



Title of Paper: encompass update March 2026

For Discussion

Requires consideration and debate.

1.0

Background

encompass was established to deliver the digitally enabled transformation of Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI). At the heart of encompass is a Digital Care Record for every citizen, provided in partnership with Epic and designed collaboratively with staff and patients to work across the whole of Northern Ireland.

All Trusts in Northern Ireland are now live on encompass May 2025, marking the first time in history that a country is live on a single epic electronic care record spanning acute, ambulatory, mental health, social care, and community care, enabling integrated pathways and continuity of care.

With these go-lives Northern Ireland has the single biggest instance of EpicCare Link (web-based portal) that provides read-only access to encompass to support patients and clients beyond secondary care.

The encompass programme is now in a phase of stabilisation, optimisation, and preparation for future upgrades as mandated by epic, with a key upgrade due to be delivered 22nd March 2026 after 6 months of planning.

Regional and Trust-level Groups continue to respond to optimisation operational challenges, including work queues, in-basket management, note sharing, pathway governance, reporting, benefits realization, and service readiness.

There have been a number of additional digital systems replaced, of specific interest to South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (SEHSCT), Healthcare in Prison (HiP) successfully went live with encompass on 6th November 2025 replacing EMIS. HiP provides integrated primary care across three prison settings, HMP Maghaberry, HMP Magilligan and HMP Hydebank Wood College. This milestone ensures safer, connected and person-centred care for people living in prison.

This represents a global first with the linking of Department of Justice systems to Health in Prison record. This was possible with unparalleled co-operation between Business Service Organisation - encompass, SET Health in Prison Service, Department of Justice, Northern Ireland Prison Service and local encompass team.

2.0

Key Issues

1. Ongoing workstreams spanning governance, training, clinical safety, digital safety and reporting continue to bring improvements to our services.

Upcoming service implementations include

- Blood Transfusion Phase 2
- Morbidity & Mortality (M&M) (June 2026)
- Child Health System (CHS) replacement (Aug 2026)
- Children's Social Care (Autum 2027)
- My Care enhancements (on-going)

These will continue to enhance our patients' and service users experience of Health and Social Care NI.

The encompass Regional Programme Team continue with planning, despite significant financial pressures; licensing, resourcing, and device costs to shape focusing in the prioritisation for the 26/27 financial year.

2. Locally encompass Programme Office has set up an encompass Benefit oversight group to support and monitor the 37 Benefits outlined in the business case alongside regional colleagues.

With HiP now successfully live SEHSCT is re-focusing on realising benefits going forward - those in the original business case and emerging benefits. Collaboration of benefit owners across all Trusts will be key to achieving this as well as the robust reporting from the system.

Clearly demonstrating benefits during the implementation and post go-live of encompass is essential to ensuring work is delivering the value it was designed to achieve and to demonstrate these through savings, cash releasing benefits or supporting service reform.

3. Reporting is a key area of improvement highlighted by the Northern Ireland Audit Office report in encompass and more recently in our recent audit – SEHSCT – encompass Issues Management.

SEHSCT continues to work collectively with regional encompass, SPPG and Data Institute colleagues to address gaps via encompass Regional Reporting Oversight Group. Resourcing for reporting build is vital to realising program benefits.

4. Workforce & Training

encompass requires a robust HR joiners and leavers process. The regional leavers form and process has now been finalised and agreed. It has been shared with ICT for local review to confirm Trust specific links, branding and system alignment. The associated HR process has been agreed and is now complete.

3.0 Resources Implications (inc Organisational, Financial, Human Resources)

All Trusts rely on the Regional encompass Team for the ongoing maintenance and continued optimisation and development of the system.

The programme faces financial pressures and similar to the rest of the HSCNI system these risk the timely delivery of core milestones and the ability to maintain essential system support.

4.0 Impact on Safety, Quality and Experience (SQE)

Mycare is the patient facing web and Mobile App that enables Health and Social Care Users in Northern Ireland to engage with their clinical/service notes, Lab results appointment letters. It is anticipated as encompass is optimised the functionality will become richer.

Since go-live SEHSCT has seen a steady 0.8 – 1 % increase in Mycare users per month with 19% of the 367,927 population of South Eastern Trust on the App or accessing the website.

SEHSCT is therefore leading regionally on an SMS Outreach programme for MyCare initially to our 300,000 patients providing a link to download the app and encouraging patients to engage.

Improved MyCare adoption will allow us to realise benefits of the system

5.0 Key Risks and Proposals to Mitigate

Key Risk	Mitigations
Financial pressures potentially impacting programme continuity and optimisation	Securing required investment and aligning spending with risk priorities

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