

Media release – 11 July 2024

Priory signs a new five-year agreement with Ashtons

The UK's largest independent provider of mental health services will benefit from medicines supply and pharmacy services alongside further development of the newly implemented e-Works electronic prescribing and medicines management solution

Priory has signed a new, five-year agreement with Ashtons that underlines its commitment to improving the management of medicines, following the roll-out of the e-Works electronic prescribing and medications management system.

The contract covers the full range of services offered by Ashtons, which encompass medicines supply, expert audit and clinical advice from pharmacists, training and e-learning for staff, and the e-Works software solution, which was rolled-out to all 53 of Priory's mental health facilities last year.

Priory will also become the first healthcare provider to implement the Ashtons 2.0 programme, which will enable pharmacists to offer more regular advice remotely, using the information captured by e-Works to reduce the need to visit hospitals to review paper charts.

Adrian Cree, chief medical officer of Priory, said: "We are delighted to have signed this five-year contract with Ashtons because of their unwavering commitment to patient safety, their innovative solutions, and their proven ability to deliver exceptional service.

"Our long-standing partnership with the company has consistently demonstrated significant improvements in medication management and patient outcomes, making Ashtons the ideal partner as we continue to enhance our services and support our patients' needs."

Priory is the UK's largest, independent provider of mental health and social care services. It has a long-standing relationship with Ashtons that goes back to 1997, when the company started to provide medicines to one of its hospitals.

Since then, Priory has gone on to choose Ashtons to provide medicines for all its facilities and adopted its learning and pharmacy services, which see expert pharmacists go on site to review prescription charts and provide advice to prescribers and medicines administrators.

When Ashtons launched e-Works in 2021, Priory chose to pilot the EPMA system at one of its mental health hospitals. A study found the shift away from paper-based prescribing practices led to a significant reduction in error rates.

Patient detail errors were reduced by 87%, prescription errors by 85%, and administration errors by 93%. Following the successful trial, Priory decided to implement e-Works at all 53 of its mental health hospitals.

Planning and implementation of the system took just 14 months, finishing early in 2024. The implementation will not only improve prescribing safety, but enable the development of the Ashton's 2.0 programme, which will enable more pharmacy services to be delivered remotely.

Stephen Tuddenham, chief executive officer of Ashtons, said: "We value the partnership with Priory and the incredible success the team has achieved. Together, we have built a robust foundation for

excellence in the supply and management of medicines, delivering significant clinical and patient benefits."

"This milestone contract renewal will also support our growth and solidifies our reputation as a leader in digital-first medicines management solutions."

e-Works is a cloud-based EPMA system that can be securely accessed using a modern browser from any device with an internet connection. It includes decision support for prescribers and a medicines administration scheduler to help administrators to ensure that patients get the right medication at the right time.

The system is designed to meet the needs of healthcare providers, and is widely used by hospices and clinics, as well as in mental health. One of Priory's hospitals became the 100th site to implement e-Works during the roll-out, and the system is now in use at more than 130 sites across the UK.

Exciting new developments, set to be adopted by Priory under the new contract, include an enhanced stock management module. This upgrade will streamline the review of medicine supplies, simplify the ordering of new stock, and improve the management of controlled drugs.

Selwyn John, implementation manager at Ashtons, said: "e-Works supports doctors to prescribe and nurses to record the administration of medications to support patient care. It is evolving software that we are continuously developing, for mental health and for hospices and clinics.

"As we have demonstrated with our relationship with Priory, this is a collaboration. We are not just developing the software that we want to develop; we are working with our customers to develop the software they need."

ENDS

Notes for editors: A full case study about the roll-out of e-Works at Priory is available here: [Priory-e-Works-CaseStudy \(ashtons.com\)](https://www.ashtons.com/priory-e-works-case-study)

About Ashtons

Ashtons is a leading provider of bespoke digital-first medicines management solutions, dedicated to revolutionising healthcare delivery through innovative digital solutions. Ashtons' range of specialist services and software solutions has been continually refined since 1995. Our services are delivered nationwide by our team of over 60 clinical pharmacists, supported by our experienced support team.

About Priory

Founded in 1980, Priory has established itself as the largest provider of mental health services in the UK. Operating a network of 290 facilities across the UK, encompassing hospitals, clinics and specialist care homes. Priory focuses on delivering personalised treatment plans tailored to individual needs across a diverse population of 28,000 people, across a wide spectrum of mental health disorders. With 98% of its patients referred by the NHS, Priory plays a vital role in the UK's mental healthcare system.