



Equality Impact: Screening and Assessment Form

Section 1: Policy details - policy are shorthand for any activity of the organisation and could include strategies, criteria, provisions, functions, practices and activities including the delivery of our service.	
a. Name of policy or practice (list also any linked policies or decisions)	Healthcare Professional Online Booking. This is an IT system for Healthcare Professionals (HCPs) to digitally request an emergency ambulance or timed patient admission in lieu of making a telephone booking.
b. Name of department	Integrated planned, unscheduled and urgent care portfolio.
c. Name of Lead	Stephen Massetti, Director of National Operations
d. Equality Impact Assessment Team [names, job roles]	Stephen Massetti, Director of National Operations Stewart Clark, Project Manager Ashley Sinclair, Programme Support Officer.
e. Date of assessment	29/11/23
f. Who are the main target groups / who will be affected by the policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients. • Healthcare Professionals and non-clinical staff authorised to make online bookings. • Ambulance Control Centre (ACC) staff and road crews. • ICT Support staff.
g. What are the intended outcomes / purpose of the policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a fast method to request an ambulance for an emergency or timed admission online. • To reduce the demand on the HCP telephone booking process with a target of 80% of all daily bookings to transition from telephone to online.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To optimise SAS staff utilisation by freeing up Call Handler resources to pick up 999 calls and other incident types requiring verbal handover. • To improve patient safety and data quality by reducing the scope for misunderstanding that occurs when requesting an ambulance by telephone. • To improve HCP staff and patient experience regardless of whether protected characteristics are present or not.
<p>h. Is the policy relevant to the General Duty to eliminate discrimination? Advance equality of opportunity? Foster good relations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy is relevant to fostering good relations and the system by its nature will support all users and benefit all patients regardless of protected characteristics. HCPs will be able to book an ambulance online using their professional judgement without speaking with a Call Handler. Use of the online service will free up ACC staff to optimise their service to citizens and other call types, thereby improving efficiency. HCP staff will also benefit from a streamlined process which will free up their time to care for more patients. Patient safety will improve from faster dispatch resulting in improved patient experience. Data quality is expected to improve by mitigating the risk of misinterpretation during verbal handover.
<p>If yes to any of the three needs complete all sections of the form (2- 7) If no to all of the three needs provide brief detail as to why this is the case and complete only section 7 If don't know: complete sections 2 and 3 to help assess relevance</p>	

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Section 2: Evidence, consultation and involvement			
Please list the available evidence used to assess the impact of this policy, including the sources listed below. Please also identify any gaps in evidence and what will be done to address this.			
a. Previous consultation / involvement with community, including individuals or groups or staff as relevant. Please outline details of any involvement / consultation, including dates carried out and protected characteristics			
Details of consultations - where, who was involved	Date	Key findings	Protected characteristics
			Age
			Disability
			Gender reassignment
			Gender / sex
			Marriage / civil partnership *
			Pregnancy / maternity
			Race
			Religion / belief
			Sexual orientation
			Cross cutting - e.g. health inequalities - people with poor mental health, low incomes, involved in the criminal justice system, those with poor literacy, are homeless or those who live in rural areas.
A workshop was held to demonstrate and discuss proposed solution with 3	March 2021	There was a high level of interest expressed by those who attended the workshop and the benefits to HCP staff were agreed.	Available evidence - presentation

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The Scottish Ambulance Service
A Special Health Board of NHS Scotland

<p>of the 14 territorial Boards (NHS Lothian, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, and NHS Ayrshire and Arran). SAS contributors were:</p> <p>Garry Buchanan Roslyn Scott Anne Marie Di Palo Karen Brogan Julie King Steph Jones James McGuire Paul Watson</p>			
<p>Benefits Realisation, Risk Register and Issue Register</p> <p>James McGuire Steph Jones Anne Marie Di Palo Tracy Fleming Stevie Cairns Stewart Clark</p>	<p>June - August 2022</p>	<p>A key benefit of the HCP Online Bookings project for SAS is that demand and workload on ACC staff, particularly HCP Call Handlers, will be reduced.</p> <p>This has the benefit for ACC operations that 999 calls and other incident types can get additional resources thereby improving experience including shorter call waiting times.</p> <p>An assessment of risks and current issues has taken place to determine if introduction of online booking could have any adverse effects in relation to equality, but no equality concerns have been raised.</p>	

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	Available evidence – Benefits Realisation Plan, Risk Register, and Issue Register.
b. Research and relevant information	The solution will comply with equality and diversity policies, and has been designed to deliver an improved service, and accessibility for all eligible HCP users has been considered. The questions asked for an online booking are the same as those during a telephone booking, only the method to transfer the information is different.
c. Knowledge of policy lead	The online bookings solution uses the MIS Advanced Questionnaire Module (AQM) which is a standard off the shelf product. SAS will be the first ambulance service to use the product by making it available via a secure webpage to territorial Boards. In that regard, the solution is not yet proven in real-world application.
d. Equality monitoring information -- including service and employee information	<p>HCP Online Bookings will be piloted by a representative sample of territorial Boards who will each be invited to provide feedback about its usability and how the process compares to the telephone booking process.</p> <p>The HCP or other NHS Scotland employee who makes an online booking will provide their NHS email address to confirm their identity (in case of audit or complaint). All other contact with scene will continue by telephone.</p>
e. Feedback from service users, partner or other organisations as relevant	ACCs are represented as part of the Project Team in the capacity of internal Senior Supplier. Clinical staff are

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	<p>represented on the Project Team by a Clinical Lead, in the capacity of a Senior User.</p> <p>The project approach is focused on the quality of the product by involving high demand users in the pilot cycle, seeking to include all three stakeholder groups (GPs in hours, GPs out of hours and HCPs in a hospital setting).</p> <p>The end-user testing will capture feedback from SAS users as well as each of the Boards who participate during the pilot phase. This will ensure that any unintended equality or diversity implications are identified and addressed prior to rollout.</p>
f. Other	None.
g. Are there any gaps in evidence? Please indicate how these will be addressed	The direct user feedback from the pilot phase will seek to identify any unintended equality and diversity implications but no such implications are anticipated.
Gaps identified	The solution is new and SAS is the first ambulance service to implement it. Accordingly, there are no real-world lessons learned for SAS to benefit from, and a successful pilot phase is on the critical path to rollout. Although NHS24 staff won't be eligible to use online booking, a separate policy is being developed to benefit patients in their care, and provide their staff with a faster service and improved experience.
Measure to address these; give brief details. Further research? Consultation? Other	Direct user feedback from pilot via a survey and the opportunity to make any critical changes to the solution design before rollout of the change.
Note: specific actions relating to these measures can be listed at section 5	

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Section 3: Analysis of positive and negative impacts			
Please detail impacts in relation to the three needs specifying where the impact is in relation to a particular need - eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations			
Protected characteristics	i. Eliminating discrimination	ii. Advancing equality of opportunity	iii. Fostering good relations
Age			
Positive impacts			
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.		
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.		
Disability			
Positive impacts			
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.		
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.		

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Gender reassignment	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Gender / sex	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	The medical genders question can be extended to include additional options besides “Male”, “Female” and “Unknown” if there is a future requirement to do so. However, gender information captured via a telephone booking is currently “Male”, “Female” and “Unknown”. Any change should be considered for the telephone and online process.
Marriage / civil partnership	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Pregnancy / maternity	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Race	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.

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Religion / belief	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Sexual orientation	
Positive impacts	
Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Cross cutting - e.g. health inequalities people with poor mental health, low incomes, involved in the criminal justice system, those with poor literacy, are homeless or those who live in rural areas. Other	
Positive impacts	HCP online booking has been designed for professional-to-professional use to streamline the booking process for healthcare users and to shorten the patient waiting time for crew to arrive on scene, improving patient experience and patient safety. It provides improvement on the existing telephone based service, regardless of the presence of protected characteristics. It has been designed to deliver an improved service, and to simplify the booking process when verbal handover is not necessary. It has also been designed to be inclusive and with accessibility having been fully considered in the design.

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Negative impacts	No negative impact has been identified.
Opportunities to enhance equality	Not required. Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods.
Note: specific actions relating to these measures can be listed at section 5	

Section 4: Addressing impacts Select which of the following apply to your policy and give a brief explanation - to be expanded in Section 5: Action plan	
	Reasons
a. No major change - the EQIA shows that the policy is robust, there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	<p>The EQIA suggests that the outcomes of the HCP Online Bookings project will have no adverse effect on anyone affected by its introduction, either directly or indirectly. This includes patients, ACC staff, HCP staff, ICT staff, and the general public.</p> <p>Since online bookings uses the MIS Advanced Questionnaire Module, this does mean that ICT staff (including the Service Desk) must have an ability to create support calls and manage these to resolution with MIS input when necessary. However, the skills are already present so the emphasis will be on ensuring any existing processes are adapted where necessary, such as in the event of unplanned downtime.</p>
b. Adjust the policy – the EQIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities and you are making adjustments or introducing new measures to the policy to remove barriers or promote equality or foster good relations	Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods. Eligible NHS staff who request ambulances will have the option to save time when there isn't a need to speak with an HCP Call Handler. A minority of instances such as when a patient has an immediately life-threatening condition must continue to be transferred verbally.
c. Continue the development and implementation of the policy without adjustments – the EQIA identifies potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote	Telephone and online booking are both viable booking methods. The need for an adjustment could arise from the pilot but none have been identified at this stage.

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equality. Justifications for continuing without making changes must be clearly set out, these should be compelling and in line with the duty to have due regard. See option d. if you find unlawful discrimination. Before choosing this option you must contact the Equalities Manager to discuss the implications.	
d. Stop and remove the policy - there is actual or potential unlawful discrimination and these cannot be mitigated. The policy must be stopped and removed or changed. Before choosing this option you must contact the Equalities Manager to discuss the implications.	There are currently no concerns relating to the policy that would be affected by equality and diversity considerations.

Section 5: Action plan

Please describe the action that will be taken following the assessment in order to reduce or remove any negative / adverse impacts, promote any positive impacts, or gather further information or evidence or further consultation

Action	Output	Outcome	Lead responsible	Date	Protected characteristic / cross cutting issue*
Communicate positive impacts to stakeholders including HCP staff as users of the system and ACC staff who will be affected by the change in process	Invitation to Pilot communication, Online Bookings posters, Team meetings, Pilot briefings, GP newsletter/ bulletin, Chief Executives bulletin	Communications Plan updated, Stakeholders informed of positive impacts, Raised awareness among staff (especially ACC and ICT)	Project Manager, HCP Online Bookings	As per Communication Plan	All users regardless of protected characteristics

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and in ensuring current quality standards are maintained, reporting any issues to senior management. A business-as-usual support model must also be agreed with ICT and assessment of changes to business continuity plan.		Updated ACC Business Continuity Plan			
Produce an intuitive User Guide for HCP end-users.	User Guide which steps through the booking process	Well-informed users who can make bookings unassisted, quickly and easily	Project Manager, HCP Online Bookings	As per Project Plan	All users regardless of protected characteristics
* list which characteristic is relevant - age, disability, gender reassignment, gender / sex, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion / belief, sexual orientation or cross cutting issue e.g. poor mental health, illiteracy etc					

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Section 6: Monitoring and review Please detail the arrangements for review and monitoring of the policy	
	Details
a. How will the policy be monitored? Provide dates as appropriate	The policy will continue to be monitored and reviewed by the Portfolio Lead / HCP Online Bookings Project Board until the closure of the project.
b. What equalities monitoring will be put in place?	The policy will continue to be monitored from an EQIA perspective until the closure of the project, with pilot feedback expected to identify any unintended inequalities of the changes delivered by the project.
c. When will the policy be reviewed? Provide a review date.	The EQIA will be next reviewed at a date stipulated by the Project Board, expected to be two years from approval date.

Section 7: Sign off Please provide signatures as appropriate			
Name of Lead	Title	Signature	Date
Stephen Massetti	Director of National Operations		01/12/2023
Completed form: copy of completed form to be retained by department and copy forwarded to Equalities Manager for publication on Service website			
Provide date this was sent	04/12/2023		

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