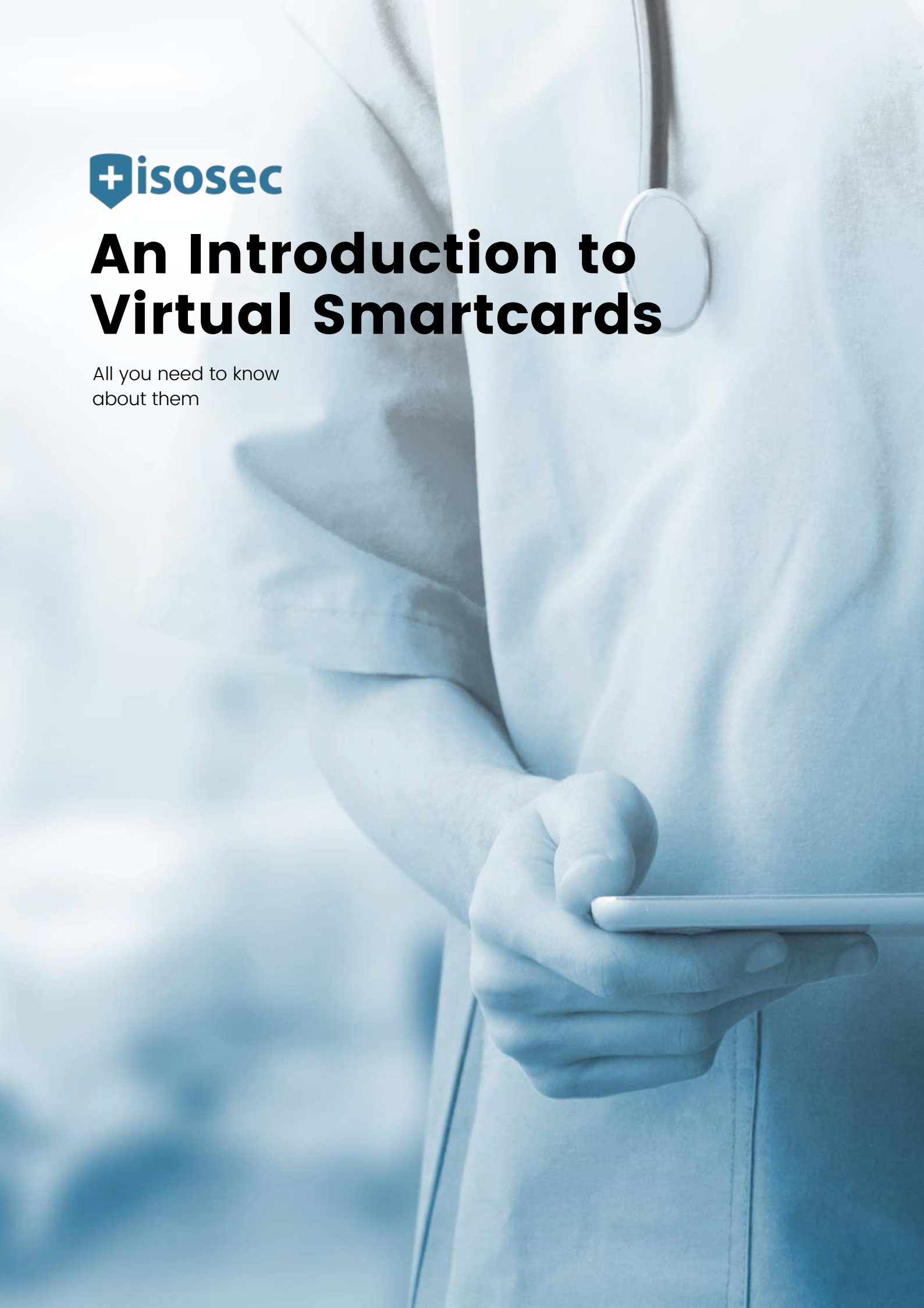




An Introduction to Virtual Smartcards

All you need to know
about them





About Isosec

Isosec is the market leader in cloud-based NHS Identity & Access Management solutions.

We've been working with the NHS for over 15 years with more than 100 NHS customers, providing fast, simple, secure and reliable access and authentication to the systems that clinicians and NHS staff require on any device, any platform, at any time.

What is a Virtual Smartcard?

A Virtual Smartcard is a replacement to the NHS physical smartcard, but provides exactly the same access and uses the same NHS identity as a physical card, so anyone who has a physical smartcard can have a Virtual Smartcard.

The user's credentials are virtualised into a secure cloud based service provided by Isosec. Instead of using a card reader and physical card, a user just has to enter their Virtual Smartcard passcode to get authenticated to the NHS Spine.

Additionally, the service comes complete with a simple to use 2nd Factor (2FA) authenticator app that ensures additional user security.

How can they be used?

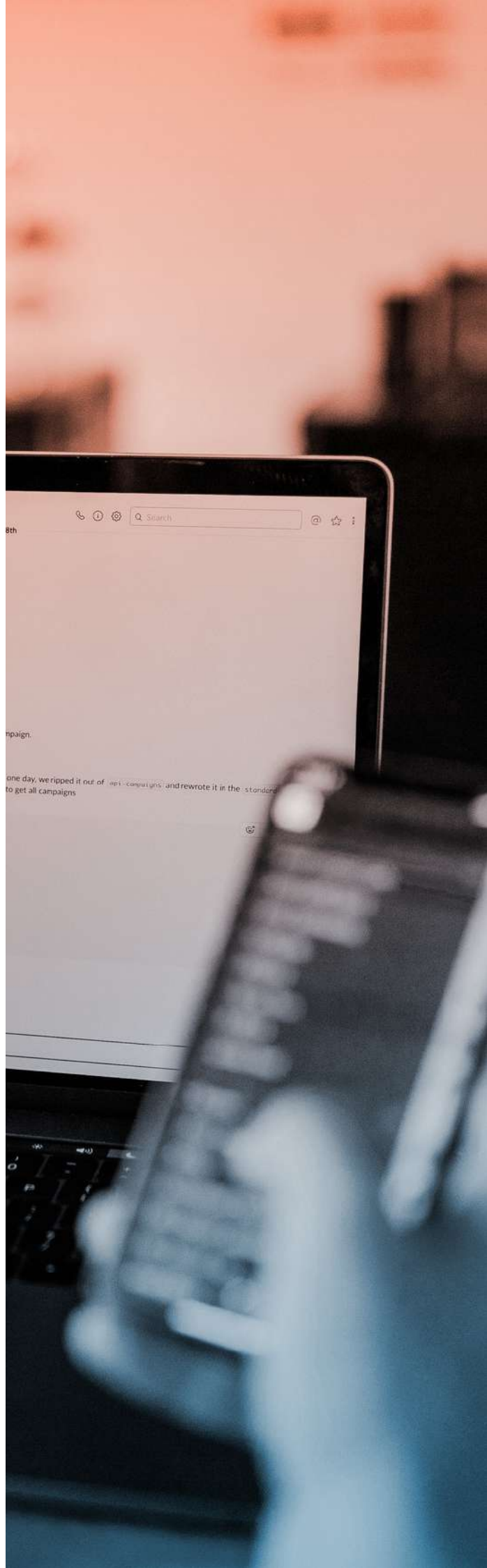
Virtual Smartcards work with the same systems and applications that use physical smartcards today. In addition, they allow the use of almost any type of device (including personal devices) where virtual desktops are deployed, allowing for all working situations, including home and remote working.

How are they issued?

Virtual Smartcards can only be issued with a Registration Authority (RA) and follow the same identity requirements that exist for physical cards. Isosec installs a client software component (vRA) onto the RA desktop machine which then allows the RA to issue Virtual Smartcards very quickly and simply to users. Virtual Smartcards are issued via self-service and emailed to users who then unlock them via a simple self-service portal process, secured by a one-time passcode via text message. The user sets up their own passcode and secret questions and answers that can be used for self-service password resets should they forget theirs.

At the same time, new users set up their authenticator app on their smartphone, and this provides a second factor push notification alert. This is only required per NHS Spine session, currently 12 hours.

Full detailed technical and security information on the Isosec Virtual Smartcard can be found in our Technical Overview document, please feel free to request this if you need it.





What's involved in the delivery process?

The Isosec delivery team have a tried and tested deployment process where they can set up all the items that you will need to use Virtual Smartcards.

At a high-level these are:

1. We will help set-up and install the RA (vRA) software that is required to issue the Virtual Smartcards and help with any questions and support on this.
2. Users will need the Isosec Identity Agent (iO) to be installed on the physical or virtual desktop that the Virtual Smartcard will work on. There are always some nuances here and our team is used to dealing with a wide range of ecosystems/platforms.
3. Isosec will then work with you on the environment and make sure that the Virtual Smartcard service is configured to work within the environment that you have.
4. If you require Electronic Prescribing (EPS), we will work with you on the installation of that component as well.

Isosec prides itself on a friendly and efficient process that means every customer gets set-up as fast as possible. We run a system where we will identify roles, responsibilities and expectations of what needs to be done and by whom.

All parts of the delivery process are clearly outlined in the documentation that our team provides as part of the installation to each customer.

Key features

Virtual RA

In the same way a manager issues a physical card with the NHS card management system (CMS), using the Virtual RA a manager can issue a Virtual Smartcard in the Virtual Smartcard Cloud where it is stored securely and never leaves.

Spine Authentication

Just like with a physical smartcard, a Virtual Smartcard authenticates to the Spine and is completely transparent to Spine clinical applications.

Self Service

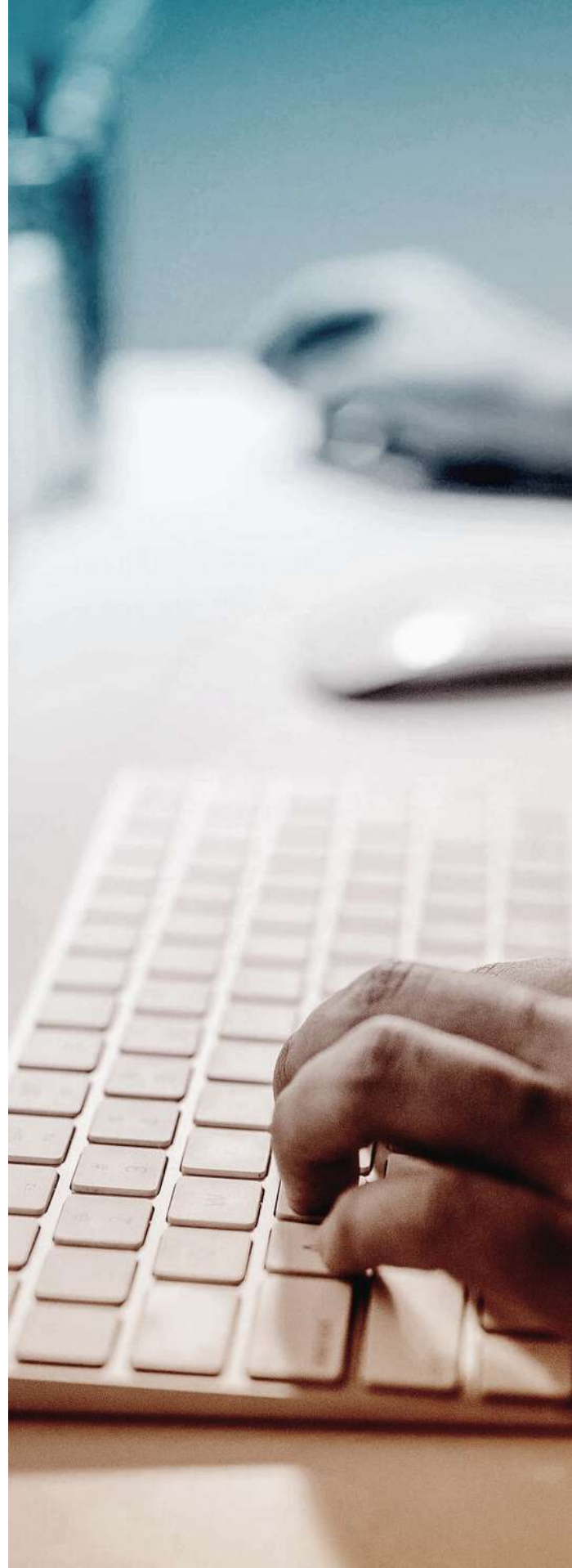
A Virtual Smartcard user can enrol and manage their Virtual Smartcard via a self-service portal.

Analytics

Every use of a Virtual Smartcard is audited giving the Trust an unequivocal view of when and who authenticated, which apps were used and for how long.

Security

Virtual Smartcard is secured to NHS security standards and requires two-factor authentication: something the user knows (the passcode) and something the user has (the smartphone or biometric, for example).



[Click here to watch our Virtual Smartcard demo](#)



Key benefits

Time saving

Virtual Smartcards are fast to issue and easy for the user to enrol, with no face to face contact or journeys needing to be taken to issue and manage physical cards. Password resets can be done via the self-service portal, saving valuable clinical time ever being lost.

Improved card management

With Virtual Smartcards there is always absolute control over who has one and how it is used at any given time. A Virtual Smartcard cannot be lost, stolen, forgotten or borrowed. They can be time limited, which helps with those who may only need temporary access like locum or agency staff.

Better Information Governance

Virtual Smartcard data is collected passively and securely collated for full audits at the touch of a button via the Isosec KPI & Analytics platform, which is made available to authorised users.

Get in touch

Get in touch with our product experts here:

E: vsc@isosec.co.uk

T: 0161 376 3570

