

First contracts awarded as eye care electronic e-referral management and image sharing service (EeRS) forges ahead

NHSX and NHS England and Improvement's EeRS programme is entering an exciting new phase as regions begin implementation of electronic eye care referral systems. The roll out comes thanks to original capital funding of £7million from NHSX earlier this year.

Mounting pressures in hospital eye services, exacerbated by the pandemic, have led to a natural ambition to make better use of high street optometrists, so more patients can be seen closer to home and capacity is released in hospital-led services. Through EeRS, we can send referrals and images more efficiently, communicate more quickly with hospitals and provide more eye care services locally directly to patients.

Since December, the EeRS programme has scaled up at pace across England. Five suppliers are now in the process of delivering EeRS solutions across four regions, with procurements ongoing across the rest of the country including the Midlands, North West, North East and Yorkshire regions. This will bring us close to covering 40million of England's population by the end of the calendar year.