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NHS England to invest $71M to fast track online maternity records

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NHS England and NHSX will work with maternity service providers to facilitate access to maternity records on smartphones of every pregnant woman by 2023/24.



NHS England and NHSX will work with maternity service providers, local maternity and neonatal systems and integrated care systems, as well as suppliers, to develop the best platform for clinicians and women.

Speaking at the NHS Confederation Conference, Chief Nursing Officer for England, Ruth May, said “bulky paper records would soon be banished” and pregnant women will be able to access information on their pregnancy at their fingertips on phones or other electronic devices if they choose to. Women can also choose to keep paper records, depending on their preference.

The NHS is investing £52 million ($71 million) to fast-track its Long Term Plan commitment to ensure that all women will have access to all of their maternity notes and information through a smartphone or other devices by 2023/24. This will give women easy access to their maternity records, whether on a smartphone or online, allows them to take full control of their pregnancy journey by having all the information and decisions about their care at their fingertips. Midwives, GPs, and other clinicians caring for a pregnant woman will also have easy access to information, no matter where or when the mum-to-be is seen.

“Not only will this help improve the experience for women by reducing the burden of repeating information to each healthcare professional that they see throughout their pregnancy, but it will also improve safety," adds CNO Ruth May.

Healthcare providers will be supported to upgrade their maternity information systems so that records kept by different services are fully interoperable. The new system will be the gold standard and ensure that there are no variations in the quality of platform across the country. To provide national leadership in digitising maternity services, NHS England and NHSX have appointed Julia Gudgeon as the first national digital midwife.