

OITUK in the UK Health Sector

Introduction

Most NHS sites hold patient related data in a variety of ways using differing media, eg. paper, microform, and digital. Although some areas have introduced bespoke databases allowing storage and audit the majority rely on more traditional means. It is currently very difficult, if not impossible, to identify exactly what information may be held on a given patient. Some departments compile their own copy of patient's records, specific to their department's needs, with the prime objective of having information to hand when required. This practice has resulted in falling standards for timely filing of patient related documentation in the patient's acute medical record; increasing risk and disadvantaging patients and clinicians.

Hospital data systems hold a wealth of patient related information; yet data entry is duplicated on a routine daily basis as secretaries have no facility to directly populate MS Word documents. Using Information Technology (IT) in this area alone would deliver real benefits to secretarial staff and improve data quality.

Advances in IT have paved the way to providing a central Electronic Document Management (EDM), delivering measurable benefits, in real time. EDM systems facilitate the electronic transfer and storage of documents ensuring high levels of security and audit. EDM is, however, a much greater asset than simply an electronic filing system. OITUK continue to work closely with NHS users to develop and provide integrated solutions, using EDM as the underlying technology.

Solutions for the NHS

The Health Sector has traditionally handled large paper volumes and complex record sets, managed internally at departmental level, via a range of technologies including imaging, document management and workflow. Nowadays, a whole range of pressures are driving organisations to provide web-based facilities that enable external bodies to interact with the core information systems. At its simplest level, members of the public, and multiple health care departments, must now link together to extend health services and streamline operations. This paradigm shift must operate within the laws of the existing Freedom of Information Act, the Data Protection Act, and for many organisations, The National Archives (TNA – formerly Public Records Office) - regulations.

OITUK believe that NHS Trusts must adopt a more holistic approach for content management. The core component of all such systems is document management. Unfortunately, document management per se is still regarded as a luxury and, in many cases, utilised as glorified electronic filing of patient records, with little or no return from investments in such systems. Organisations must demand a more integrated approach – the digital patient record cannot sit in a document management system that remains un-connected with other patient administration and clinical care systems. The document is the vehicle for content which must be searchable and integrated with the core hospital systems and practices. Its management has to encompass the document life-cycle which includes day-to-day patient record management (including security), as well as retention and destruction in compliance with TNA guidelines – the integrated, holistic approach.

The underlying EDMS technology provides a compound document repository that can be shared amongst many departments, to unify the document repository and provide access to the Integrated Patient Record:

C-Cube - Integrated Document and Records Management

Legal compliance and the desktop revolution demand a fresh approach to electronic document management which will enable NHS Trusts to meet their strategic requirements and be compliant with emerging legislation. Most systems provide the basic facilities for document capture, storage and retrieval of patient records. Not all, however, meet the stringent criteria imposed by NHS sites which have more strategic objectives in mind. Some of the more 'important discriminators' between systems include:

- open, client-server architecture
- integration with the environment and business applications
- full object management with life-cycle support, compliant with emerging legislation;
- Workflow and Business Process Re-engineering

To meet these challenges, OITUK Ltd., continues to develop and provide high-end Information Management Solutions - incorporating Electronic Document, Content, and Records Management - which are closely integrated with patient administration processes and clinical care applications.

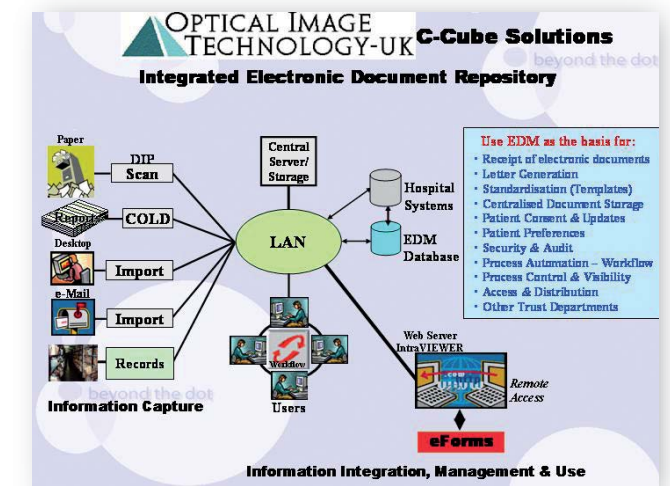
In practice, the integrated, holistic approach has been given a real shot in the arms through:

- a. the lower cost Internet/Intranet - based technology. This has given rise to portal-based systems which unify data across sites and empower users with more control over the presentation space;
- b. legislation and compliance – formal document and records management is no longer an option, but a mandatory requirement;
- c. Affordable, powerful content search engines for leveraging information out of document content.

Integrated systems now include a mixture of older but proven back-office tools such as imaging and database connectivity facilities, coupled with newer web-based portal mechanisms and workflow functionality. The returns from investments are being realized through careful application of this technology to address strategic requirements rather than short-term measures to solve paper problems. The technology is not rocket-science, but has evolved gradually as customer demands and web accessibility have increased. The OITUK C-Cube product suite has mirrored this evolution and now provides a rich capability for handling a broad range of requirements – for patient care and for hospital administration systems.

The key to all OITUK solutions is integration with hospital systems to ensure that information is delivered on time and to the right place. OITUK Ltd has provided EDM & Workflow solutions into many NHS, Local Authority, and Private Sector sites over the last 12 years and is now in a leading position in the Records Management Industry. The full scope of the C-Cube integrated document and records management suite includes:

- Electronic Document Management
- Internet/Intranet/Extranet delivery
- Standardised Patient Letter Generation & Management
- Web Based Electronic Forms processing
- Electronic Records Management
- Storage management and archiving
- Workflow
- Content Search & Knowledge Management System
- Web Portal-based solutions
- COLD/Microfiche handling

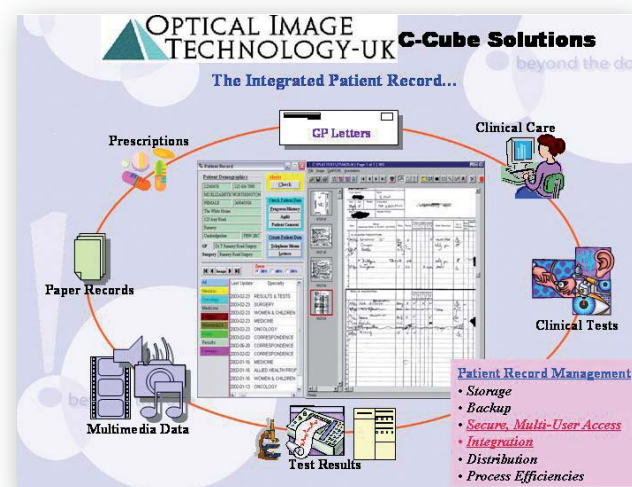


- XML and HL7 based application integration
- Collaboration facilities

OITUK have extended enterprise-wide Electronic Document Management solutions, to include Electronic Records Management and Knowledge Management. The C-Cube ERMS - Electronic Record Management System - helps organisations to manage records in compliance with guidelines dictated by The National Archives – TNA 2002. ERMS enables organisations to be accountable for both physical and electronic records that have to be retained over specified periods and (equally important) records that have to be destroyed after given time periods.

The C-Cube KMS - Knowledge Management System - helps organisations to leverage information held in EDM and EDRM solutions, by extracting content and making that content available via the KMS search engine, for use within applications.

The C-Cube products are based on client-server architecture using vendor-independent SQL databases. The products support standard application interface technologies, including XML to ensure that solutions can be readily expanded to use emerging technologies, incorporate future requirements, and allow integration with existing desktop and hospital systems. These integrated software components from OITUK form a market mature, integrated suite with associated software longevity, an ongoing future development vision and high quality levels of support.



Content Capture & Control