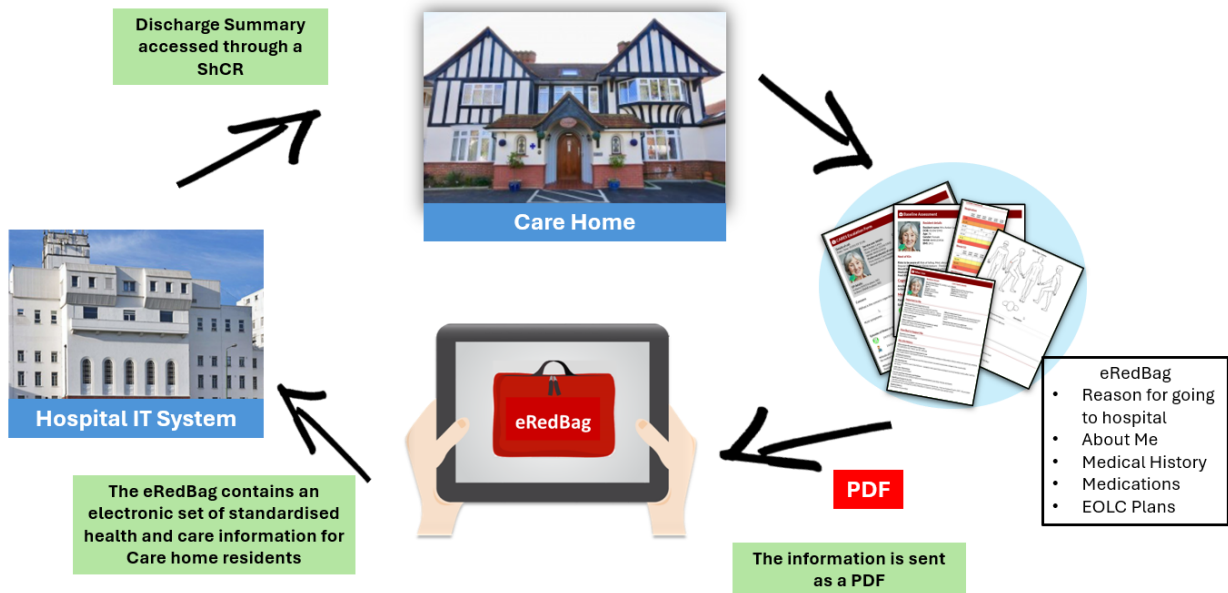


# The Short Guide to the eRedBag Pathway

The eRedBag Pathway helps improve the experiences and quality of care of residents moving from their care homes to hospital in an emergency and then back to their care homes. The eRedBag provides healthcare staff with up-to-date information about care home residents, quickly and easily, enabling them to deliver the best possible care.

## Contents

- 1. What is the eRedBag Pathway? ..... 2
- 2. What information does the eRedBag contain? ..... 3
- 3. How is the information transferred electronically?..... 3
- 4. What are the benefits of the eRedBag? ..... 4
- 5. What stage is the eRedBag project at?..... 4
- 6. What are the challenges to implementing the eRedBag?..... 5
- 7. Where to find more information? ..... 5



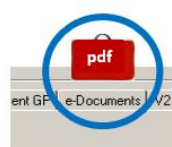
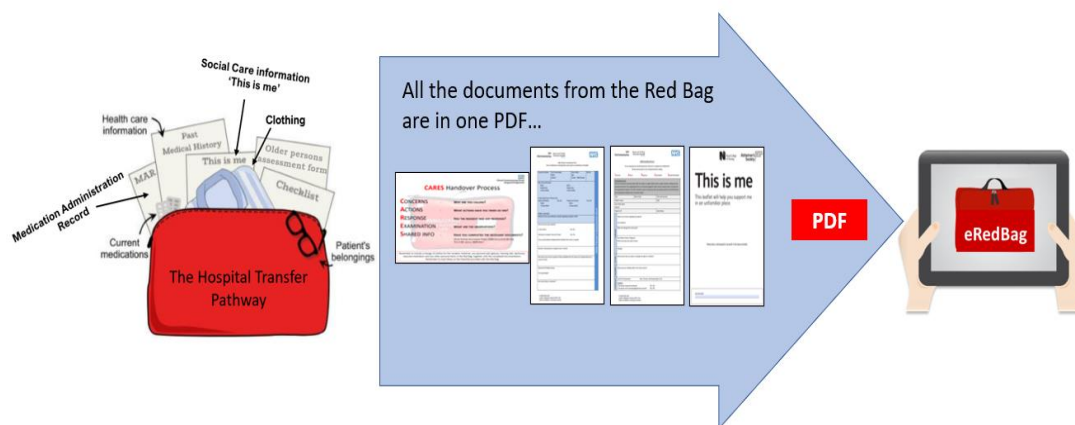
Date of publication: February 2024

## 1. What is the eRedBag Pathway?

Put simply, the eRedBag Pathway is the electronic version of the paper documents included in the [Hospital Transfer Pathway](#), more commonly known as ‘Sutton’s Red Bag initiative’. The Red Bag initiative was initiated in Sutton, South West London, in 2015, as part of the Enhanced Health in Care Homes Vanguard. The contents of the Red Bag are put together for when a resident is transferring from a care home into hospital either urgently or in an emergency. The Red Bag contains key paperwork, medication and personal items like glasses, dentures and hearing aids and is handed to ambulance crews by care staff. It then travels with the resident to hospital where it is handed to staff in the emergency department.

The Red Bag project aimed to improve residents’ experiences and outcomes through transferring their important information, belongings and clothes to return home in, when they required urgent care in hospital. Users of the Red Bag report that it results in better quality, joined-up care, delivered in a timely manner and significant cost savings [were also reported](#). The initiative is a proven example of integrated working across health and social care.

Following the success of the Red Bag scheme in Sutton and the subsequent rollout across over four-fifths of the country, it was recognised that the project could be made more effective if the information in the paperwork was shared electronically. Following six months of technical development and information governance hurdles, the eRedBag became a success. The first eRedBag transferred to hospital in February 2019. In South West London this innovation is known as the eRedBag – though for coding purposes it is referred to as the ‘Care Home Emergency Pack’ on our SWL Health Information Exchange. The physical bag remains a central part of the initiative but there is enhanced capability, from the electronically transferred information, for more joined up, responsive care.



## 2. What information does the eRedBag contain?

The eRedBag is a collection of data items, currently brought together into a PDF document, which includes:

- Details of the patient, preferred name, care home (including secure email address), GP and next of kin, NHS number
- CARES Escalation Form – symptoms, concerns and actions taken by care home
- Medical history, medication and vital signs observations
- Body map, including pressure sores, and mobility status
- UCP plan, Advanced Care Plan and DNACPR if any
- Reasonable adjustments and any impairments
- About Me form - personal preferences and information about themselves
- Safeguarding, legal information and risks
- Additional support plans

There is now a standard list of data items. In October 2020, the Professional Records Standard Body (PRSB) published five national standards for sharing information between health and social care. [The new standards](#) outline key information, such as how someone's needs might change after being in hospital and how this should be recorded. Two of the new standards relate to information held within the eRedBag. These standards are:

- About Me – the information that people want to share about themselves
- Urgent referral from care home to hospital – information required for the care and support of a person when they are admitted to hospital from a care home in an emergency

## 3. How is the information transferred electronically?



The eRedBag is transferred electronically from the care home via encrypted, cloud-based software and a secure network connection, to the NHS. In order for the ambulance crew to view the eRedBag on the way to hospital, it is transferred via the [National Record Locator](#) and National Care Record Service. At the same time, it is transferred to the local shared care record. In South West London, it is transferred to the [London Care Record](#), in order for staff at all four hospitals, as well as the community teams and general practice, to view the information.

#### 4. What are the benefits of the eRedBag?

The eRedBag has many benefits to individuals and organisations across the health and care pathway. They are both non-cashing releasing financial benefits and quality benefits; both benefits have been witnessed at all system levels. The full benefits are detailed in the document: 'eRedBag Pathway Benefits Paper' in the Mobilisation Pack.

In summary, reliable, trusted, up-to-date, consistent quality information about patients/residents is readily available for communication across health and social organisations and leads to...

##### ...short term benefits:

- Improved experiences, quality of care and safeguarding for care home residents
- Improved assurance and peace of mind for family members, friends and carers
- More time available for staff to spend caring for people
- Improved job satisfaction for staff
- Quicker and safer discharges
- Reduced risk of data breaches

##### ...system benefits:

- Care staff feel more connected to the broader health system
- Cost savings through less people going to hospital, fewer unnecessary tests and interventions whilst in hospital, and less time in hospital
- Improved compliance and understanding of data protection, and data and cyber security.

The financial benefits are:

- Reduced ED attendances (non-cashable)
- Reduced admissions (non-cashable)
- Reduced length of stay (non-cashable)
- Reduced readmissions (non-cashable)
- Reduced ambulance conveyances (non-cashable)
- Increased hospital staff productivity (non-cashable)
- Increased care staff productivity (non-cashable)

#### 5. What stage is the eRedBag project at?

From December 2019 to January 2021, work focussed on delivering the technical capability, supporting homes to meet information governance requirements and engaging with users of the eRedBag, although Covid inevitably caused delays to the project timetable. By March 2021, the project sponsored by NHS Digital has been completed in South West London. From April 2021, the eRedBag moved from being a project to become part of SWL ICB's (previously known as CCG) programme of work with more care homes across SWL being supported to help access the scheme and more engagement is happening with hospital and ambulance staff to understand their experiences. From 2023, we continue to work with more care homes across SWL and further engagement and promotion is occurring with hospital and ambulance staff to realise the benefits.

## 6. What are the challenges to implementing the eRedBag?

Lessons have been learnt during implementation that relate to:

- The importance of timely and extensive stakeholder engagement across the whole health and care network
- The value of engaging senior clinicians in the hospitals who can act as advocates and mentors to encourage access to the eRedBag
- Allowing plenty of time to support care homes to reach minimum required standards for information governance and data protection
- Targeting the care homes that already use software to deliver planned care as they are often in a position to move forward at pace
- Early engagement of care homes with the concept and keeping up momentum, providing support to connect remotely for staff training
- Working with software providers to engage with homes already using their products.

## 7. Where to find more information?

The eRedBag is available to be rolled out across England through a package of guides and tools to support local implementation available at:

<https://healthinnovationnetwork.com/resources/implementing-the-eredbag-pathway/>

For more information, please email [SWLCareHomes.eRedBag@swlondon.nhs.uk](mailto:SWLCareHomes.eRedBag@swlondon.nhs.uk)

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations for their ongoing commitment to this project:

