

Savience-CSC solution transforms clinic management and patient flow at Birmingham's Royal Orthopaedic Hospital as part of a new outpatient department.

The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, one of the largest orthopaedic units in Europe, has around 900 staff and an annual turnover in excess of £65 million, it was awarded Foundation Trust status in 2007. As part of an ongoing modernisation programme, the Trust has invested £7.9 million in a purpose-built outpatient department which opened in May 2011. The new building includes 24 consultation rooms, treatment rooms, injection suite and an ultrasound suite. The unit can see 350 to 400 patients a day.

The Opportunity

When plans for a new outpatient department at the hospital were unveiled, staff recognised the opportunity to streamline clinic management processes and transform the way patients moved through the service.

Clinics were managed using a paper-based system that was supported by volunteers. Patients were called from the main waiting room, only to face a further wait in secondary waiting areas. There was a lack of clarity about clinic locations, with patients failing to arrive at the correct clinic, and nursing staff wasting valuable time trying to locate them. Patient feedback revealed frustration about the process and the lack of information about likely waiting times.

With the patient experience high on the Trust's agenda and plans for the new building being drawn up, the time was right to look for a solution that would address the issues and support the Trust's vision of a patient-centred, modern outpatient facility.

The Project

The Savience-CSC Clinic Management and Self Service solution was the obvious choice. The touch screen kiosks present a contemporary look and are specifically designed with ease of use, patient privacy and hygiene in mind. Behind the scenes, rich clinic management functionality provides staff with a single view of patient progress, from arrival through to departure. Kiosks have been placed in strategic locations in the department and LCD screens are located in the waiting areas to call patients to consulting rooms. The solution integrates with the hospital's Patient Administration System (PAS).

The solution was delivered by CSC in collaboration with Savience; using a proven project methodology, and working closely with the Trust. The project had to fit into the overall plan for the design and construction of

"With this state of the art new department, we decided to make all the changes in one go. It has completely changed working practices – for the better – and staff have embraced the solution because it is so simple."

Lisa Savage,
PAS Manager

"I really expected to lose some nurses when the new system was introduced, but they all quickly took to it and even back-up staff picked it up immediately. Agency and other nursing staff now want to come to work here – 'please remember me when booking extra staff!' they say."

Amritpal (Rani) Randhawa,
sister-in-charge

Savience at the Royal Orthopaedic

the outpatient department, requiring a coordinated approach. Both parties worked flexibly with the Trust to accommodate the additional complexity and ensure the solution was ready from day one. A critical factor for success was the level of staff engagement.

Sister-in-charge, Amritpal (Rani) Randhawa, a driving force throughout the project, witnessed her nursing colleagues becoming increasingly positive as the solution benefits became clear. "At first, the team of 14 nurses was concerned about the technology. Most had only used computers for email and had hardly used them to access the PAS, so they expected to find the computers off-putting. But, after training, they were put at their ease and, when the system went live, they realised how much easier the new system is. They can see where patients are at a glance."

The Results

The department's 70,000 annual outpatient appointments are now handled with much greater ease, and the experience for staff and patients has been transformed. Patients check-in quickly and smoothly using one of the touch screens and are directed to the appropriate clinic where clinicians can call them to consulting rooms at the press of a button.

Patients have taken readily to the system and are appreciating the benefits. Their previous dislike of being called to the secondary waiting room after the main waiting room has been addressed. The amount of paper used across the department has been vastly reduced.

With patients checking in and making their way to the correct clinic room without assistance, reception staff time has been freed up, allowing them to devote their energy to more valuable activities such as arranging follow-up appointments with patients before they depart. Nurses too can devote more time to patient care.

With more than three decades experience in the outpatients department, Sister Randhawa reflects on some of the immediate benefits: "Nursing staff are no longer continually on the phone calling reception to find out where patients are – they are now free to do other things. Changes in clinic rooms no longer pose the difficulties they did in the past – room codes communicate that information quickly on screen to patients waiting."

The Future

The Trust is keen to allow the solution to bed in and to explore further benefits. A key next step is to extend use of the system to the hospital's consultants, building on the high level of clinical engagement already in place.

For more information see www.savience.com or call 01327 811872

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"Royal Orthopaedic had a particular need to identify the location of outpatients needing hospital transport. So we designed Savience Informer to include a customized transport view which enables the transport organizer to see exactly where each outpatient requiring hospital transport is in the department. This has relieved pressure and saved a lot of time for the transport administrator, nursing staff and of course patients.

As a company Savience is always keen to identify particular needs and often incorporates them as modules for any customer."

Roger Everitt, managing director, Savience