

UK NHS Trust Concludes Implementation of Cerner E-Prescribing System



Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has rolled an electronic medication management system from Cerner across all 2,000 beds at the trust in just 12 months. The hospital, which became the first in the country to go-live with the system from Cerner in December 2009, has been rolling it out at a rate of “a few wards a week” since it decided to accelerate its roll out in January 2010.

Speaking at a Cerner event last week, Neil Watson, chief pharmacist at the trust, said: “We’re in the last phase now, with one ward going live yesterday and one today. We’ve done around 2,000 beds in twelve months and it’s been great fun and a huge amount of hard work.” The trust is using the system to prescribe 14,000 medicines per day and has gone live across all general wards at the trust, excluding paediatrics, where it became clear there were too many order sentences involved. The trust has also gone live in its intensive care units, although it says it is yet to implement decision support across the trust. Watson added: “We realised that by excluding intensive care we suddenly had a huge number of issues with transfers of patients from paper to electronic. “It would have been a big mistake to ignore it, so what we decided to do when going live on our second site was do ITU first, not with all the bells and whistles but it’s good enough.”

Newcastle was the first trust in the North, Midlands and East to reject the offering by local service provider CSC, who is contracted to supply iSoft’s Lorenzo product under the National Programme for IT, instead taking Cerner Millennium from supplier UPMC. Weston said that using electronic medicines management has reduced adverse prescribing incidents and given the trust visibility on what type of errors are being made, as well as whether those administering the drugs are following best practice. In addition the trust is now using the system to provide accurate, up to date medicines information as part of its discharge summaries. “We’ve been able to pull the list of medications seamlessly together with the clinical detail put together by the junior doctors and nursing staff, so it can be sent to the GP. At the moment it’s getting there in 4-8 hours, which the GPs say is like the Holy Grail for them.”

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