INTEGRATED DIGITAL CARE RECORD

Success Story
Safer Hospitals, Safer Wards Technology Fund

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust
January 2015

NHS England administers the Safer Hospital, Safer Wards Technology Fund on behalf of the Department of Health.
THE CHALLENGE

In 2011 Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Trust implemented an evidence-based paper “Early Warning” chart, which standardised recognition of deteriorating patients throughout the organisation. Recognising the limitations of a paper-based approach, OUH determined that an electronic solution could further improve patient safety. Using in-house IT resource alongside human factors and engineering expertise from the University of Oxford, OUH developed tailored software that allowed compatibility with tablets and bedside devices whilst integrating with the Cerner Millennium EPR implemented in the Trust under the National Programme for IT.

To speed up implementation of the digital solution, the Trust were awarded funds from Safer Hospitals Safer Wards Technology Fund. OUH procured hardware to distribute across 65 of the wards to deploy an intuitive, electronic early warning scoring system, where real-time data would be shared in the right way, with the right people (staff, patients, relatives and carers).

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

The System for Electronic Notification and Documentation (SEND) was developed using web-based software and has been successfully piloted across three wards at OUH.

Inputting patient vitals is a simple process through touch-screen bedside tablets, which also display early warning scores for clinicians. These tablet computers are integrated with existing IT infrastructure so all information can be displayed in a dashboard, viewable to relevant professionals anywhere throughout the Trust, allowing rapid assessment and intervention.

The system also provides a real-time overview of clinical practice against National Institute for Care Excellence (NICE) criteria.

Bar-code scanners identify staff members from their ID badge and patients from their wristband and all information and data can be easily understood and displayed through the tablets, keeping patients, family and staff in mind.

RESULTING BENEFITS TO PATIENTS AND STAFF

The SEND project has quickly delivered patient benefits by the immediate identification of their condition and the information made visible to clinicians irrespective of their location.

Patients benefit because their charts are immediately available to the clinicians caring for them rather than only being available at the bedside. Clear chart design allows their vital signs to be shared with them as part of normal clinical care.

Staff benefit because the system is swifter than the paper-based system, with accurate early warning scores being automatically calculated. Patient care can be prioritised according to need.

The information is integrated into the Trusts EPR solution to form a complete health record for the patient, which is more convenient for clinicians and allows them to manage their time more effectively. Having the complete clinical record in the same electronic area allows clinicians to integrate a complete picture of the patients recorded information, improving patient communication and care.

LESSONS LEARNED

In comparison to asking vendors to adjust existing solutions to fit Trust requirements, the ability to develop in-house solutions to fit local Trust requirements can improve the “fit” and flexibility of the solution generated with reduced long term costs. The local “know-how” developed in the process increased the strength of the team, both to support the current solution and to develop further solutions for the OUH.

FUTURE

Initial feedback from the pilot in three wards has been extremely positive. Full roll out is planned to take place throughout 2015.

IN A NUTSHELL

SOLUTION:
Electronic early warning scoring system

IMPLEMENTATION:
September 2013 - ongoing

FUNDING:
Safer Hospitals, Safer Wards

PATIENT BENEFITS:
Quicker, easier and safer detection of deteriorating conditions and increased involvement in their own care

STAFF BENEFITS:
Quicker entry of accurate patient conditions and wider availability of information to clinicians

TRUST BENEFITS:
Greater support for clinical governance and safety auditing.

RESULT:
Successfully piloted in 3 acute wards - plans to implement all 65 wards throughout 2015

“We spent a lot of time with the people who use the system to make sure we could develop a tool that would be useful and allow better recognition and alerts of deteriorating patients."

“SEND sets up an electronic system where if your signs are worsening, an automatic score is placed on the deterioration and information is displayed to the clinician telling them what they need to do to care for that particular patient.”

Dr Peter Watkinson,
SEND Project Clinical Lead, OUH

CONTACT

NAME: Dr Peter Watkinson
JOB TITLE: SEND Project Clinical Lead, OUH
EMAIL: peter.watkinson@ouh.nhs.uk
WEB: www.ouh.nhs.uk
TWITTER: @OUHospitals