



West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust empowers clinicians with Clinical Photography app.

MX

MX is a scalable and easy-to-use toolkit that puts you in control of your mobile app design, deployment and management. The toolkit allows you to create bespoke, cross-platform apps that can be used online or offline to improve your service delivery, security and integration.

1 million minutes saved per year

Improved accuracy and security

Improved patient care

Improved CQC rating

Process time reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes

West Suffolk 
NHS Foundation Trust

What opportunity did West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust identify?

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT) is a Global Digital Exemplar Trust which serves a population of around 280,000 citizens in West Suffolk and small parts of Essex, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. The Trust wanted to update its clinical photography process to overcome issues that had been raised in a CQC inspection, which highlighted inconsistencies in the previous system.

The Trust's clinical photography process used standard digital cameras during assessments to capture photographic records of wounds and other conditions, along with images of the patient's wristband and signed consent forms. After the assessment, the images were manually transferred to a computer from the cameras SD card and uploaded into the Medical Image Manager system.

Unfortunately, this process relied heavily on the clinician remembering to upload the images and being able to find a computer that had an unlocked SD reader. Ultimately, this process was very fragmented, took up to 30 minutes per patient and was prone to errors at any step in the process. In some cases, it could take up to 3 hours for a photograph to finally reach the patient's records. Other issues, such as attributing consent to the correct image and ensuring images were deleted from the SD card, were also a concern.

What was its solution?

With a desire to improve its CQC rating and the security of its clinical photography data, WSFT developed the Clinical Photography App using MX, NDL's mobile working toolkit.

The Clinical Photography app has allowed clinicians to complete photographic examinations in one place, with no follow-up actions required. Using their hospital login to access the app, the clinician scans the patient's wristband, confirms their details and obtains their consent via a DigiSign screen. The reason for the examination is then entered into the device, along with any TRIPS requirements if the Clinician is examining a burns patient.

The app then allows Clinicians to take multiple photographs, with the option to delete any unwanted images, before adding comments and submitting the case to the EPR - eliminating any security risks if a camera or SD card were ever lost. Once in the patients record, the photos are viewed on a webpage where the Clinician has the option to view them side by side for comparison.

In addition, the image transfer time from patient to record has been reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes as the app is integrated with the Trust's EPR system. Following a successful trial period in Breast Care and Dermatology, the app now being used across 20 departments in the Trust – completely retiring the old digital camera process.

What benefits has it seen?

The new system will handle 6000 sessions, on average, per year – each containing multiple images. In performing these sessions, WSFT identified the following benefits:

- A time saving of over 1 million minutes per year with images now transferring to a patient record within 3 minutes, instead of 3 hours.
- Improved patient data security and accuracy
- Faster and improved patient care from richer clinical data due to more clinicians using photography during assessments
- Improved CQC rating

What's next?

WSFT has plans to develop a 'public-facing' version of the app that will allow GP practices, opticians and community nurses to submit photos directly to the hospital's records.

"The positive feedback we have received from clinical teams within the Trust has been overwhelming. Clinicians feel the new system has enriched their roles by providing clearer support, ultimately leading to the best outcome for the patients – putting them first."

Liam McLaughlin
Senior Interoperability and Development Manager/Deputy CIO



For more information, visit www.ndl.co.uk or email info@ndl.co.uk