

Improving Patient Experience and releasing Clinicians' Time



Circle Health Group is the largest independent healthcare provider in the UK with 53 independent hospitals, running integrated care programmes and rehabilitation services across the health economy. Circle Integrated Care is a specialist operating company within Circle Health Group, and provide a treatment hub for Musculoskeletal Services and Dermatology Services, supplying support for 1.5 million NHS patients.

The Challenge

As a provider of contracted healthcare services, Circle Integrated Care needs to collect accurate data from Patient Related Outcome Measures (PROMS) forms to provide evidence of delivering effective patient outcomes. These results are benchmarked by the CCGs across healthcare providers to ensure consistency and quality.

Previously, the collection of PROMS data was done manually. Patients were asked to fill out a paper form independently, but consultants or specialist nurses would often complete forms with the patient. This was taking up valuable appointment time and had become a frustrating exercise for everyone involved.

The Solution

Circle adopted a "virtual-first" appointment approach due to the global pandemic. In this challenging healthcare climate, introducing digital PROMS has been welcomed by Clinicians and has improved staff morale.

Circle was already working collaboratively with NDL to implement Robotic Process Automation and decided to use NDL's eForms toolkit for PROMS assessments. They started with the Dermatology Life Quality Index (DLQI) form, designed to measure health-related quality of life for adult patients suffering from a skin disease.

Key Benefits

- Improved patient experience
- Enhanced quality of care
- Better staff morale
- ROI in less than 6-months

“Our eForms development was extremely straightforward, and NDL provided great support to help us drive the project forward. We aim to showcase our eForms within the wider Circle Healthcare Group – as it is such a simple, easy and cost-effective way to collect data.”



Zara Thomas,
Business Systems Analyst
Circle Health Group

Following a 2-day NDL training course, Circle's innovation team set to work on creating the solution. The initial eForm took just 1 day to build with the end-to-end solution being deployed in 3 weeks.

Patients are sent a link to fill out the DLQI 24 hours prior to the first appointment. A second DLQI is also sent after the initial consultation to ascertain treatment effectiveness. This form was previously completed by phone by a Healthcare Assistant (HCA) 6 weeks after the appointment.

Both forms are completed online by the patient, releasing HCAs to spend more time with patients and increase capacity in clinics. Analysis is used to track the effectiveness of the communication, monitoring the 'send rate', 'click rate' and 'eForm submissions'.

As this was a new way of communicating with patients, Circle had some uncertainty of how successful their first eForm implementation would be, but the solution has exceeded expectations. As Zara Thomas, Business Systems Analyst explains **'We have been amazed to see over 60% of patients completing the form. We feel confident that with further communications we can increase this number further.'**



On the back of such a successful launch it has certainly excited our clinicians and we now have plans to build PROMS for our other services. These will help save time across our clinical and administration teams, and provide us with more data points, allowing us to analyse the effectiveness of our treatments and interventions and provide better care to our patients.



Amanda Phillips, CIC Director
Circle Health Group



The Benefits

The new digital experience has increased both patient and clinician satisfaction as follows:

- Easy to complete eForms resulting in timely and accurate data capture
- Gives clinicians more time to focus on patient care
- Time savings of 3-5 minutes per patient appointment
- Saved money by reducing paper
- ROI in less than 6-months
- Enriched data quality provided to the CCG's
- Rapid eForm development, tailored to Circle's exact needs
- Adaptive and responsive eForms for any device
- Improved patient experience and enhanced quality of care
- Better staff morale

What's Next?

With the success of this initial project in dermatology, plans are already in place to develop further eForms corporately across Circle Integrated Care.

Circle has other PROMS eForms in development and future projects in the pipeline include patient choice forms, patient experience and consent. These will both allow for a better patient experience, and release capacity within the Circle clinical teams.

For more information about NDL's Digital Transformation Suite:

www.ndl.co.uk

info@ndl.co.uk