Successfully Transforming Outpatient Services with Intouch Solutions – A Customer View

Managing patient flow is critical to achieving greater productivity in hospital workflow (and how patients move through the system). At Intouch with Health we understand this but this is not just our view, this is the view of our customers. As Lord Carter recently said when summarising his NHS review “…it is about achieving greater productivity in hospital workflow (how patients move through the system)…” Within this News Update we will explain what we are doing to achieve this outcome and we will show how one of our customers, Alder Hey (Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust), is doing just that.

Investing in a Suite of Software Solutions and Services is essential:

The challenge for hospitals is that when a patient enters the system a number of paths can be taken in order to arrive at the desired outcome. A seamless, graceful, flow of information is essential to smooth the patient’s transitions between stages of arrival, tests, treatment and successful outcome. Every module within the Intouch suite, from Patient Check-In and Patient Flow through to e-Outcomes and Room Booking has been designed, from the outset, as a fully integrated solution. Furthermore, the solution can be integrated with every PAS supplier.

We are working with customers to ensure that benefits are realised, in line with the original business cases. Some of the examples of the benefits reported to us are shown below.

Examples of Reported and Documented Benefits from our customers (supporting both the McKinsey recommendations and Lord Carter’s Review):

- Improved management of scheduled patients and frequent attenders (e.g. Renal Dialysis)
- Improvement in reduction in ‘Do Not Attends’.
- Improved management of non-appointed walk-in patients.
- Improved management of minor injury patients.
- Improved management of Intra-Appointment activities.
- Improved patient flow through the provision of real-time information to staff on patient flow status, thereby eliminating potential bottlenecks.
- Improved resource utilisation.
- Improved patient experience.
- Full patient journey reporting capability available for analysis.
- Improved management of hospital assets (e.g. consultation and treatment rooms).
- Improved Outcome data at the end of a consultation (100% accuracy) supporting patient discharge.
- Subsequent financial savings.

1 The Department of Health McKinsey Report and Lord Carter’s Review of operational Productivity in NHS Providers both address this point.
Whilst we are the leading supplier of outpatient solutions and services in the acute sector we work with each customer on an individual basis in order to address their specific needs. One such customer is Alder Hey NHS Foundation Trust.

**The view from one of our customers – Alder Hey NHS Trust**

Alder Hey Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is a Children’s Hospital that has been operating for over 100 years. They were the first in many areas of innovation in health and patient care.

Due to new demands the Trust needed a state of the art modern facility building called ‘Alder Hey In The Park’. This building would incorporate new techniques and technology as well as supporting single occupancy rooms and family support.

Part of the new design meant that patients attending the new Hospital for outpatient appointments would now be held centrally before being moved around various locations for clinical consultations and tests. Whilst being held in this central location the patient would have access to Cafés and shopping facilities.

The challenge was, of course, how the Trust controls the arrival and movement around the new facility whilst still supporting clinical requirements. This is where Intouch came in.

**What we, as Intouch, supplied**

Intouch were selected back in 2013 to carry out a limited proof of concept in two outpatient areas in the old Alder Hey site. This process was required to ascertain what would be required to support the movement into the new Hospital. The proof of concept was carried out using a small number of Kiosks running Intouch...Check-in and a small number of digital signage screens running Intouch...Calling. Flow Management would be controlled via the Intouch...Flow Manager Solution.

Patients would be arrived via the Check-in kiosks and an arrival message and required demographic update detail would be passed back to Meditech PAS via the Intouch Blue Prism Integration solution, patients would then be directed to take a seat. Clinicians could see that the patient had arrived via the Flow Manager dashboard and call the patient via the digital signage screens and Calling solution to their relevant consultation area.

This proof of concept lasted 2 years and was deemed a success. The next stage was the planning of the move to the new Hospital.

Intouch worked with Alder Hey for 10 months prior to the move and agreed with the Trust the
requirements for the support of the system move into the new building.

Patient check-in is only the start. Intouch then delivered the solution over a period of 12 weeks, this included all required hardware, software, integration, project management and training services.

Intouch supplied a number of freestanding kiosks at each of the three possible entrances to the Hospital and bespoke ‘Oli the Elephant’ desk mounted kiosks at each of the Outpatient Departments as well as the Radiology Department.
Intouch supplied a number of Calling Screens in the Main Atrium, Restaurant, Café, Outpatient Clinic, Radiology and Emergency Department areas.

Intouch then supplied the Intouch...Flow Manager, Intouch...Check-in and Intouch...Calling solutions.

Patients can attend either via the Check-in kiosks or Flow Manager Application for a number of different clinical interactions. At this point they are able to adjust their demographic details on the kiosks and answer Trust relation questionnaires.

The Intouch...Integration model receives all appointments for Outpatients and Radiology either via a batch CSV upload or HL7 real-time appointment feed and arrives the patient to the relevant system based on their appointments type e.g. Outpatients are arrived into Meditech via Blue Prism and Radiology patients are arrived via HL7 into HSS CRSS.

Once a patient has arrived they will be assigned to a pre-loaded or ad hoc Activity pathway work stream e.g. weigh and measure or blood test etc. and will allow the users to then call the patient to their relevant clinical area or Radiology appointment via the numerous calling screens. Once all activities are complete the patient will then be moved or called to the final consultation area and have their appointment completed.

Patients attending an Outpatient appointment can also be sent to Radiology for X-Rays or Scans at this stage.
Patients attending ED requiring X-rays or scans, will be managed via a seamless integration via the Trust Order Comms system, which will allow patients to be managed by the Intouch Flow Manager solution for the purpose of calling a patient from ED to Radiology.

The Benefits
For the Patients:
Patients are able to arrive for all Outpatient and Radiology appointments centrally, adjust their demographics visually and be then be directed to wait in a spacious comfortable surrounding with access to Restaurants, Cafés and shops. They have their treatment pathway maximised to the best effect for both themselves and the operational effectiveness of the Trust.

For the Clinical Staff:
The Clinical staff can view their list and add activities prior to a patient’s arrival (previously this was done during the patients visit, thus adding in another step), as well as adding ad-hoc activities and tests during the consultation. The Clinical Staff are able to see where their patients are during this entire visit and only call them on a ‘time-and-when’ basis. The staff can also use the Message Centre module in the Flow Manager application to inform the patients via screen based messages. The staff can generate reports based on all interactions for a given period.

For the Hospital overall:
The Hospital is able to hold patients in the central wait area, safe in the knowledge that staff have full visibility of all the patients and locations whilst generating additional revenue by the patients using the restaurants, shops and cafés. By giving the patients time to view and answer the kiosk-based questions such as checking their demographic data, the patients are more likely to answer the questions accurately which can aid in follow up appointment, resulting in DNA rates improving. Additionally, the Hospital does not have to employ additional staff to manage the arrival and movement of the patients around the Hospital, thus enabling them to either save on costs or to re-deploy staff elsewhere.

We are delighted that Judith Adams, the Chief Operating Officer at Alder Hey endorsed this approach and summed up our way of working as follows:

“I am pleased to write this testimonial regarding Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust’s experience with Intouch with Health for our Patient flow process.”
The Trust team was pleased and impressed with both the methodology and people we dealt with throughout the project. Their knowledge and experience was extremely helpful as they guided us throughout our Operational process flow. They were very thorough and flexible in developing a plan that suited our needs and unique requirements. The planned work and process were spelled out in detail and the statement of work objectives and expectations were met in full. I was most impressed with Intouch with Health’s flexibility in adapting to our specific needs and occasional variations in project pacing. They showed professionalism in all dealing with us and our other providers, taking into account company size, styles, and personalities. Intouch with Health went above and beyond our expectations for the successful opening of Alder Hey in the Park.”

Alder Hey has already purchased more modules from our Intouch integrated suite of solutions. A portfolio that includes the modules shown below.

### The Intouch Suite of (Integrated) Solutions

- **Intouch Flow Manager** - Advanced patient flow management dashboard, which allows users to view and manage all patient workflow requirements with role based views, message centre reports and access to add on modules. **Delivering increased efficiency in patient flow and clinical time.**

- **Intouch Survey** - Allows for the creation of bespoke surveys either standalone or in conjunction with the Intouch Check-in module. **Delivering increased support for patient feedback and the likes of ‘Friends and Family’.**

- **Intouch Walk-In Manager** - Allows for patients to register for non-booked appointments via kiosks or the Intouch Mobile Appointment Manager solution. **Positively addressing the challenges associated with managing necessary but unscheduled appointments.**

- **Intouch Activity Manager** - Allows users to plan and manage clinical tests and activities both in a structured and flexible manner dependent on clinical requirements. Patients can be moved around various locations to attend multiple activities and tests whilst be viewed centrally via a dashboard. **Maximising the use of assets, clinical time and increasing patient satisfaction.**

- **Intouch Wayfinding** - Allows detailed maps of areas/locations/Hospitals to be viewed via kiosks placed across a specific site. **Delivering lower patient anxiety and increased satisfaction.**

- **Intouch Performance Manager** - Business Intelligence tool giving users the ability to create bespoke reports, dashboards and widgets to be viewed in real time or via scheduled information based on data collected by the Intouch solutions. **Enabling the better use of assets and available resources.**

- **Intouch Room and Resource Manager** - Allows for the management and allocation of rooms and resources across an area/location/Hospital. This solution can either be integrated via the Intouch Flow Manager solution or can be standalone. **Delivering the more effective utilisation of Trust resources.**

- **Intouch eOutcomes** - Out of the box electronic form to be used to collect and report all clinical interactions, procedures and outcome of the patient’s visit. Supplier will create required speciality base forms via the built in solution configuration tool. Integration capability available. **Ensuring the maximisation of financial flows and the reduction of lost revenue and Trust income.**

We look forward to our ongoing work programme with Alder Hey!
In Summary

If you are seeking to address any of the following:
- Researching service efficiency improvement tools?
- Seeking ways to improve the operation of your hospital?
- Looking for increased efficiency in healthcare?
- Exploring strategies to improve patient flow?
- Reviewing ways to reduce costs?
- Requiring patient flow and clinic management solutions to deliver service benefits to patients and healthcare professionals alike?
- Maximising Outpatient revenues
- Improving ‘outcome’ processes

Then we would be pleased to discuss our solutions further. Please contact:

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