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Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Achieving financial savings and driving patient safety with Idox

Challenge:

Implementing a cost-effective, modern records management process

With an ongoing vision to deliver high-quality patient care and meet significant cost-saving targets, Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust recognised its health records processes and systems were outdated, inefficient and ready for improvement. The challenge was ensuring that all patient records were made available in the right place, at the right time. Health records library space was at full capacity at each of the Trust's sites, with patient files constantly being moved to overflow areas and not being tracked consistently across the estate, resulting in significant time spent searching for them. Increased Trust activity also meant a risk of there being no space to accommodate a potential rise in the number of records. The Trust's numerical filing process required staff to store patient records in sequential order and did not support the team in operating a coordinated, sustainable and efficient library. By transitioning to a system with location-based filing, customised pulling lists, one-click tracking and increased automation, the Trust was confident that it could drive the necessary cost savings, while enabling staff to work more productively.

Solution:

Using iRecords to manage 3,000 case notes a day

After seeing Idox's hospital records management solution, iFIT deliver operational efficiencies and significant savings at a nearby NHS Trust – also using Lorenzo as their Electronic Patient Record – the team were excited about its ability to revolutionise the storage, tracking and retrieval of medical records. Supported by the installation of fixed RFID passive readers and sensors to track case note movement across the Hull Royal Infirmary, Castle Hill and Hessle Road sites, and the provision of handheld devices to locate case notes electronically, the system ensures timely access to patient information, allowing staff to trace records far quicker than before. The system generates an intuitive 'pulling list' of required patient records, making it faster and simpler for staff to retrieve the records they need for upcoming patient appointments. iRecords also maximises library space, increasing shelf space by over 15% and allowing records to be filed 80% quicker when compared to the Trust's previous numerical filing method.



Martin Whittle, Health Records Manager at Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust said: "We manage in the region of 3,000 sets of notes a day, and without iFIT, staff would have to pre-sort and store them, before we even had time to file them away. This meant notes could be waiting to be filed for up to a week, which was becoming a bottleneck, and we weren't able to operate as efficiently or as productively as we would have liked."

"Now notes are filed with iFIT, we've been able to completely transform the management of our records, making it far easier, safer and quicker to store and retrieve patient information. As a result, we work more productively and can increase patient safety by ensuring case note availability."

Martin Whittle
Health Records Manager
Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Outcome:

Achieving productivity savings ahead of time

With the iFIT solution implemented, the Trust witnessed rapid results – so much so, the team reached many of their 12-month savings targets ahead of time. In terms of library efficiencies, 11.4 WTE were saved in the first five months alone, enabling the Trust to reallocate staff members to other essential activities, such as library housekeeping. Martin explained: "As well as increasing the pace at which we can work, we've also freed significant staff hours. Due to limited resource, many trusts struggle to complete important housekeeping tasks, such as removing deceased patient case notes out of the system. We have the time to manage this now, which is already improving the quality of our records management and helping us streamline our storage processes and make the most of our facilities." Importantly, medical records are now filed within an hour, with the Trust operating a more reliable, efficient library that maximises case note availability – crucial for patient safety and ensuring a positive experience. "While we've always had good case note delivery, it took a lot of staff to sustain that service," explains Martin. "With iFIT, we can maintain 99.5% record retrieval in a way that's cost-effective and easier to manage, avoiding the admin bottlenecks. Many of our longstanding staff have said they wouldn't want to go back to the old tracking system – they're extremely happy with iFIT." The Trust is using the iRecords solution, part of the iFIT tracking and hospital management platform. As a GS1-compliant solution, the entire suite can scale to track other hospital assets such as equipment, and aligns with the Trust's wider Scan4Safety strategy – an opportunity that other departments in the hospital are starting to explore.

Call us now on 0333 011 1200 or email marketing@idoxgroup.com to find out about our clinical and hospital management solutions, or to arrange a demo.

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