

iFIT at Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust

Barking, Havering and Redbridge **NHS**
University Hospitals
NHS Trust



Idox Health's iFIT solution – a Health Records Logistics Management platform – has been created in collaboration with the NHS to overcome longstanding challenges experienced by Health Records departments, and uses logistics best practice to streamline the case note journey. Efficiencies are achieved through the automation of business processes, enabling a space-saving filing alternative and ensuring that all records can be both tracked, located and retrieved in a timely manner.

Here, we explore how Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) has been able to transform their medical records management with the help of iFIT, and deliver a better service to those who use its services.

BHRUT Health Records Service:

- » One main Health Records library housing approximately 500,000 patient health records.
- » Main library is located offsite and operates on a closed library basis.
- » Approximately 471,411 health records are pulled per year.
- » An average of 200,000 health records in circulation.
- » Emergency department activity levels at both sites averages 650 episodes per day.
- » Approximately 560,000 health records stored at Iron Mountain offsite storage.
- » Average of 600 health records requested from offsite storage per year.
- » The trust uses the Medway Patient Administration System (PAS) provided by System C.

About BHRUT

BHRUT runs NHS hospitals in the east London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. It operates two main hospitals, namely the King George Hospital in Ilford and Queen's Hospital in Romford. It also operates a number of clinics at various sites in the nearby area, including Barking Hospital and Brentwood Community Hospital. The trust serves around 700,000 patients annually, making it one of the largest acute hospital trusts in England, while the trust's Health Records department manages more than 500,000 records in their main library.

The project at-a-glance

Following a CQC inspection in 2013, BHRUT needed to address a major challenge within its Health Records department. It had been reported that the location of as many as 40% of patient records were unknown and that clinics had been taking place with up to 10% of records unavailable at the point of patient care. This was resulting in patients being seen without records, cancelled appointments, increased clinical risk and poor patient experiences. Previously, the trust used the traditional labour-intensive Health Records library model based entirely

on manual tracking. With such a system, the complex flows of health records mean that 40% are out of circulation at any one time, leaving staff with a limited understanding of where records are. This led to case notes being difficult to find, large numbers of temporary notes being created, frustrated clinicians and patients, as well as poor staff morale. Subsequently, as part of BHRUT's improvement plan and with a new CQC inspection looming, the trust chose Idox Health's iFIT health records tracking system to help it transition to a more effective way of managing patient information.

Ensuring a successful rollout

The iFIT logistics platform is not just a superficial technology 'add-on'. Its implementation involved a complete process change in the way BHRUT managed its health records.

iFIT operates via a network of mounted RFID sensors in corridors, wards and treatment areas that detect and record the locations of tagged items as they move around both the Queen's and King George hospitals and main records library. As each case note is issued its own unique GS1-compliant RFID tag, a breadcrumb trail of movement can be identified. This allows a small team of individuals to refine searches, using handheld mobile devices to locate sought-after items as they get closer to the missing notes – without disturbing the occupants of the areas being searched.

This functionality resulted in a huge reduction in the number of files marked as 'missing' across the trust – now the team **only reports 0.2% of case notes as missing**. The availability of automatic real-time data also ensures optimal use of medical devices.

In addition to requests raised through the hospital's appointment system, ad-hoc requests for files can also be made through iFIT. This allows the trust to

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automate requests to the records library originating from emails, handwritten notes or phone calls. Previously a manual process, it now runs in parallel with the planned requests from appointments, providing the records library with a clear and efficient pull list, **improving the efficiency of the retrieval, handling and transporting of case notes by 20%**.

iFIT also facilitates administrative processes by producing dashboards and reports for management. Its suite of reports provides records managers with a clear picture of the main KPIs, such as the numbers of missing files and file movements both in and out of the library.

Within the trust's records library, the introduction of GS1 location tagging permits a radical change in the filing model. The traditional Terminal Digit Filing system has been replaced by Location Based Filing, where tagged files are quickly tracked to any available shelf without having to resort to pre-sorting. This significantly reduces the amount of time taken to both retrieve and store records, as well as minimising the amount of space taken up within the library itself.

iFIT was live across the trust in just five months, on time and to cost. The project combined Agile and PRINCE2 project methodology and included a blended training programme for 1,300 staff.

Key financial drivers

The value of iFIT is that it drives tangible business benefits for a hospital. Before implementation, Idox Health and BHRUT identified **a three-year net cumulative savings of £1,444,690**.

The aim was to achieve this by a headcount reduction as a planned return on investment of £1,000,000 in year one and a projection of 84% return of total benefits over the three years.

Within less than five months BHRUT had achieved 85% of the business case, with 65,000 locations barcoded and **32 full-time equivalents released** to undertake other roles or reduce agency staff.

Key Business Benefits

Cost and time benefits

- Notes and assets available **when** and **where** they are needed.
- Significant reduction in time spent looking for items that should be readily available - a key initiative from the Carter review.
- Improved reporting capabilities driving visibility and performance.
- Cash releasing savings with reduction of department overheads:
 - » Automated labour intensive processes (between 30-40% staff savings).
 - » Automated statutory reporting and KPI generation.
 - » Improved library space (typical 15% space savings).
 - » Reduced staff time engaged in filing and retrieval activities.
- Establishment of a firm baseline for fully electronic health records:
 - » Places physical paper records under a full inventory audit and reconciliation process control (automatically captured during the records migration process).
 - » When moving to EDRM; dual use of both paper and electronic patient information eliminates most of the costly scanning of the paper archive (80% of the cost going to EHR).
 - » Provides a platform for use in managing any future scanning and EDRM Programme.

Staff benefits

- Boosted staff morale by offering the tools to support their jobs and reducing the time taken for laborious tasks.
- Automation of manual efforts including sending alert messages for missing items and auto-return request messages for specific assets.
- Higher levels of records availability resulting in improved clinical decisions and patient experience.

Legal and compliance benefits

- Improved information governance due to item movement being fully auditable.
- Mitigation against potential legal claims through improved ability to track and locate records.
- Improved compliance following CQC recommendations.
- Infrastructure that supports all seven GS1 identification keys for compliance and provides capability of tagging other trust assets such as medical devices, beds, pharmaceutical supplies, etc.

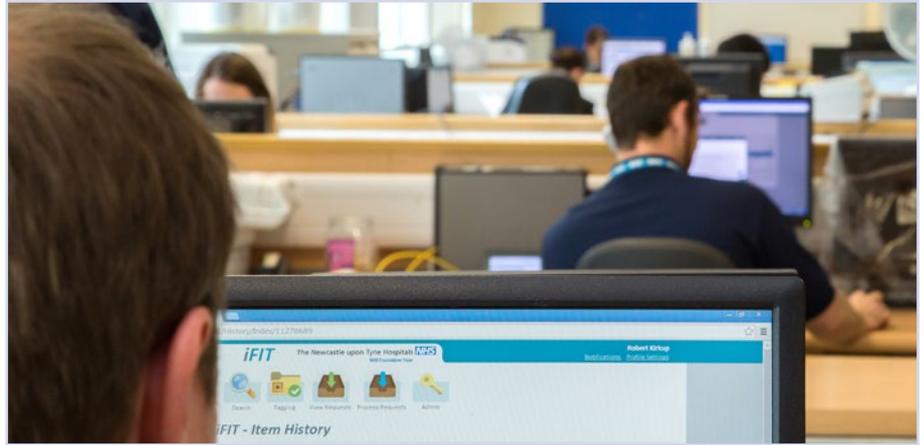
“iFIT’s handheld scanner is easy to use, giving quick results, and the tracking sensors throughout the hospital follow the case notes’ journey through the building and pinpoints their location.”

**Sally Donoghue, Ward Clerk,
Queens Hospital, BHRUT**



“iFIT has not only addressed immediate concerns around record availability and the re-deployment of resources, it has also provided technology that has enabled a clear roadmap for both a digital strategy and GS1 compliance. The projected savings have not only been realised, but significantly exceeded.”

Andrew Raynes, former IM&T Programme Director, BHRUT



Embracing the benefits of iFIT

There is clear evidence to suggest that the efficiency and safety benefits experienced by BHRUT are also available to other healthcare organisations – either on a smaller or larger scale. BHRUT’s implementation addressed many of the issues raised in the 2013 CQC report, including KPIs to demonstrate new efficiencies through better management and visibility of health records.

Whilst iFIT is not a replacement for the digitisation of the Health Records Service, its implementation is a foundation for supporting the prioritisation of the process. For example, identifying the patients that are seen regularly and the records that move around the most results in a benefit-driven scanning strategy. The immediate savings offered by iFIT enable trusts to create the necessary ‘headroom’ in their budgets to support cost-effective EDM implementation.

As of January 2017, iFIT was tracking over 13 million live healthcare records across 12 NHS trusts with a further six trusts moving into contract. The common word used to describe it by NHS employees is ‘transformational’.

iFIT is fully certified by GS1 UK as capable of correctly and consistently implementing GS1 standards and associated best practice.

Medical records management remains just one example of healthcare logistics management. Given that iFIT is a multi-purpose platform, it has also been used to manage mobile hospital assets, and will shortly be capable of tracking pathology specimens, pharmaceutical supplies and hospital staff.

Keen to find out more?

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