

Improving PAS accuracy in real-time with automation technology



East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust needed to eliminate wasteful duplicated data entry as well as ensuring its central Patient Administration System (PAS) was more accurate and up-to-date. To do this, it needed to integrate a number of systems with the PAS. It has used SX, NDL's RPA Platform, to carry this out and, as a result, it has been able to divert staff time to more productive tasks, patients are tracked more stringently and data is entered more accurately and in real time.

The Challenge

Accurate data is critical for all NHS trusts. In particular, the central Patient Administration System (PAS) in acute trusts needs to be as up-to-date and correct as possible to support the generation of Commissioning Data Sets (CDS). These are critical for future funding and evaluation of hospital performance.

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust faced a significant challenge in this area, in part because of its ageing central iSoft Clinicom PAS. There were a number of difficult integration projects it needed to address, particularly in outpatients and A&E, which would eliminate the inefficient and slow process of duplicated entry into the PAS. This was a wasteful use of staff time, allowed errors and was also de-motivating for staff. The Trust therefore looked for a cost-effective and flexible integration method to automate a number of data entry processes across its hospitals.

The Solution

East Lancashire looked at various alternatives for integration but these were either not reliable enough or simply not suitable for the processes involved. Instead, the Trust selected SX, NDL's RPA Platform. SX is a cost-effective, flexible and versatile alternative for integration which avoids the need to use individual vendor APIs

Key Benefits

Real-time updates to PAS

Better patient tracking

Greater data accuracy

Less duplicated data entry

More motivated staff



We intend to use SX wherever it is practical to automate duplicated data entry tasks, which means staff will only need to do this manually where intellectual input is needed. SX gives you a flexible way of interacting with a database which otherwise might have thrown up considerable difficulties in entering or extracting data. And you can trust it: it allows you to use the inbuilt validations so you know it's doing what it's meant to do.



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The Solution (continued)



or adaptors. It links to and from the front office or joins back-office applications together, thus improving business processes and workflows.

SX

Product
Robotic Process Automation

East Lancashire has now used SX for a number of integration projects:

- **Linking between electronic bed boards and the PAS:** the Trust has successfully implemented the ExtraMed Inpatient Flow Manager electronic patient tracking system. One of the areas in which this is used is Minor Injuries. However, there is no clerical cover in this unit after 8.30pm. Information about these transfers was not being entered into the PAS in a timely manner, leading to potential errors, consuming considerable clerical time and meant that the PAS was not up-to-date. SX has now been used to link automatically between the bed boards and the PAS, enabling realtime updates into the central PAS and eliminating wasteful duplicated data entry.
- **PAS data quality:** the Trust was experiencing data quality issues, in particular around patient tracing and death notifications. Previously, it was using a laborious process of manually updating the PAS from spreadsheets. Now, using SX, data is automatically transferred and updated in the PAS.
- **Check-in kiosks:** the Trust has successfully installed Intouch check-in touchscreen kiosks for patients when they attend an outpatient appointment. However, it needed to find a way to automatically log check-ins into the PAS, preferably in real time. Using SX, lists of appointments are sent to Intouch; when patients arrive, they check-in via the screen and, using SX again, this is then noted in real time as an 'arrival' in the PAS. Patients are also given the option to update their details, which is also automatically written back into the PAS.

The Benefits

As a result of using SX to integrate between various systems and the central PAS, East Lancashire has achieved a number of benefits and cost savings:

- Data entered into the central PAS is far more accurate and up-to-date, supporting the generation of CD
- Staff no longer have to carry out laborious data entry tasks: it has been estimated that this has freed up one full time employee's time, which is diverted into more productive work
- Patients can be tracked more accurately and handled more efficiently when they visit Outpatients or Urgent Care Centre

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It's all about data quality and having the information in PAS at the right time. In particular, we need real-time admission and discharge data, so for example you need to make sure that information in the bed board system is reflected quickly in PAS. Data also needs to be available for downstream reporting so that we are not, for example, generating false negatives.



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