



## SystemOne Out of Hours Case Study - Providing successful Out of Hours Care with SystemOne.

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SystemOne is a centralised computer system providing patient records at the point of care. TPP's focus on developing SystemOne Out of Hours has been to provide a system that can improve the quality and standard of clinical outcomes. Clinicians at Out-of-Hours centres have access to the patient's electronic medical record, enabling them to see a full problem and medication history, meaning that they can make care decisions with all the information they need to hand.

Bradford & Airedale GP Emergency Centre and North East Lincolnshire Out of Hours based in Grimsby have been using SystemOne Out of Hours for the last three years to provide a joined-up care service linking GP and OOH.

### Call Handling

John Collard, Matron for Unscheduled Care and Nurse Practitioner for Bradford and Airedale tPCT, explains how the technology systems used at Bradford & Airedale GP Emergency Centre work together. "When a patient contacts the Out of Hours call handling service, their details are recorded on AdastrA. That information is passed through to the OOH unit so that we see basic demographic information, a one-line comment about the complaint and details of the patient's consent to look at their record. If permitted, we then access the patient record on SystemOne and phone the patient back."

The process is similar in Grimsby. With the centre dealing with over 30,000 patient contacts a year, the management of data is crucial. Ruth Thompson, Clinical Implementation Manager, says, "When we get the information through from AdastrA, we transfer it to SystemOne and verify it against what information we have locally and against Spine so we know we're only creating one record for one patient. Everything we do then goes into the patient record, even if we've only spoken to the patient over the phone."

### Patient Consent

Consent to access a patient's record is always sought and rarely refused. In Bradford, John says, "In the last three years, we've only had two people say they didn't want us to access the record. When we do access a record, we must first record the consent on the system, and then there is a full audit trail, and a notification is automatically sent to the patient's GP."

Ruth says the reaction from patients at her centre is very positive, "Very rarely does a patient not give consent to view their record. When they do consent, they're often pleasantly surprised by the information available. For example, you can give them blood test results before the GP does, which saves them a trip back to the practice."

John agrees, "Patients expect all this anyway. They don't understand that you might not be



able to see their record. They say things like, 'Well, you can see from my record...' I don't think the public really believe that different parts of the health service can't pass information to each other. And of course, in Bradford, we can through SystmOne."

**Detailed record access**

Having access to a patient's detailed care record in OOH makes a big difference to patient care. "You can see the patient's medical history, when they last saw the GP and what that was about," says John. "This is a huge advantage. It enables you in many cases, particularly for people with complex health problems, to focus your questions around previous problems, and to see what their problems are likely to be."

John continues, "It is very valuable to know whether the patient has consulted the GP about the same problem before, and also to be able to see information from all other users of SystmOne. For example, if they're diabetic you can see what the diabetes centre has entered. If the patient is terminally ill, you can see information from the palliative care service and the hospice. You can also see hospital letters, what the consultant's thoughts are, outpatient clinic letters - anything that has been scanned into the record. There's an enormous amount of information in the SystmOne record."

In North East Lincolnshire, the majority of GPs use SystmOne, which means most GP records are

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**Hitting back at negative OOH media stories**

Media coverage about Out of Hours care in Britain tends to make grim reading, giving the impression that all centres are failing and that Out of Hours care is universally unsatisfactory.

At the end of October, 'Pulse' magazine reported on a 'Crisis of confidence in out-of-hours care', stating that both GPs' and patients' confidence in the service is 'plunging'.

The story of Penny Campbell is frequently mentioned in press reports condemning the lack of communication between out-of-hours clinicians. Miss Campbell died in March 2005 despite six telephone calls and two face-to-face meetings with doctors working for an out-of-hours service. A report into her death found there had been a 'major systems failure' in the care offered to her.

Clearly, there are problems in some PCTs, but for services using SystmOne, it's a very different story.

John Collard, Matron for Unscheduled Care and Nurse Practitioner for Bradford and Airedale tPCT, says, "Media reports about the lack of communication in OOH make me cross. Those issues don't apply to us because at Bradford & Airedale we've got excellent systems in place. Using SystmOne means we're years ahead of our time."

SystmOne Out of Hours helps OOH carers to put issues of communication behind them and to provide a comprehensive service, with patient care based on a complete patient record. With good linked-up IT systems in place, OOH providers and their patients can be confident that tragedies like that of Penny Campbell should never happen again.

## new SystmOne release method benefits Out of Hours

At the end of 2007, TPP changed the way in which SystmOne updates are released. The new method means minimal downtime for users on the system at the time.

With the old method, SystmOne could be unavailable for up to 60 minutes when a release took place. The new method sees that time reduced to less than two minutes.

Karen Roberts, Unscheduled Care Manager for County Durham and Darlington PCTs, says the Out of Hours units benefit from this development: "The reduced downtime has been an improvement as we are not inconvenienced by not being able to access the system for as long. At an Out of Hours unit, you need access 24/7."

Shila Patel, Clinical System Analyst and Release Manager, says, "With more Out of Hours units now using the system, we had to respond to their need to keep working throughout the evening. We're really pleased that the new release method has been a success and we will continue to use it for all releases from now on."



available at the OOH unit. Ruth says, "If the patient usually attends a SystmOne GP practice, we can see their records in OOH.

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If the team at NE Lincolnshire sees a patient without a SystmOne record, they create one for them.

Ruth explains, "Everything goes on SystmOne, even if the patient is from out of the area. We build up quite a useful database."

Accessing a patient's record in OOH minimises the potential for prescribing unsuitable or duplicate medication. John explains: "If someone needs a repeat prescription, you can access the record and issue it straight from their repeat list, making sure you are getting the right form and dose. That's so much safer than trying to work out exactly which 'little pink pills' the patient is asking for."

Viewing the record also has another benefit - the ability to see whether or not a patient is making a valid request: "If an asthmatic asks you for another inhaler, you can look at the SystmOne record and see that this is the fourth inhaler in as many

weeks. You can then advise them to see the GP because their asthma is not being well controlled."

John continues, "Conversely, if someone works away and finds it difficult to get to a surgery, you can perform their asthma review and put your findings back into the record. There are all sorts of little ways in which SystmOne makes a big difference."

As over 75% of GPs use SystmOne in Bradford & Airedale, as well as diabetes, child health, community, drug dependency, hospices and palliative care, the majority of patients treated in OOH have a SystmOne record. The centre also treats patients from nearby Skipton, in North Yorkshire and York PCT. "The largest practice in Skipton has just gone live with SystmOne GP so now we can see their records if they contact us too," says John.

John says, "There's no doubt that treating a patient without a SystmOne record makes you much more wary. You have no access to their background information, past medication or allergies. And then you realise that this is how units are working elsewhere in the country - pretty much in the dark. We're so used to having access to the record, when you see someone without a SystmOne record, you do feel more cautious."



### New Deployments

County Durham and Darlington PCTs are in the process of moving four unscheduled care units to SystemOne. Karen Roberts, Unscheduled Care Manager, is involved in the projects. She reflects on the decision to move to SystemOne: "We chose to move the units to SystemOne because of the benefits around access to patient records. There's a huge safety benefit to patients with clinicians having access to their medical records. Clinicians can access things like drug history, so if the patient is allergic to something but they're not sure exactly what, or if they don't remember the name of the medication they're on, the clinician can view the record and find out. They can see up-to-date information that aids the clinical decision making process, they can see lab reports, blood results and investigations. That all helps with continuity of care."

"Come and visit one of the centres to see SystemOne working for yourselves. Then you can see it in practice and assess whether it's the right system for you."

Karen Roberts

Karen has this advice for other Out of Hours or Unscheduled Care units considering moving to SystemOne, "Getting process mapping right at the beginning of the project is important, particularly so that trainers understand the processes they need to work through. But before you decide, come and visit one of the centres to see SystemOne working for yourselves. Then you can see it in practice and assess whether it's the right system for you."

Out of Hours services using SystemOne in County Durham and Darlington PCT serve 21 GP practices, eight of which currently use SystemOne GP, and with another centre due to Go Live in spring 2008, integrated patient records are benefiting more and more patients.

Karen says, "We can access patient records for around 40% of patients at the moment. And as more GP practices go live on SystemOne, the OOH service will benefit. When we encounter a patient without a SystemOne record, we will create one for them, then when the consultation

is over, we print out an Out of Hours view from SystemOne and fax that to the GP. I hope that eventually the majority of patient records will be available in OOH, whether that's through SystemOne or through the national Spine."

### An easy-to-use, evolving system

SystemOne is a windows-based system and users can be up and running on it very quickly. Ruth Thompson says, "Most of our GPs in North East Lincolnshire are SystemOne users so they already know how to use it. Those that aren't are generally computer literate and will get on with any clinical system. It's not a problem - SystemOne is quite an easy system to use."

SystemOne Out of Hours, as with all SystemOne modules, is constantly being developed. Recent additions to the OOH system have included the ability to record information in line with national quality requirements. Ruth says, "We have previously had to report non-compliance to the PCT because we didn't have the means to report on our activity. Now, we have full capabilities to report on our data on SystemOne and have been able to report full compliance."

### Joining up the loops

OOH services are able to provide better care through the use of SystemOne. Ruth says, "There's an awful lot in the press about out-of-hours not communicating with in-hours, but in Grimsby, we can and do communicate. The vast majority of GPs do sessions in out-of-hours, and we don't use any locums, so the GPs use SystemOne both at their practice and in OOH. Through SystemOne, other carers for the patient know what we've done and we can see what they've done - in North East Lincolnshire, we're joining up the loops."

John concludes: "SystemOne enables us to extend the GP service into the Out of Hours period, rather than provide a 'plug-the-gap' service. With SystemOne, we can offer a decent GP service out of hours, which is what it's all about."

### More...

For more information on SystemOne Out of Hours, please see [www.tpp-uk.com](http://www.tpp-uk.com) or call TPP on 0113 20 500 83.

SystemOne Out of Hours is part of the core offering provided by CSC Computer Sciences under the National Programme for IT, and is therefore available with funding from the Connecting for Health project in the North, East and Midlands regions of England.