

Sharing Information beyond Organisational Boundaries

Sharing of information between the wider Mental Health care team has been something of a holy grail for our Trust. There are obvious clinical advantages to sharing information, but in practice this has proved a difficult process to deliver or even embed within our own organisation. However, sharing of information to external care partners provides many more benefits, especially to the client. Our primary audience for sharing is:

- Emergency Departments – We know that around 1% of clients in contact with our services, also attend emergency departments. Clinical management of these clients can be difficult if they do not have access to existing treatment plans, risk information, and the behaviours or functioning of such clients.
- Intermediate care teams – Avoidance of many delays in transfers of care (to the most appropriate setting) could potentially be avoided, if up to date information is available remotely. It may be that such remote monitoring can save time if the case can be assessed in this way, rather than formal multi-agency/disciplinary meetings.
- Social Care, Emergency Duty Teams – A high percentage of current mental health clients will also be in contact with social care teams during their episode. Whilst sharing information to all social care teams is the ideal, providing access to the Emergency Duty team is critical, and very similar to Emergency Department needs.

A secondary outcome required, was to provide a very specific “clinicians desktop”. A great deal of time was spent understanding the subset of information accessed by clinicians, and the data that needed to be recorded by clinicians day to day. Though the core application supports all that is needed, a simple and targeted sub application appeared to be the obvious solution, especially as internal staffs’ requirements were not considerably different from external clinicians & practitioners. The added benefit of using a service designed to be securely accessed from outside our network environment, is that our own staff can access records from home PC’s etc... especially pertinent for our out of hours, and on call services.



Maracis Solutions Ltd, were able to accurately understand our requirements, to provide a proof of concept information sharing service within very short timescales. From a service provision perspective, the rapidity of development has greatly helped with long term, and widespread acceptance of the solution from end users; who are unfortunately, all too familiar with lengthy delays between identification of a business problem and a solution being delivered.

At a time when there are few success stories within NHS information system developments, it is very pleasing to be able to bring solutions to the point of care delivery, quickly and easily. The service is not however without a few issues. There is a tendency within the delivered service to have to click more times than is necessary, which is perhaps a small glitch in the development environment, but nevertheless detracts slightly from an optimal user experience. One further technical issue is that the developed service, though delivered via browser technology, and does not behave in a similar manner to native browser technologies in relation to the SSL encryption. Unless network/device settings are changed (remembering that these settings are controlled by other organisations), security warning messages appear, which indicate that the SSL encryption is not able to work, or be seen to be working, as it would normally. From a user experience perspective, this can raise questions about the security of the service. Whilst the service remains secure, it is understandably unsettling, in these times of increased security and protection of client information.

Even in light of these small issues, the service continues to represent a massive step forwards in sharing information, and even opens the door to further opportunities such as sharing the record with the Client themselves. The service has therefore become a catalyst for improvements to clinical practice, and therefore improvements in the care experienced by our clients.



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