

# St Helens & Knowsley first UK Trust To Go Paperless



“Once we had been trained on the Kodak scanners, they proved to be reliable, fast, hassle free with excellent image quality.”



Neil Darvill,  
Director of Informatics, NHS Trust

Merseyside-based St Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust has completed a pioneering project to deliver health records electronically using its C Cube electronic document management software (EDMS), integrating with Kodak document scanners.

The Trust has migrated away from a labour intensive and unsustainable paper process and is the first Trust in the UK – as far as is known – to stop using paper records in operational practice.

This landmark initiative provides instant access to health records, enhances patient safety through 100% records availability, improves clinical effectiveness and saves money. Secure and simple to use, the system has the full support of users, is built on standards-based not propriety technology, and provides future expandability.

All 27 hospital departments have now gone 'live' – following a 22 month roll out – with over 500 clinicians and 130 medical secretaries now trained to use it.

The Trust can now guarantee that the correct patient file is available when needed, irrespective of location, which could not be achieved with the old paper process given the logistics involved in moving 7,000 records every

week for 349,285 outpatients visits annually. With 90,000 new patients registered every year this quantity was expanding exponentially.

While this project is primarily about improving patient safety and care, £1.4 million per annum will be saved ongoing as the Trust aims to close its records library in 4 years (2014). All paper files will be dispensed with and storage facility will not be required. The cost savings are greater than first imagined. In the original business case, the Trust expected to save over £3.2 million over a 5 year period from an investment of £1.2million.

This is because not as many records as first thought will need to be scanned. When the project started, it was expected that 671,800 records would be scanned over 5 years. To date, 134,389 complete records have been digitised equating to over 41.3 million pages.

The Trust has to keep standard records for an eight year period – the mean age of each is four years – after which files can be destroyed. The Trust is therefore scanning records required, destroying those which are not, with the library therefore shrinking faster than was originally envisaged as new files are not being added.

Name:  
St Helens & Knowsley Teaching  
Hospitals NHS Trust

Location:  
St Helens, Merseyside

Solution Overview:  
Implementation of a scan-  
on-demand electronic patient  
record system to achieve  
100% availability at time  
of appointment capable of  
handling over 250,000 visits  
annually.

Kodak i660 and i780 Scanners  
deployed with C-Cube software  
from OITUK to capture over  
600,000 case note files in  
5 years.



### The C Cube Solutions EDMS installation is unique in the NHS for two reasons:

First, scan-on-demand has been adopted where medical records for patients coming into the hospital are scanned, with the EDMS used to deliver them. The Trust is digitising live files only. It rejected scanning the whole library of 700k files each containing on average 350 pages. A study estimated it would take 10 full time staff 30 years to do it - too time consuming with no patient value added.

All staff involved in paper records have been moved from the library to its scan-on-demand department to form a team of 52 people.

Kodak i660 and i780 high performance production scanners digitise the paper files and cope with vast daily scanning volumes<sup>1</sup>. Bar coding is used to indicate that a new patient file is being scanned and/or to scan into different chapters.

Second, a bespoke portal for the system was created by C Cube Solutions to make the project clinically viable. This

is the first time this has been done in the NHS. It offers a single, simple and safe point of access to view and access records so that the treating clinician can see the patient's medical history.

The screen displays information for instance patient name, appointment time, last doctor's letter, and has a range of links (virtual chapters) into the EDMS so that a clinician can easily delve into the patients' medical history.

Duplicated information and department-based repositories have been removed, with the system integrating with other IT solutions like the Patient Administration System which has minimised unnecessary development work or duplication of technology.

At the beginning of the project, the Trust started with health records for outpatient clinics only, but over the past year, has extended it to ward admissions and use in-theatre. This means that every patient coming into hospital is now seen using the system and paper records are not delivered anymore.

In terms of rollout, new departments could only be bought online step-by-step. On average, patients revisit outpatient clinics three times per condition. While it takes time and resources to scan a patient's file for the first visit, for the second and third visits there is no staff overhead to prepare files as they are already available electronically. Over time, the paper-based library is therefore reduced, with staff then free to scan other departments' records.

Access to the system will be extended to GPs and other primary care professionals via a voice and data network which interconnects 340 sites in Merseyside. A consultation process is underway with the project team anticipating making this available in 2011.

**Watch the complete story on You Tube:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zvrSZWUdEY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zvrSZWUdEY)

<sup>1</sup> Recommended daily scanning volumes for the Kodak i660 and i780 scanners are respectively 120,000 and 130,000 pages per day

#### To learn more:

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