confirmed that COVID-19 vaccinations were to be administered to 12 – 15-year-olds, HCT was able to deploy eConsent forms within schools in just one week. Within 48 hours it had already received over 5,000 signed eConsent forms.

### Improved patient experience

The **familiarity and convenience** of eForms provide an improved patient experience for both pupils and consenting parents or guardians. The consent process now takes less time and can be completed from anywhere.

### Carbon footprint reduction

Within just a **year** of implementation, HCT was able to save **25,000 sheets of paper across 250 schools** during flu vaccinations. Since implementing eConsents full-time, it's become impossible to track just how much of a positive impact the project has environmentally.

### Data safety

With the removal of paper forms, data is now captured more successfully. No longer are paper consent forms misplaced in bookbags or blown away on the walk back from school. They cannot be stolen, lost or damaged – improving **GDPR and data accuracy**.



**NDL's front-end technology has been invaluable to us as we were able to rapidly deploy eForms particularly for the COVID-19 School Immunisation programme, a very handy toolkit to have.**



Sunil de Souza  
Data Warehouse Consultant



## What's Next?

While the Trust continues to develop eForms for both staff and patients across a number of clinical and administrative processes, it aspires to continue its digital transformation wherever applicable.

For more information about NDL's Digital Transformation Suite;

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