

Leicester implements 'interim' order comms

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University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust has carried out the first phase of the deployment of an interim order communications system supplied by iSoft, delivered by Computer Sciences Corporation.

The implementation – initially to a small number of wards - is the first time under the National Programme for IT in the NHS that local service provider CSC has delivered iSoft's iCM clinical software on top of an existing patient administration system as an 'interim' product.

The one other implementation of iCM by CSC under the national programme occurred at Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust. In April 2007, it went live with both iPM and iCM.

Working with CSC, iSoft and NHS Connecting for Health, the Leicester trust has kept its ageing iSoft Clinicom patient administration system – originally a Torex product - and implemented a version of iSoft's iCM clinical software to provide order communications functionality. Integration has been carried out using Orion Rhapsody.

The trust plans to use the new legacy system, implemented on top of an old but reliable PAS, to provide an 'interim' solution until a reliable and robust version of iSoft's next generation Lorenzo eventually becomes available from CSC under the national programme.

The version of iCM used is understood to be the fully fledged iCM product rather than the simplified version CfH has negotiated for CSC to implement. The version of iCM now in use in Leicester is understood to have a pedigree closer to the original Eclipsys Sunrise Clinical Manager product from which it was originally derived.

The implementation of the interim system is the culmination of almost three years of work by the trust, working with CfH, iSoft and two different LSPs. The project began under Accenture, ground to a halt as it quit as an LSP, and slowly came back to life from 2006 under replacement LSP CSC.

John Aird, trust director of IM&T: "We anticipate we will work to migrate to the Lorenzo product which is likely to take a couple of years."

He described the implementation of order communications, to be followed by e-prescribing, as an extremely welcome step, but only the beginning of where they planned to get to. "We want to get to integrated pathways and electronic patient records; order communications is your starter for ten."

CSC said in a statement to E-Health Insider: ""University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust went live with iCM at the end of June. This was the first iCM to link with a trust's own legacy PAS.

"Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust went live with both our iPM and iCM systems concurrently. There are a few further trusts interested to take iCM, but the majority of trusts we have approached in the North, Midlands and East have elected to wait for requests and results when Lorenzo is deployed."

Taking the legacy iPM and iCM systems together, often referred to as the Plymouth option, has in the past been offered by CSC as an interim solution to NHS trusts waiting for the Lorenzo Care Records System.

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