

NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit

Web-Enabled Incident Reporting



NHS Blackburn with Darwen is a local-led organisation for health, serving a population of around 160,000 people. It is responsible for providing primary and community health services and commissioning a full range of hospital services for people in the area.

The publication of the NHS documents *An Organisation with a Memory* (13th June 2000) and *Building a Safer NHS for Patients* (17th April 2001), together with the establishment of the National Patient Safety Agency, prompted NHS Blackburn with Darwen to review its existing incident reporting processes in light of increased emphasis on learning from information captured on adverse events.

From paper to web

At the time, NHS Blackburn with Darwen was capturing all incidents on paper. These were sent to a central location and inputted into the system, which duplicated effort and presented the potential for transcription errors. Given the NHS' drive towards increased utilisation of electronic systems, the organisation decided to move to a web-based incident reporting system, making it more accessible and easier to capture and log incidents. In early 2007 NHS Blackburn with Darwen conducted a full review of its incident reporting system to facilitate the move to a web-based solution.

It was decided to implement the use of web-based incident reporting within Datix patient safety and risk management software, which was already being used successfully by NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit. The organisation's Risk Management Team configured the application to meet their requirements for web-based incident reporting.

The Datix web form was set up with simple drop down boxes that prompted standardised descriptions of incidents and the form is accessed easily with a user friendly web browser.

The pilot process

Following a positive two month pilot within the District Nursing Service, the system is being rolled out throughout NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit. A training programme is being delivered as part of that roll out in order that clinical and support staff benefit fully from the system.

Eileen Stokes, Deputy Risk Manager and Datix Co-ordinator said, "Through the pilot process we found that the data recorded was much more consistent. In addition, we were able to identify trends very quickly. Also, due to the user friendliness of the web-based application, we were able to quickly overcome any reluctance to use the system and everyone is extremely pleased with what has been implemented."

"The Heads of Service are able to capture incidents much earlier and address any issues"

Eileen Stokes

Deputy Risk Manager
and Datix Co-ordinator
NHS Blackburn with Darwen



Early identification

The Risk Management Team produces monthly reports from Datix for the Provider Services Unit's Strategic Managers who are responsible for clinical services. Such is the success of the system that many senior managers, including the Head of Integrated Service, who was involved in the early pilot, regularly check the system to monitor what is being reported. This has been a key enabler for NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit in relation to the early identification of issues.

The new system has delivered real efficiencies to the Risk Team, having cut down the labour intensive task of compiling paper forms and collating data. It has also reduced duplication of the forms being checked. Reports can be generated very quickly and managers can view their own data 24/7.

Improving patient care

It is not just the staff that have benefited from the new system. Patient care has also improved as a result of the clear ownership by Heads of Service, made possible with close monitoring and faster, more accurate incident reporting. "The Heads of Service are able to capture incidents much earlier and address any issues," explained Eileen Stokes.

She continued: "An example of this would be in the care of the elderly where incidents in particular homes and neighbourhoods can be quickly identified from trends in reports. The type of trends monitored could be the number of pressure sores being recorded where a patient may not have been turned often enough.

This may highlight a lack of staff experience or resource in a particular home. Picking up such facts early can result in early intervention, improved patient care and experience".

Following the effective use of the Datix solution, NHS Blackburn with Darwen is evaluating further Datix applications to support and meet the standards of safety required for healthcare organisations. Directors of the Trust will have direct access via a web browser to a risk register and assurance framework. This will enable them to prioritise the risks to the organisation and put in place action plans for improvement.

Future plans

Datix will be rolled out to approximately 500 staff within NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit and the Risk Team is also implementing the Datix Safety Alerts module, linked to a medical device register. This will enable it to issue broadcasts on the safety of equipment to the relevant parties while reducing paperwork and improving communication across the organisation.

NHS Blackburn with Darwen is working hard to meet the core standards set out for healthcare organisations. The Datix patient safety and risk management software is enabling it to effectively meet a range of challenges. The organisation understands the requirement to identify and learn from all patient safety incidents and ensure alerts are acted upon within timescales. The organisation's future plans for Datix will assist it in continuing to meet Government legislation for NHS Trusts.

About Datix

Datix is a global supplier of software for patient safety, risk management, incident and adverse event reporting.

We aim to help healthcare organisations build a culture that drives excellence in patient safety, based on market-leading software, skills and healthcare knowledge.

Set up specifically to meet the governance and risk management requirements of the healthcare industry, Datix is working as a partner to leading healthcare organisations across the world.

Today, Datix customers include more than 70% of the National Health Service in the UK, the United States Department of Defense, a number of provinces in Canada and some of the world's leading private healthcare providers.

Fast Facts

- NHS Blackburn with Darwen serves a population of around 160,000 people
- Datix was first piloted with the District Nursing Service
- Datix will be rolled out to approximately 500 staff within NHS Blackburn with Darwen Provider Services Unit
- The risk team has delivered efficiencies having cut down the labour intensive task of compiling paper forms