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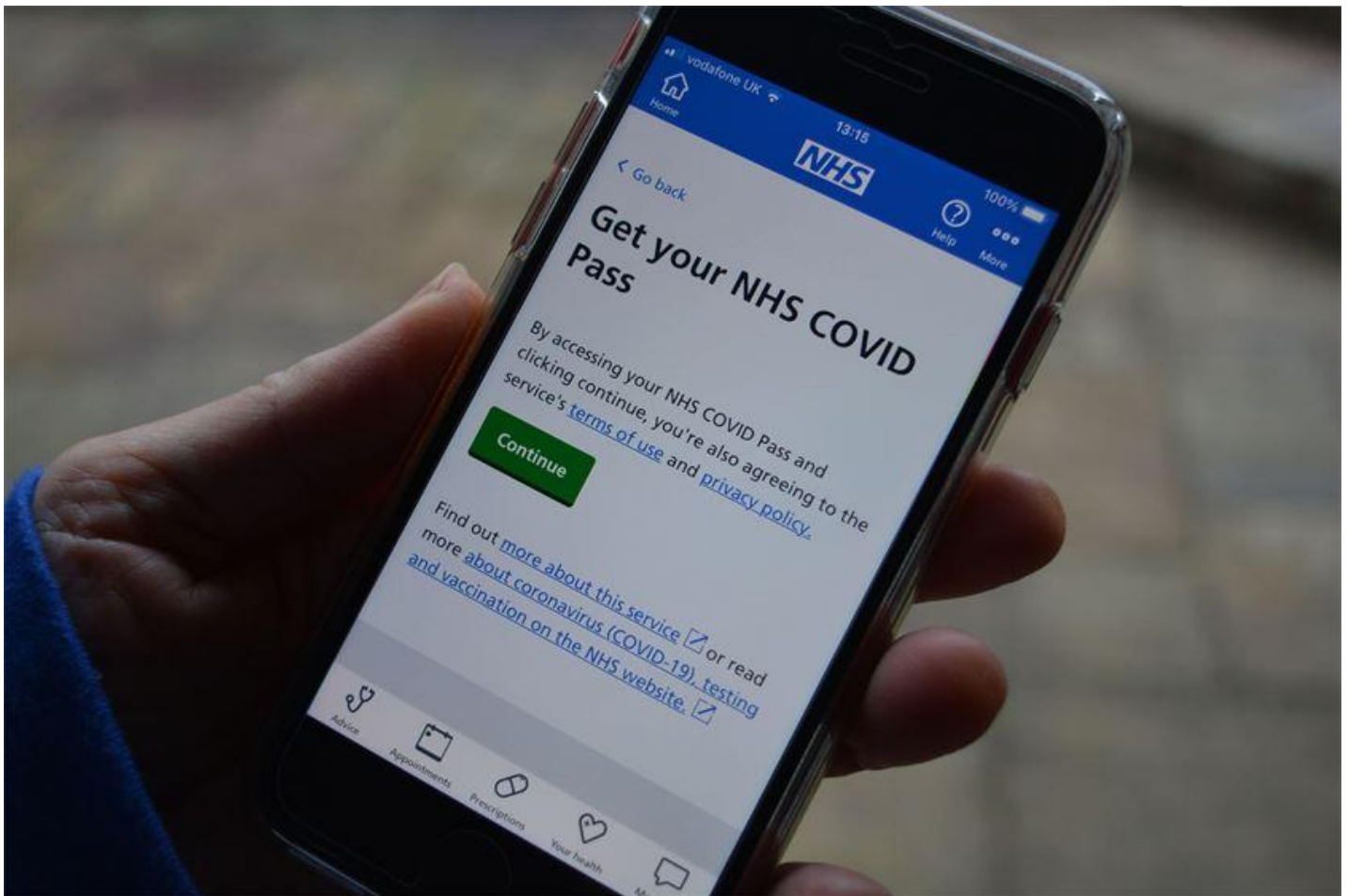
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## DHSC names IT firm as £18m 'delivery partner' on Covid pass

Netcompany to provide "operational management, incident management and support" as Covid pass use winds down within UK



NHS Covid pass app Josie Elias/Alamy



By [Tevye Markson](#)

11 Apr 2022

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The Department of Health and Social Care has chosen an IT consultancy as its "delivery partner" for the NHS Covid Pass, as use of the pass to demonstrate vaccine status winds down in the UK.

Netcompany UK has been handed a year-long contract, starting on 1 April, with the option to extend to 36 months, according to the public contract documents.

DHSC estimates that the initial year of work will cost £6.5m, rising to £18m if optional extensions of up to 24 months are triggered.

The Danish company – which created the Scottish NHS Covid pass, as well Danish and Norwegian Covid apps – is tasked with “delivering the NHS Covid Pass App live service including operational management, incident management and support, and app development services”.

Launched in May 2021, the Covid pass app has been used both to facilitate international travel and domestically. Since then, some venues and events have required people to show a Covid pass or negative test to enter – either because the government has mandated it or as a voluntary measure, as guidance has changed.

The 1 April start date for the contract coincided with the ending of guidance recommending the use of the Covid pass in this way. The government's Living with Covid plan, published in February, suggested the pass will only be used for international travel in the long term.

“From 1 April, the government will remove the current guidance on domestic voluntary Covid-status certification and will no longer recommend that certain venues use the NHS Covid Pass,” the document said.

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“The NHS Covid Pass will remain available within the NHS App for a limited period, to support the use of certification in other parts of the UK. The NHS App will continue to allow individuals access to their vaccination status for international travel, as well as their recovery status for travel to those overseas destinations that recognise it.”

It was also revealed last week that the NHS Covid Pass system [underwent a £300,000 assessment of its cybersecurity set-up](#) and key risks from October to March.

DHSC signed a deal with IT consultancy Mason Advisory on 18 October, which ran until 31 March and covered the provision of the tech firm's 'cybersecurity assessment and implementation' service.

The department also [signed a contract with Deloitte](#) in September to provide advice, guidance and leadership for the Covid pass programme, which ended on 13 March.


Since the launch of the digital vaccine passport system in May 2021, millions of citizens have accessed the Covid pass – principally via the NHS App, which now has more than 22 million users across England. All but about 250,000 of these have downloaded the app since the start of the pandemic – including 18 million that have downloaded it since the creation of the Covid pass.

Netcompany recently signed [a separate £2.5m deal with NHS Test and Trace](#) to provide support and ongoing development work for the NHS Covid-19 contact-tracing app until the end of 2022.

DHSC and Netcompany were both approached for more details on the contract.

Netcompany said it could not comment on the contract, whilst DHSC had not responded at the time of publication.

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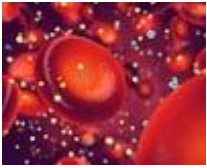
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