South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Benefits from Improved Decision Making with Datix

Datix®
Software for Patient Safety

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest employers in the Tees Valley area and includes both The James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough and the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton.

In April 2009, South Tees Hospitals achieved Foundation Trust status which means that it will benefit from a variety of new freedoms. Patients, carers and local people also have the opportunity to get involved by becoming members of the Foundation Trust. Currently, the Trust has more than 3,700 patients and public, and 8,000 staff as members.

Patient care a priority

A key part of the new status is that the Foundation Trust will have the opportunity to set out its strategic direction and introduce new services for patients. With many new developments being planned, the Trust places great importance on measuring and monitoring the quality and efficiency of its patient care. In addition, as with all Trusts, it is important that it has the highest standards of patient safety and that the Trust board can manage risk and meet the associated governance requirements within the National Assurance Framework (2002).

The organisation had already invested in Datix Patient Safety and Risk Management software to ensure that patient safety is managed appropriately at the highest levels. The next step for the Trust was then to develop a risk register system that would allow incidents to be captured and the associated risks to be assessed across the organisation. In 2008, the Trust implemented the DatixWeb Risk Register to enable comprehensive and consistent risk management.

Proven success

Datix was initially introduced into South Tees in 2001 and was chosen over other competitive solutions because it had modules for managing complaints and claims as well as incident reporting. This enabled the organisation to form a complete history of contact with an individual. Subsequently, the Trust implemented Datix's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and Freedom of Information modules. The success of the Datix implementation laid a firm foundation for the Trust-wide roll out of the new web-based incident reporting and risk register modules.

Staff benefits

According to Kay Davies, Datix Manager at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, "There have been many benefits to staff from using an electronic system for incidents and risk. They have easy access to historical data - going back to 2001, and can produce their own reports which has enabled them to look at trends. The Trust has benefited from having all the data in one central location, which also means that any changes to the application can be carried out by the systems

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Datix Manager
South Tees Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust

manager. There is no longer any requirement to print incident forms – everything is done online. All these factors have led to savings for the Trust."

Patients have also benefited from staff being able to access records on incidents, PALS, complaints and claims, an integrated approach that provides an entire picture of the patient experience. Lessons learned can then be evaluated and disseminated throughout the Trust.

There has been an increase in the number of incidents reported each month on month following the implementation of DatixWeb Incidents in 2005. Kay Davies explained that there has not been a rise in the number of incidents, but there has instead been an increased awareness of patient safety as a result of comprehensive training when the system was rolled out.

Staff training

Datix training was arranged in each of the divisions and all staff from departments and wards were invited to interactive sessions. Within one year, over 7,000 staff at the Trust had been trained.

Meeting the assurance framework

Since its implementation, the DatixWeb Risk Register has also brought significant benefits to the Trust. At the beginning of each financial year, the Trust sets its objectives, covering a wide range of aspects related to the organisation's clinical and non-clinical performance, financial management and governance. Under each objective, risks are defined along with clear actions, controls and measures as to how they are met.

Risks are defined as divisional, corporate or strategic, which are then monitored within the National Assurance Framework. The corporate risk register is produced directly from Datix, which includes an action plan as to how each risk will be mitigated. This enables the Trust board to be assured that risks are being managed.

Kay Davies explained, "Divisional risks are reviewed monthly by the patient safety team. The directors are made aware of any risks that may impact the Trust's objectives. Prior to the introduction of Datix, spreadsheets were used across departments to manage and record this information. Now that Datix is used and all incidents and risks are captured and fed back into the risk register, our directors can have confidence that the data is accurate and up to date."

Managing risks locally

Each clinical division has a governance lead, either a ward or department manager, who is responsible for managing the activity on the local risk register.

Datix also enables action plans to be maintained for each risk. Staff members with responsibility for an area can receive reminders when their actions are due. Costs for each action can be recorded, allowing the total amount of investment required to mitigate a risk to be calculated. This is a major benefit to the Trust for budgeting purposes.

Saving time

Kay Davies is also impressed with the Datix e-forum, "It is a great asset for finding out answers to questions and enabling us to share information on policies and job descriptions with colleagues in other Trusts. It can save a lot of time."

About South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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Patients, carers and local people have the opportunity to get involved by becoming members of the Foundation Trust. Currently it has more than 3,700 patients and public as members, and more than 8,000 staff members.

The Trust also has an established Council of Governors representing a broad geographical area and skill mix, made up of local people, staff and representatives from partner organisations. The Trust was also recently named as one of the 'Top 100' healthcare organisations to work for in the UK by the Health Service Journal and Nursing Times, following staff feedback.

For more information, please visit: www.southtees.nhs.uk

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Software for Patient Safety

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

- South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was granted Foundation Status in April 2009
- Datix initially introduced in 2001
- DatixWeb Risk Register implemented in 2008
- Corporate Risk Register produced directly from Datix – including mitigation plans
- Directors can have confidence that data is accurate and up to date
- Costs for each action is recorded allowing the total amount of investment required to mitigate risk to be calculated – major benefit for budgeting purposes