EPSOM AND ST HELIER UNIVERSITY
HOSPITALS NHS TRUST
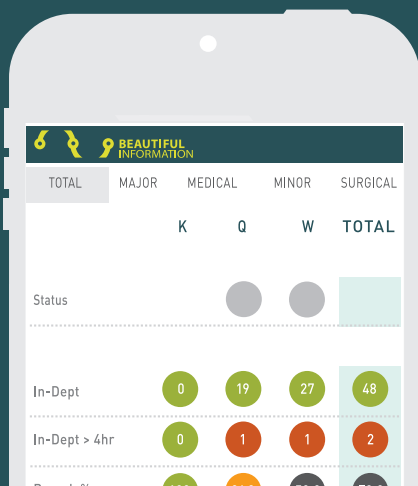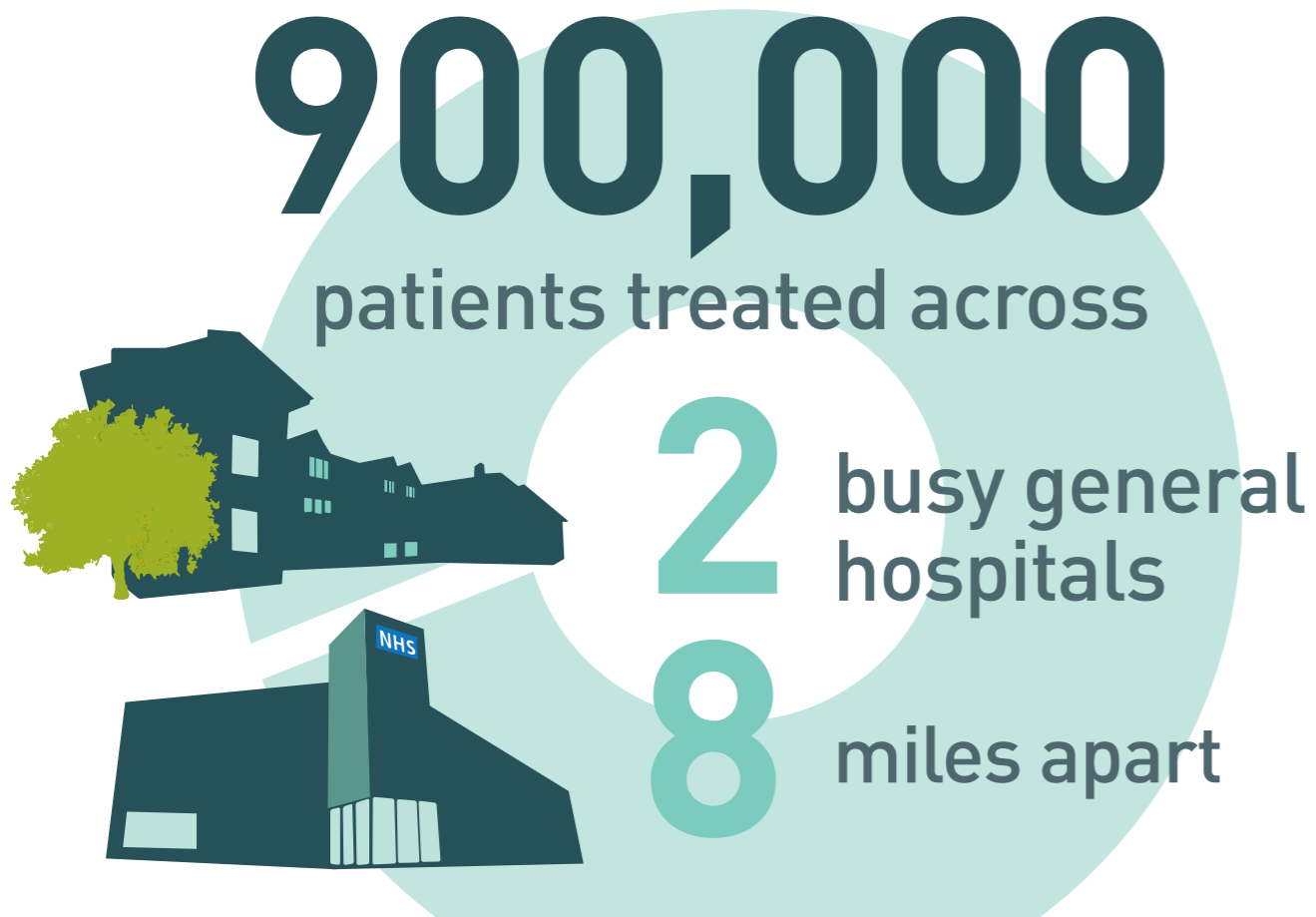
How a bespoke tracking solution helped monitor and improve patient flow from admission to discharge

BED MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SOLUTION

BEAUTIFUL
INFORMATION

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust serves a population of over 490,000 across south west London and north east Surrey. The trust operates two busy general hospitals with approximately 870 beds across the two sites and 900,000 patients attending the hospitals for care and treatment every year. It is committed to adopting new technology, developing systems and improving services to deliver the most effective and efficient level of care possible.
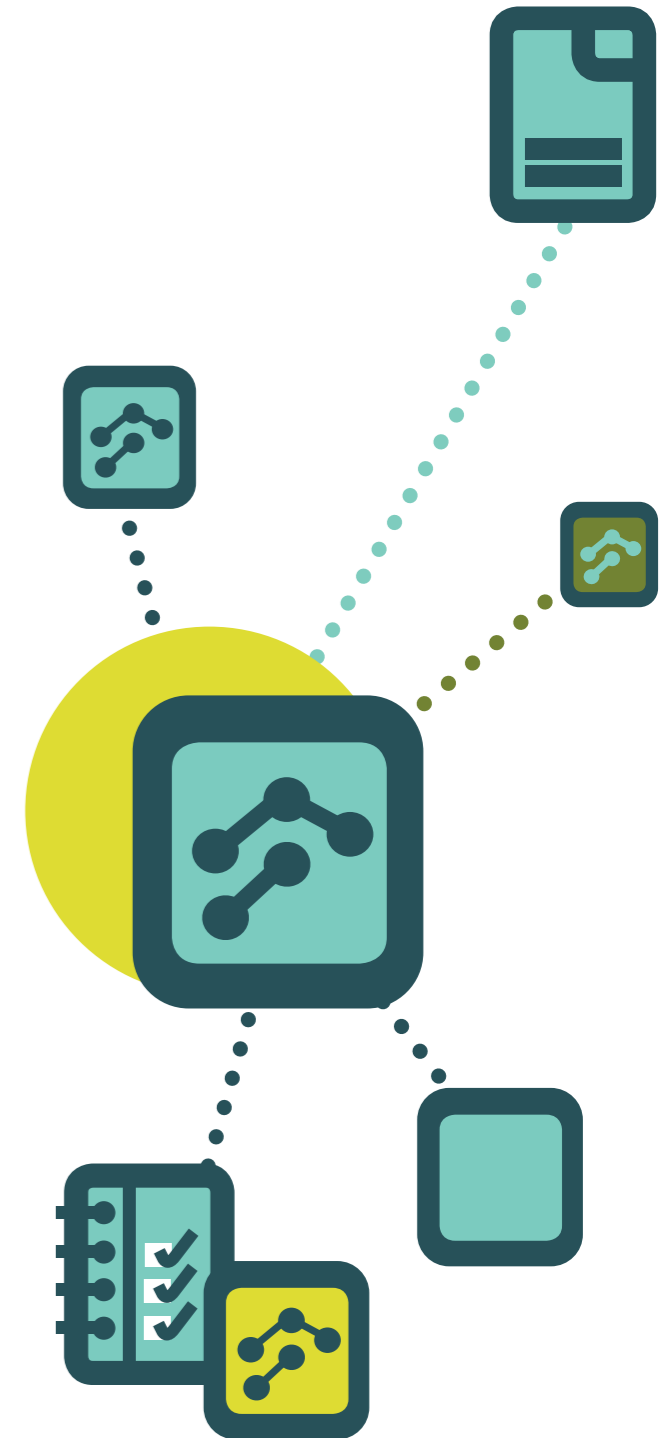
900,000
patients treated across
2 busy general hospitals
8 miles apart

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

Embracing new technology in the NHS has always been a challenge, but it was clear that Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust needed to change how patient flow was managed across its two sites and make patient flow visible. Having recently deployed VitalPAC to the majority of its ward areas, the trust needed to source an informatics solution that could be tailor-made in order to meet the organisational needs and requirements.

Until this point, getting up-to-date and real-time information on patients within the hospital was not possible, nor visible in a simplistic way for staff managing the care of each patient. The trust had a patient administration system (PAS) and a range of IT systems to manage every aspect of the inpatient journey. What it didn't have was a system that brought all this information together in one place.

In addition, reliance upon manual updates of bed capacity and ED demand across two sites proved onerous and gathering this information was time consuming for many staff on a daily basis.

The new system needed to accumulate data from a number of sources and a range of IT systems bringing them all together in one place - creating a single source of information

After seven days, the average income per bed drops to £79,411 per year, equivalent to 18 % of that for short-stay

NUFFIELD TRUST | UNDERSTANDING PATIENT FLOW IN HOSPITALS | 2016

To overcome these issues, the trust decided to work with an external provider to develop a bespoke and fit for purpose information management system bringing all the necessary patient flow data into one place. This would visualise patient level data for each ward and across the trust, and also provide aggregated activity and performance data on a mobile platform anywhere, anytime and in real time.

KEY OBJECTIVES

A key objective was to have live visibility of all inpatients in every ward area across both sites. This included the development of a patient tracking list (PTL) for each ward area that was accessible from anywhere in the organisation and with defined, RAG-rated tracking steps visible.

This system needed to accumulate data from a number of sources and a range of IT systems currently in place. Information flow between the new and existing systems was also a key function – to be able to write key messages from the PTL back into the trust's repository and update the PAS.

Additionally, the trust wanted an aggregated view on a mobile platform to monitor ED performance, bed capacity, delays, flow and resource allocation.

By not needing to manually collect data, efficiency within the trust would be improved and more clinical time could be spent on care. All data would be coming from and going back to the trust's repository, creating a single source of information. The resulting clarification would make it easier to identify opportunities to improve patient care.

SOLUTION

Developing a specification to meet these requirements and achieve the trust's objectives, the board of directors and supplies team reviewed a number of options.

8 weeks
Ready to test within eight weeks of sign off from the steering group

Delayed transfers of care cost providers £173 million, up 19 % from the 2016 estimate of £145 million

DELAYED TRANSFERS OF CARE IN THE NHS | BRIEFING PAPER | 2017

60 wards
All wards requiring the PTL now have the new system in place

The decision was made to go for the latter and Beautiful Information won the tender to build a bespoke solution for the trust, harnessing its experience of building solutions for other organisations with similar requirements, such as East Kent University Hospitals NHS Trust.

The solution has been developed, working in partnership with the trust's informatics, operational and clinical teams, and all 60 ward areas requiring the PTL now have the new system in place. There is no downtime with this solution as the web application software has been developed and the framework is extremely stable.

PLANNING TO IMPLEMENTATION

The success of the implementation ultimately depended on the engagement and collaboration of key stakeholders across areas of the organisation.

These stakeholders included:

> Director of Performance and Strategy
> Deputy Chief Operating Officer
> Clinical Director – AMU (Title TBC)
> Director of Transformation
> Head of IM&T
> Head of Procurement
> Nursing and Therapy Leads
> Pharmacy
> Beautiful Information Lead

During the scoping exercise,16 workshops were carried out with various groups of clinical staff and non-clinical staff in order to design a system that was fit for purpose and met the requirements of the organisation. Beautiful Information led on each of the workshops until the design phase was complete. The design was then signed off by the steering group and development of the solution started.

The strong relationship between the trust and the team at Beautiful Information allowed for rapid progress to be made, with Iteration 1 of the PTL ready to test within eight weeks of sign off from the steering group (Aug 2017) and deployment starting from October 2017, with full implementation in January 2018. The implementation was aligned to the trust's Transformation Program running alongside the infrastructure, solution build and technology arm of the project.

This has enabled all ward areas to change their working practice whereby daily board rounds are now run through the electronic PTL on all ward areas across the trust.

"Six months in from the start of implementation and the IP Patient Tracking List built by Beautiful Information is a way of life now on the wards and we couldn't live without it"

DAPHNE LEISTER | HEAD OF IT PROJECTS | EPSOM AND ST HELIER UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS TRUST

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

> All ward areas have the solution in place, including therapies which is historically a paper service

> The trust now has clear sight of patient flow, which did not exist before

> Beautiful Information has also helped to set ongoing milestones for improvement - all achieved in only six months

LEARNING POINTS

> Clear internal communication is required at the start of a project; the clinical and development teams and the steering group had different interpretations of the system with differing agendas

> Projects like this work best when they are clinically led and viewed as a clinical delivery project, rather than driven through as an IT project

> The success of this project can be attributed to maintaining a close relationship with the external company throughout the building process

Control the flow of patients, finances and healthcare resources

Get in touch

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