

NHS Appraisal Toolkit website taken offline for three weeks

As part of a routine security check it has been discovered that certain aspects of the electronic NHS Appraisal toolkit, established nine years ago, are not sufficiently robust to withstand modern day hacking. Ministers have immediately instructed that the website is taken offline until the supplier, SCHIN, can address these potential vulnerabilities.

The Department is aware that some of the 27,000 active users of the service will have annual appraisals planned during the period that the system will be suspended and that this will be a matter of concern to them. However, after consulting with the BMA and the RCGP, there was a shared concern to ensure that any level of security risk was dealt with as robustly and as quickly as possible.

There is no evidence of any security breach or loss of data. Given the importance of given the importance of preserving confidentiality of staff and patient information, it is not acceptable to take any risks. The Department of Health is working closely with the supplier to ensure that the service is restored as soon as possible and apologises for any inconvenience this may cause doctors in the meantime. It is hoped that full service can be resumed within three weeks.