

Media Release

Pennine Acute to roll-out iSOFT's new e-whiteboards to 97 wards

Banbury – 1 December 2011 – The [Pennine Acute Hospitals](#) NHS Trust is to roll-out iSOFT-developed electronic whiteboards to 97 wards across its five hospitals before the end March 2012, following a pilot on eight wards that is already starting to show improvements in efficiency and patient safety.

Replacing conventional handwritten whiteboards, [VisiWard](#) from [iSOFT](#), a CSC company, is interfaced to the trust's patient administration system (PAS) giving clinical staff visibility of patients and bed status in real time. Information displayed on the e-whiteboards currently includes the patient's name, age, room, bed, consultant's name, admission date, and expected discharge date. It also highlights patients that are medically fit to be discharged.

Employing an agile development philosophy with clinical staff involved at every step, the system was ready within four months of an initial kick-off meeting in June to define the initial specification.

Mick Heaton, Pennine Acute's senior project manager, says staff value the system. "Consultants like it because they can search and locate their patients instantly across different wards without having to visit the ward, quiz nurses or decipher handwritten boards."

He says the system has been shown to save time as patient information is now highly visible on 42-inch plasma touch screens. "Nurses are no longer faced with constant interruptions which allows them to focus more time on patient care. And bed managers can plan their workflows and admissions without having to visit wards to find empty beds, which is a huge time saver."

The trust's EPR system development and implementation officer, Libby Woodcock, says the system is helping focus the team on "bed blockers". "This will help reduce the overall length of stay as these blockages are now highly visible for all to see. Ward managers are now questioning their counterparts on other wards over why patients have not been discharged.

"Handwritten whiteboards are generally different across each ward and contain different information in different formats with no guarantee that details are up-to-date," she added.

The next step is to display more clinical information such as infections, diabetes and special dietary needs. A further phase will allow staff to use the touch-screens to update the PAS, which will again save time. Staff will also be able to visually “drag-and-drop” patients to a different bed, room or ward with the PAS updated automatically. Both phases are scheduled for completion before the end of next year.

“We are working in partnership with iSOFT to roll-out clinically-valued systems as part of a trust-wide EPR; e-whiteboards are a fundamental component of this wider strategy,” Heaton said.

Adrian Stevens, managing director of iSOFT’s UK business, said: “Pennine Acute is a hugely important strategic partner as we continue to develop innovative solutions that meet a genuine need and deliver real benefits. In the space of a few months we have delivered e-prescribing and electronic whiteboards at Pennine. These innovations will be of huge interest to other NHS trusts given the obvious efficiency gains and improvements in patient care.”

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