

For health professionals in the UK



An overview of e-safety netting tools

This document provides an overview of electronic safety-netting tools commonly adopted by GP practices across the UK, their key functions, associated costs, and any evaluation data. It aims to improve awareness of tools available, the functions they offer and support practices in adopting the tools that are most appropriate for them.

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What are e-safety netting tools and how can they support practices?

E-safety netting tools are electronic systems designed to help primary care teams track, monitor and follow up with patients who present with symptoms that may be caused by a serious condition, such as cancer.

Consistent use of e-safety netting tools can help practices to:

- Standardise safety-netting across clinicians
- Reduce missed or delayed investigations or referrals
- Manage follow-up actions more reliably
- Support quality improvement via better audit data around safety netting
- Improve patient communication and engagement

There are two broad categories of e-safety netting tools:

- 1) **Add-on tools:** tools that sit alongside electronic health records (EHR) and integrate via messaging, dashboards or templates.
- 2) **In-built EHR functions:** tools built directly into HER systems such as EMIS, SystemOne or Vision.

Both types of tools are included in this overview. For more information about how safety netting e-tools can support clinicians and practices, how they can be evaluated, and resources to support your practice, see our [Safety netting webpage](#).

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Overview of e-safety netting tools

Below are two tables that provide an overview of the e-safety netting tools that are commonly used and available in the UK. This is not an exhaustive list, and details may be subject to change. The information in this document does not constitute Cancer Research UK endorsement.

- **[Table 1: Quick comparison of e-safety netting tools](#)**: provides a snapshot of e-tools' system compatibility, key functions and whether they're free to use. Refer to the [key below](#) for icon descriptions.
- **[Table 2: Detailed overview of e-safety netting tools](#)**: provides more details on each tool, including an indication of cost, available evidence or evaluation and links to supporting documents.

Notes on the scope of the tools included: The overview of e-tools below is focused on those known to be used for people presenting with potential signs and symptoms of cancer. It only covers safety netting software that supports the automation of safety netting. Technology that can conduct safety netting but isn't part of a specific software e.g. text-netting, has not been included. Some of the tools below may have additional use cases, for which we did not evaluate the evidence base for e.g. clinical decision support or risk stratification. Some tools may require additional regulation to support other use cases.

Notes on detail included: There is limited peer-reviewed research or verified sources that provide detailed information on e-safety netting tools. The content below has been gathered through assessment and triangulation across various online sources providing information on known common technologies that support the use of electronic safety netting. In the absence of more detailed information, costs have been gathered from publicly accessible sources (e.g. company websites, or Government [Digital Marketplace](#)). Costs may vary dependent on packages and population.

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Table 1. Quick comparison of e-safety netting tools

Safety netting software	Ardens	AccruX	C the Signs	EMIS E-SN tool	MJog	SSNAP	SystemOne features	Vision features
Compatible with:								
EMIS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
SystemOne	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Vision	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Functions:								
Patient communication	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Automated or scheduled alerts or actions	?	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓

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Tracking / reporting of actions	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗
Visualisation of tracking e.g. data dashboard	✗	✗	✓	?	✗	✗	?	✗
Supports coding	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Develops templates	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Free to use	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Evidence to support safety netting	✗	✗	?	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Support documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓

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Table 1 key

Icon	Description
	Represents where information on functionality, supporting documentation or evidence that investigates it's use as a safety netting tool was available and clear.
	Represents where information on functionality, supporting documentation or evidence that investigates it's use as a safety netting e-tool was limited or unclear.
	Information on the function of the tool was unavailable, as was supporting documentation or evidence that investigates it's use as a safety netting e-tool.

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Table 2. Detailed overview of safety netting e-tools

Name	System compatibility	Functions	Cost	Evidence or evaluation	Supporting documents
Add-on systems					
AccurX	EMIS, SystemOne, Vision	<p>Appointment reminders</p> <p>Post appointment messages/e-mails</p> <p>Scheduled messages to patients</p> <p>Create custom safety netting templates to send to patients^{1,2}</p>	£0.155–£0.616 per person a year, dependent on package and population size ³ .	No publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.	AccurX Help Centre
Ardens	EMIS, SystemOne	Template to help record data to track referrals, diagnostics and symptom safety netting.	£0.25 to £0.43 per person a year ⁵	No publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.	Ardens Support Centre: How to run reports Ardens Support

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		<p>QOF alert for practice staff to track those patients on the safety netting system.</p> <p>Searches and reports to monitor patients not seen in clinic in a specific time frame, diagnostics that have been tracked and have not had a result and to keep track of patients returning for symptom monitoring⁴.</p>			<p>Centre: Safety netting searches</p> <p>Ardens Support Centre: Safety netting functions</p>
<p>C the Signs</p>	<p>EMIS, SystemOne, Vision</p>	<p>Visualisation of data: Practice dashboard of patients being safety netted⁶</p> <p>Patient communication: Provides videos and resources that can be sent via text or email to patients</p> <p>Alerts to flag delays or missed actions</p>	<p>Variable estimates online: £0.20–0.33p per patient cost, dependent on length of licence^{8,9}</p>	<p>Small, qualitative study in one area of England reported varied use of the tool, software was found to be effective in managing referral processes and tracking patients’ progress in other points of care.</p> <p>Another qualitative study found clinicians generally</p>	<p>C the Signs Help Centre</p> <p>Getting started admin guide (SystemOne)</p>

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		<p>Automatically tracks those awaiting referral or diagnostics if inputted into C the Signs system</p> <p>Supports use of safety netting coding⁷</p>		<p>found managing and monitoring referrals as part of post-consultation safety netting as the most helpful component of C the Signs.</p>	
MJog	EMIS, SystemOne	<p>Appointment reminders</p> <p>Two-way messaging system to patients across email and SMS</p> <p>Integrated with NHS App</p> <p>Scheduling and sending of customisable health and online services message templates¹⁰</p>	<p>Software Subscription: cost not publicly available</p> <p>Standard text message can cost ~3p per segment, making longer messages more expensive</p>	<p>No publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.</p>	<p>Mjog Resource Hub</p>

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			Mjog Web Messenger and Desktop GP: free to use with software subscription ¹¹		
EHR Functions					
EMIS E-SN tool	EMIS	<p>Template that schedules diary reminders</p> <p>Read coded events tagged to diary entries which are time reminders</p> <p>Tracking events related to suspected cancer referral, direct access diagnostics and vague symptoms</p> <p>Pop-up alerts that remind users that the patient is being tracked or there is an</p>	Free for those using EMIS Web	<p>The CASNET2 study, conducted by University of Oxford, evaluated this tool and found that using the tool reduces time to referral and diagnosis.</p> <p>Positive feedback from a small evaluation survey by North Central London Cancer Alliance, with users finding it user-friendly and acceptable.</p>	<p>Youtube video</p> <p>Clinician guide</p> <p>Admin Guide</p>

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		outstanding action when the patient's record is opened ^{12,13}			
SSNAP (Shared Safety Netting Action Plan)	SystemOne	<p>Records details of the safety netting discussion to support patient engagement</p> <p>Creates reminders and allocated tasks</p> <p>Generates patient letters and diary reminders</p> <p>There is also a visual aid, but this is not compatible with SystemOne.</p>	Free for SystemOne users	One research paper summarises the co-design process, but otherwise no publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.	No support documentation identified
SystemOne Features	SystemOne	The 'delayed treatment module' provides a structured way to capture any intervention that is delayed. This might include referrals, investigation,	Free for SystemOne users	No publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.	SystemOne Administration

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		treatment, assessment or attendance			
		Set scheduled tasks ¹⁴			
Vision features	Vision	<p>Templates and task workflows built into Vision to schedule reminders, manual coding, and follow-up actions for suspected cancer cases</p> <p>Custom templates</p> <p>Scheduled tasks and alerts</p> <p>Use of read/SNOMED codes to trigger follow-up reminders</p> <p>Logs diagnostic status and pending results</p>	Free for Vision users	No publicly available evidence or evaluation of the tool for safety netting use.	<u>Safety Netting in Vision</u>

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Choosing the right tool: decision checklist

Before selecting or changing a safety netting tool, your practice may want to consider:

1. What problem are you solving or area are you looking to improve?

Missed results? Referral tracking? Communication gaps?

2. What functions do you need?

E.g. patient communication, automated or scheduled alerts, tracking and reporting of data (see [table 1](#) overview)

3. Compatibility

What tools work with your EHR (EMIS, SI, Vision)?

4. Evidence and value

Is there any published evidence showing improved outcomes? Does the cost of the tool provide added benefit over what's already in place?

5. Implementation

Do staff need training? Has the tool been switched on for all roles? How will you monitor use and impact?

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Making the most of your e-safety netting tools in your practice

If you already have a system in place:

- Ensure all clinicians and relevant support staff are using it
- Review workflows to reduce duplication
- Use searches/dashboards regularly
- Build prompts into QI or MDT processes
- Evaluate usage: What's working? What's being missed?
- Keep templates standardised and up to date

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- ³ Accurx. [Pricing document](https://assets.applytosupply.digitalmarketplace.service.gov.uk/g-cloud-13/documents/708675/717732996936611-pricing-document-2024-03-21-1056.pdf). 2024. Available at: <https://assets.applytosupply.digitalmarketplace.service.gov.uk/g-cloud-13/documents/708675/717732996936611-pricing-document-2024-03-21-1056.pdf>
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