Western Sussex NHS Trust improves patient safety and quality of care with Patientrack Early Warning Score track and trigger solution

Patientrack solution tackles care quality issues raised by "Time to Intervene" report and supports CQUIN assessments.

London, UK – July 2012 - Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust has deployed a solution from Patientrack that is helping the trust more quickly identity deteriorating patients or patients who should be moved to palliative care. The solution, deployed on all 38 wards across the trust's two hospital sites, allows more than 2000 nurses, doctors and other clinical staff to electronically record observations at the bedside, using Acer handheld devices connected to the trust's upgraded wireless network, before automatically calculating National Early Warning Scores (NEWS).

Key to the success of this deployment was the close collaboration between doctors, nurses and IT, which ensured Patientrack was embraced by all staff, and secures a strong foundation for future development.

Ward manager Leo White, who headed up the project to implement Patientrack, says ward staff have seen a number of benefits. "With Patientrack, NEWS calculations are 100% accurate, compared with no more than 80% when recording observations on paper," she explains. "It takes less time to capture observations and calculate scores using Patientrack than with our previous approach, which was based on calculating scores manually from observations on the paper chart. Also, if the ward gets busy, the system reminds staff which observations are due, so they aren't skipped. Finally, as ward manager, I can quickly see the scores of all the patients and know where to direct my attention."

Dr Richard Venn, a consultant in intensive care at Western Sussex and one of the driving forces behind the introduction of Patientrack at the trust, adds that "Patientrack has also helped nursing staff feel more empowered to get help sooner when they feel a patient needs intervention from a doctor, by providing clear evidence that a patient may be deteriorating. Meanwhile, doctors can view patient charts and observations remotely, allowing them to start making changes to patient care even before arriving on the ward."

Western Sussex is now extending use of the Patientrack solution to provide support for CQUIN assessments such as VTE. "While the key drivers for implementing the system were patient safety and quality of care, including avoiding unnecessary cardiac arrests and minimising the need for transfers to intensive care, we've been able to justify the cost of the system in terms of CQUIN targets," Dr Venn explains. "For example, getting VTE prophylaxis right will very nearly pay for the solution by itself. Patientrack is also contributing to efforts at the trust to reduce lengths of stay."

Patientrack was chosen in a competitive tender over another product which had been trialed on two wards for a year. "We have been delighted with Patientrack’s support to develop a solution which meets our evolving needs," Dr Venn explains. "In fact, the introduction of Patientrack has proved to be one of the most successful clinical IT projects at the trust so far, and getting IT to every bedside with Patientrack is providing a foundation on which to deliver other clinical applications. Patientrack has also moved the trust toward a culture of real-time patient information and helped change attitudes about IT from being seen as a bolt-on to being viewed as something that should be at the core of hospital work and integrated into everything we do."

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Notes to editors

About Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust

Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust serves a population of around 450,000 people who live in a catchment area covering most of West Sussex. The Trust runs three hospitals: St Richard’s Hospital in Chichester; Southlands Hospital in Shoreham-by-Sea and Worthing Hospital in the centre of Worthing. The Trust was created on 1 April 2009 by a merger of Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, which managed St Richard’s Hospital, and Worthing and Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust. Every year, the Trust's 6,000 staff: treat 118,000 inpatients and day cases; make 476,000 outpatient appointments; see 126,000 people in the two Accident and Emergency departments; deliver 5,500 babies; dispense around 740,000 medicines and take more than 310,000 imaging exams (x-rays/scans).

For further information http://www.westernsussexhospitals.nhs.uk

About Patientrack

Patientrack helps hospitals deliver safer care – which is also more cost-effective care – by ensuring observation and assessment protocols are carried out correctly and consistently, and by automatically calculating early warning scores and alerting clinicians when interventions are needed. Through early identification of deteriorating patients, Patientrack helps hospitals meet national and local targets for improvements in patient safety, while cutting costs through reducing lengths of stay and transfers to ICU within the hospital. Patientrack was developed in conjunction with clinicians and nurses and its effectiveness in delivering both patient safety and cost improvements has been proven in a peer-reviewed clinical trial.

For further information contact Donald Kennedy on +44 (0)845 121 4644 or +44 (0)7981 238933 email: dkennedy@patientrack.com www.patientrack.com

Media Contacts

Laura Steward, Highland Marketing

Phone: +44 (0) 1877 339922

Mobile: +44 (0) 7899 061975

lauras@highland-marketing.com

You can also follow Highland Marketing on LinkedIn or follow us on Twitter

Laura Steward

Account Director