

SBRI HEALTHCARE CASE STUDY CareFlow Connect



INNOVATION

CareFlow Connect

Modernising Care Communications: Real time connectivity making a real difference to your healthcare organisation and your patients.

COMPETITION

Patient Safety & Reducing Pressure on Urgent & Emergency Care

FURTHER INFORMATION

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CareFlow Connect

System C 
Connected Care

Part of the System C & Graphnet
Care Alliance

CLINICAL NEED

Technology is required to improve workflows within the NHS by replacing the need for clinical staff to use pagers, faxes and other paper-based methods of communication which can cause delays in patient care and are not cost effective. Using traditional means of communication such as pagers and paper notes causes reporting, conversation and coordination delays.

In fact, research suggests that people who are frequently paged can spend 20 percent of their time looking for and waiting on phones.* Caregiving is a team game and the players are not always in the same place at the same time. This can cause communication delays regarding urgency and the best treatment. This ultimately puts patients at risk, results in longer hospital stays, and spikes hospital costs.

Taking one scenario of trying to reduce the risk of acute kidney injury (AKI), technology could make a big difference in reducing progression of the disease. According to NICE, AKI is seen in up to 18% of people who are admitted to hospital, and those with AKI tend to remain in hospital 4.7 days longer than people of the same age in the same HRG without AKI.

**Health Service Journal, 2013.*

SUMMARY OF INNOVATION

CareFlow is an integrated communication platform available on any mobile or web device, delivering faster clinical communication, better collaboration and safer care. CareFlow Connect's mobile and cloud-based messaging system reduces inefficiencies in healthcare communications by ensuring care teams can send, receive and log patient information via their smart device around the clock wherever they are.

CareFlow's mobile and cloud-based digital app fully encrypts all the data it collects and provides care team members with patient information and correspondence. The technology allows instant messaging, file sharing and real-time discussions wherever people are at a particular time.

In a trial with East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, the CareFlow system reduced the number of patients who deteriorated from AKI stage 2 to Stage 3 while in a secondary care setting. Stage 3 patients tend to stay in for longer.

PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

By centralising information via a mobile cloud-based platform, clinical team members can access information 24 hours a day and from wherever they are via their smart phone or other device. This technology therefore has the profound capability to positively impact the patient's journey across care settings. The patient is more effectively managed. Benefits include:

- Quicker intervention
- Preventative and earlier treatment
- Shorter stays in hospital
- Quicker access to test results

For clinicians obtaining patient test results, the use of mobile and cloud communication platforms means they receive vital news more quickly and can act upon it in a timely fashion.

“The CareFlow Connect app links clinical staff across departments and sites so that teams stay connected and involved in their patients’ care. Getting the right data to the right person and the right time is vital. The added bonus now is that we not only know that the right people have the information, but we know what they are doing with it.”

Dr Michael Bedford, Renal Research Registrar at East Kent Hospitals

COMPANY OVERVIEW

CareFlow was formed in 2007 by surgeons Dr Jon Shaw and Dr Jonathan Bloor. They saw clear opportunities to improve the efficiency of communication between clinical teams and the potential of social media and cloud technology to share information and improve workflows throughout the NHS.

Shaw had a background in writing software solutions inside and outside of healthcare and he worked as an emergency physician for five years while building CareFlow.

CareFlow has received more than £1.5M of SBRI Healthcare funding, about £1M in other venture capital and government funding prior to its acquisition by System C Healthcare in 2016. About 20 jobs have been created in the UK and 12 offshore in the technical and sales teams.

“There must be funding available for this kind of R&D in healthcare and to be able to show the benefits being delivered and the importance of innovation.”

Dr Jon Shaw

NHS IMPACT

The economic benefits with the use of Careflow are the impact of improved communication on the management of Acute Kidney Injury (AKI), with improvements in managing the progression of the disease leading to reductions in length of stay.

The solution is currently deployed and in mainstream use in two sites, the original pilot site at East Kent University Hospitals Foundation Trust (EKHFT) and Dorset County Hospital. Deployment of the solution at both hospitals has seen combined cash savings to date from AKI of over £11M since 2015, with estimated recurring annual savings of £6M (*PA Consulting 2018 Report ‘A review of the benefits of the SBRI Healthcare programme’).

CareFlow also reported wider benefits in terms of saved clinician time relating to improved communication replacing pagers, and improved handovers. These impacts are significant, although the ‘saving’ is to individuals.

