Vendor Guide to the In-Trust Inventory Management Systems (IMS) programme

October 2026

NHS Supply Chain

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How do trusts get on to the IMS programme?

Trusts register their interest in joining the programme with NHS Supply Chain by completing an online Pre-Deployment Questionnaire (PDQ).

Submission of the PDQ generates a request to the pre-deployment team to arrange an on-site readiness assessment. The purpose of the readiness assessment is to gather additional information and evaluate the trust's readiness. The readiness score is then calculated by combining the results of the assessment and the PDQ.

A feedback session is subsequently held with the trust to review any findings identified during the on-site assessment, as well as to provide a detailed explanation of the PDQ responses and the overall scoring.

Where the required score is achieved, an initial stock scan will be arranged to establish a baseline stock profile for the trust across the defined and scoped areas.

Where the required score is not achieved, the trust will be provided with detailed feedback and recommended actions to address identified gaps, with the opportunity to re-engage once these have been completed.



Readiness assessment

The readiness assessment is a structured, scored evaluation designed to determine how well a trust is prepared to commence and successfully implement the new solution.

On-site risk assessment - PDQ validation, process maturity and change readiness:

1

PDQ validation

- Vendor readiness
- Trust resource
- Purchase to Pay (P2P)
- Catalogue
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Scope
- Upcoming works / trust projects
- Storage
- Business case.

2

Process maturity: Ordering, catalogue and IT

- Uniformity of ordering process
- SOPs
- Catalogue
- Materials Management (MatMan) ordering / top up
- Implant ordering
- Consignment
- Clinical reporting Medical Devices Outcomes Registry (MDOR)
- Internal reporting
- Mobile device management and WiFi.

3

Process maturity: Stock management, MatMan and Research and Development (R&D)

- Consignment management
- R&D
- Capture process in R&D
- Stock rotation
- Stock transfers
- Storage location and capacity
- Expiry management and reporting
- Returns and recalls
- Automation or manual recall management.

4

Change readiness risk

- Infrastructure and technology
- People (capability, capacity and training)
- Sponsorship and change readiness
- Stakeholders and communication.

Assessment framework

An illustrative example of the assessment framework is provided below. Typically, a ‘proceed to deploy’ outcome is achieved where the overall readiness score falls below 150.

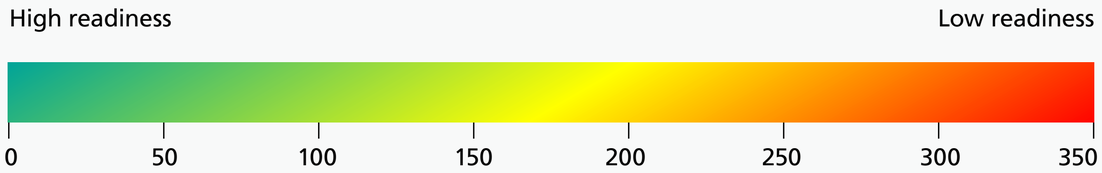
Risk score is calculated by totalling PDQ, ordering and stock management scores. This is them multiplied by the average change readiness risk and multiplied by the average deployment pre-requisites risk score.	
Risk scoring	
PDQ validation	
Ordering, catalogue and IT	
Stock and management, MatMan and R&D	
x Average change readiness risk	
x Average deployment pre-requisites risks	
Total score	**75**

Pipeline position - readiness cycle target

Year 1

The final decision point looks to assess trust readiness for IM deployment, following an on-site assessment which will look to understand the following:

- PDQ validation
- Process maturity
- Change readiness
- People
- Process
- Infrastructure
- Technology
- Practical / external factors.



Pre-deployment plan

Our pre-deployment team will work with the trust to assess their inventory management maturity and readiness to join the IMS programme.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 4	Week 6	Week 12	Week 14	Week 18	Week 26	Week 28	Week 32	Week 32
Activity	Trust contacted regarding programme	Trust fills out PDQ	On-site assessment is arranged	Feedback for onsite assessment provided	Stock count	Trust business case	Vender selection	OPA and trust funding	Hardware selection	Benefit forecast	Kick off day
Document	Engagement pack	PCQ	On-site assessment	PCD	1. 3d stock holding	Business case template	Vendor quotation tool	OPA and project charter		Project forecast document	Kick off deck

Deployment

Following on from the pre-deployment plan ending at week 32, deployment commences from week 33 as illustrated.

	Week 33	Week 34	Week 37	Week 40	Week 43	Week 46	Week 47	Week 48	Week 49	Weeks 49-55
Activity	Baseline meeting: create working groups	Interface set up	Change management meeting	Stock count	Clinical engagement	Training	UAT	Go live	Hypercare	Remaining go lives
Document		PCQ	MatMan / finance change management deck	1. 3d stock holding	Clinical engagement deck	PCD		PCD.	PCD.	

Post deployment benefit realisation activity illustration

NHS Supply Chain has a critical responsibility within the programme to deliver accurate and timely benefits realisation reporting to NHS England and its customers.

Fulfilling this obligation is essential to demonstrating value, ensuring transparency, and supporting informed decision-making across the system.

To enable this, vendors are required to meet the following expectations:

- Provision of access and training: Vendors must provide the NHS Supply Chain benefits realisation team with appropriate system access and comprehensive training on the solution reporting suite(s), subject to trust approval.
- Data export capability: The solution must include robust functionality to export all relevant data from the reporting suite into Excel format, ensuring data can be easily analysed, validated, and incorporated into formal reporting outputs.

Activity	Conclusive lessons learnt session	Sign PTD	Deployment handed over to benefit team	IMS now BAU	Ongoing collaboration with benefit team	Regular approval of benefit figures realised	Internal NHS Supply Chain sign off

The NHS Federated Data Platform

The NHS Federated Data Platform is the enabler that connects data in a secure environment and addresses the most pressing operational challenges whilst enhancing the ability to make informed and effective decisions.

NHS Supply Chain expects that all vendor systems are aligned with the Canonical Data Model (NHS England » NHS Federated Data Platform infrastructure) and able to export all required data to the FDP.

More detail will be shared in due course:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/digitaltechnology/nhs-federated-data-platform/icb-offer/



Partnership

To ensure we achieve maximum return on investment and most importantly improve patient safety, we will work in partnership during the role out of the Inventory Management project.



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