

OphthalSuite Case Study

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

The Challenge

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest integrated care providers in England, serving a population of around 600,000 people. Their ophthalmology department provides a wide range of in-patient and out-patient treatment for eye conditions, emergency treatment and elective surgery across three sites (Darlington Memorial Hospital, University Hospital of North Durham and Bishop Auckland Hospital).

Despite modern equipment and facilities, the Trust lacked a central repository for all recorded patient information. Clinical Images were split between paper documents and several software tools. Patient notes were hand-written and often incomplete or incorrectly filed. Clinical teams had to compare information stored in several different locations. Repeat visits were often required, as access to data across sites was not available. Clinic letters would regularly take 4-6 weeks to send out following a consultation and auditing the service was near impossible.

The Trust recognised that they needed a new electronic imaging and medical record system to overcome these challenges. They turned to BlueWorks and Medisoft to provide a more reliable and efficient approach.

The Approach

BlueWorks and Medisoft worked closely with the Trust to understand the needs of Clinical Photographers for each Ophthalmic Imaging Equipment, and Clinicians in each subspecialty. A fully-integrated system was deployed across the three sites, comprising Medisoft Ophthalmology, which replaces the paper notes of assessments and operations, and BlueWorks OphthalSuite, which links with all ophthalmic devices across the Trust and provides instant access to scans and images.

The Results

- Having instant access to all the necessary information has helped to improve clinical care and is particularly helpful in the Eye Casualty department;
- Disease progression can be assessed quickly and easily. Images and scans can be compared with a few mouse-clicks, and charts highlight changes in treatment and how these affect outcomes;
- The system assists clinical decision-making and helps to identify and minimise human error;
- Audits can be produced with just a few clicks and all clinical information can easily be reviewed from any location, allowing outcomes reporting, research and service demand forecasting;
- Automatic generation of letters and prescriptions has led to a significant increase in capacity as well as direct cost savings. The Trust's carbon footprint has been minimised;
- Patient notes and images can be reviewed if they telephone the unit, eliminating delay and leading to a better, safer service.

After 3 (three) years of OphthalSuite usage, the relevant numbers are:

137 604
Exams

15 441 423
Images

18 414
Patients

51
Users

"One of the best investments the ophthalmology department has ever made."

Mr Saju Thomas, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon

"Ophthalmology staff are able to concentrate on patient care, rather than worrying about missing information"

Paul Thurland, Head of Service, Surgery and Diagnostics