



Case Study:

The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Facilitating a Closed Loop EPMA workflow





Facilitating a Closed Loop EPMA workflow

Background

Many NHS Trusts are working to implement new ePMA (electronic prescribing and medicines administration) systems or improve their existing ePMA functionality by introducing closed loop medication dispensing. The main goal of this is to improve patient safety by reducing the number of prescribing errors.

By moving from paper drugs charts to an electronic system, there is less opportunity for error. By going a step further and 'closing the loop' between the patient identification and drugs administration then even more potential errors can be avoided.

As part of their wider 'Closed Loop Medication' project, The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust were in the process of deploying the ePMA module of the Cerner Millennium system and were looking to collaborate with healthcare partners to help effectively implement this new workflow.

The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is one of the busiest, largest, and most successful Teaching NHS Foundation Trusts in the country, with around 16,000 staff providing healthcare for the 273,000 residents in the surrounding city area.





The Brief

The project team needed to enable the use of laptops running ePMA software at the patient's bedside. Consolidating medication storage and IT access into one workstation would also further streamline the Nurse's workflow during ward rounds.

Secure drugs carts with IT integration provide the perfect solution in this scenario.

"A well organised medical trolley is a silent partner in patient care, ensuring that healthcare providers have what they need when they need it, allowing them to focus on what matters most – the patient"

Douglas and Douglas

The ward's current medication storage involved a fixed height 'POD' locker (Patient's Own Drugs) at the side of each bed. As well as a laptop cart solution, the project team were looking for a workstation that would securely house and distribute medication, helping manage supplies on the ward more easily.

This mobile drug cart would then facilitate the closed loop dispensing workflow by providing the user with a laptop, scanner and secure medicines storage housed in a completely mobile cart. All tasks involved with checking the patient, medication, dose, route and time can now be completed in one place, saving valuable time.

Key Project Criteria:

- Work together with the project team to facilitate their workflow as part of a wider 'Closed Loop Medication' project.
- Provide a mobile and intuitive ePMA workstation to save time and increase efficiency.
- Consolidate medication storage and access to the IT systems into one workstation.
- Ensure there is easy access to medication at any height to help with overall staff well-being.

Our Solution

With the Trust's key objectives in mind, we decided our MediCab Lite would best suit their requirements. Following a series of trial runs on site, we received some useful feedback from key stakeholders who would be involved in the deployment which Dalen Healthcare could then review and tailor our cart to suit help address these points.

- **Secure drugs storage and IT hardware**

Each workstation features fully enclosed & secure drawer space for medication and medical supplies.

This ensures the cart adheres to BS:2881 standards, ensuring the safety of medication in busy hospital environments. Secure brackets were also supplied to help protect the laptops whilst still maintaining access to the keyboard and screen.

- **Making drugs rounds quick and easy**

Having integrated all of the necessary equipment into one workstation, the medical carts have increased the efficiency of each shift and have offered mobile drugs storage to work alongside the POD lockers at the side of each bed.

The carts provide an opportunity for The Trust's healthcare professionals to experience improved workflow efficiency by having secure access to EPMA systems at the point of care.

- **Comfortable day-to-day use**

Recognising the importance of staff well-being and ergonomics, the medical carts also incorporated height adjustment for easy access to medication and supplies at any height, promoting optimal posture and reducing back strain.

This functionality helped ensure the comfort and overall well-being of the nurses who will use the solution every day.





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The Result

Since the initial deployment, the new medical carts have made drugs rounds quicker and easier, helping nurses tend to patients more efficiently during ward rounds. The feedback from nurses and doctors has been very positive with the secure design allowing pharmacists and nurses to feel comfortable that the drugs are safe on the ward.

The lightweight and compact design has been well received following feedback from nurses that the units are easy to move around the busy ward environments and a huge improvement on previous cart solutions. The carts have significantly improved the comfort and flexibility of the ward rounds.

Dalen Healthcare are committed to providing excellent customer service and have built a reputation for going above and beyond for our customers. We were delighted to work with The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and look forward to a long relationship with them.

Looking for a similar solution?

Please get in touch with us today to see how we can help.



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"We used the Dalen carts to support our new closed loop medication solution on a number of wards in the Trust over the past 18 months.

Staff have positively reported on how effective they have been in improving nurses' day-to-day routines during medication administration.

The small lockable cupboard on the cart allows the nurse to have a supplementary supply of regularly used medication with them during a drug round, whilst not impacting on space needed to administer safely."

Vicci Mulholland
Digital Health
Nurse Specialist



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