

Bedford Hospital CMS case study

Bedford Embraces Paperless Chemotherapy Management

Bedford Hospital NHS Trust is the first of four UK Trusts to go live with JAC's browser-based Chemotherapy Management System (CMS), a solution proven in 12 leading European cancer hospitals including a region-wide and shared database environment in Norway. Designed by oncology practitioners, it is a highly specialised and integrated system handling prescribing, administering, in-pharmacy production and patient records and can be easily adapted to both local and national requirements regardless of country or language.

For Bedford Hospital, the first Trust in the UK to fully implement JAC's CMS, the desire to increase safety and optimise the patient experience led to an extensive search to find an electronic chemotherapy management system to empower these aims.

The goal was to create a hospital-wide data sharing environment for oncology services that could encompass home care and community facilities, its tertiary hospital Addenbrookes in Cambridge, and cancer service provider partners in Luton and Milton Keynes.

Following an extensive search for a solution, the multidisciplinary evaluation team identified a short-list of four suppliers and ultimately selected JAC's CMS.

“When I first arrived at Bedford, the Trust was on the verge of purchasing an established US-based chemotherapy system. I suggested that instead we go to open tender for a wider selection of alternatives. They were all scored against a comprehensive list of requirements and JAC emerged on top. Not only did CMS tick all the boxes for functionality and interoperability, we also knew that by working with JAC we would be working with a reliable partner. And we weren’t disappointed: during implementation they were responsive to issues as they arose and were always willing to take on board whatever was needed.”

Kandarp Thakkar, Chief Pharmacist, Divisional Clinical Director and project co-sponsor

Optimum configurability



From the standpoint of downstream interoperability, Bedford’s purchase last year of JAC’s Pharmacy Management solution would suggest that CMS was the obvious choice. However there were other equally compelling reasons informing the choice. Having visited a proven CMS site in The Hague, the team was impressed with the system’s ease of use and rich functionality.

They were also reassured by its configurability and ability to work seamlessly with the hospital’s EMR (EPR): its open design would be easily adapted to individual and regional UK environments and compatible with national NHS requirements.

“While the tools for oncology care are universal, processes can differ across geographies. CMS’s configurability persuaded us that here was a system that would be able to meet our particular needs.”

Kandarp Thakkar, Chief Pharmacist, Divisional Clinical Director and project co-sponsor

This confidence was born out by the fact that Bedford completed its rollout programme – a process that included tasks like interfacing with Trust’s PAS and pathology applications in under eight months with a minimum of disruption.

Additionally when the system is integrated with JAC’s Medicines Management Solution, it will bring to chemotherapy management all the advantages of medicines stock control, ordering, inventory management and financial oversight.

Already CMS is helping the Oncology department reap the clinical and operational benefits of an end-to-end workflow.

“At first I was apprehensive about working with computers but as it turned out the training was really easy. The best thing is that now I don’t have to carry around bits of paper all the time.”

Wendy Cox, Oncology Nurse



Ease of Use

A key part of Bedford's strategy was selecting a solution that could adapt to existing workflows rather than forcing staff conform to procedures that were already dictated by the technology.

The ability of CMS to replicate clinical methodologies within a web browser that presents information in a way both familiar and easy to navigate won enthusiastic user support and dramatically simplified training. A case in point is Oncology Nurse Wendy Cox, who although initially wary of technology became a quick convert:

"Having recently come from a Trust that employed a different system, I'm very impressed with the depth and breadth of information available on CMS and its ease of access. One log-on enables clinicians to gain instant visibility of all they need to know about the patient, their treatments, prescriptions and test results. No cutting between screens and different systems in order to piece the picture together: everything is presented on a single consolidated screen."

Edward Hawley-Jones, Bedford's Lead Oncology Pharmacist and its future CMS System Manager

Centralising all patient-related chemotherapy treatment data, including dose adjustments and lab results, enables nurses and doctors to leave each other free text notes on the system rather than clipping them to charts and files that can easily detach and go missing.

Being electronic, the system also minimises patient risk by reducing accidental errors such as lost patient records, mislaid prescriptions and the transcription mistakes resulting from poor handwriting. In the event of an issue arising, the system's secure clinical audit capability is able to help identify the source so it can be corrected.

At-a-glance visibility

CMS provides paperless access to patient information across all touchpoints on the treatment journey from diagnosis through prescribing, aseptic production, appointment scheduling and administering – all of which is visible via a single, integrated medicine chart view.

Indeed, the only paper in the entire chain is the prescription printed for use in the pharmacy dispensing and checking process for the Trust's monthly SACT reports – a laborious task that formerly required the input of multiple pharmacists and could take up to a day to compile – CMS generates timely data with a single click.



For Athar Ahmad, Consultant Oncologist and the CMS project's medical lead, this at-a-glance functionality is a major benefit.

"I can bring up the patients CMS record and get a real-time view: On the front screen I can see the regimen that they are receiving, any dose reductions or omissions and dates of previous and upcoming treatments. I can also access their previous recorded toxicities and see any notes that other healthcare professionals have left as well as data on previous treatments without having to search through historical paper records. Chemotherapy can be prescribed and received by Pharmacy immediately with all the doses being calculated and dose-banded. CMS also provides a range of other decision support tools to help speed the prescribing process and ensure that best practice is followed."

Athar Ahmad, Consultant Oncologist

A quality experience



The patient experience during chemotherapy is always front of mind for clinicians like Dr. Ahmad. With CMS when a patient arrives for the next stage of their treatment they can be confident that there will be no delays or be inconvenienced by a session rescheduling due to an absent file.

"One of the single most important benefits of our new integrated electronic environment is that it provides full traceability and auditability."

Edward Hawley-Jones, Bedford's Lead Oncology Pharmacist and its future CMS System Manager

From initial prescription to the management and modification of treatment regimens and outcomes, clinicians now have drill-down information on patients across wards, at home and in the clinic.

Given the ever-increasing pressure on clinical time and resources within the NHS, this complete, accurate and up to the minute visibility enables clinicians to do more in less time, provides peace of mind and helps deliver best practice patient safety and a quality experience.

To find out more about the CMS for your organisation, region or country contact us or visit:
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