

Northern Ireland pilots care record system

Two of Northern Ireland's five health and social care trusts are to share information using a web based portal

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The Belfast and South East trusts will test Orion Health's Concerto Portal to view data from more than 10 systems, including NI's Health and Care Index, GP systems and hospital data including laboratory, radiology, accident and emergency and patient administration systems (PAS).

The project will act as a one year pilot of a new Electronic Care Record for Northern Ireland, allowing GPs and hospital consultants to see each others' records on a patient. It will be used by the NI project team to evaluate requirements for developing shared medical records.

"The development of region-wide electronic health records has been a policy objective in Northern Ireland since 2005," said Brian McKeown, head of ICT planning, commissioning and performance management for the NI Health and Social Care Board. "We visited similar Orion Health integration projects in Canada before procuring this pilot and we learnt that it was essential for the project to be driven by doctors."

The system will be installed initially at Belfast City Hospital, Ulster Hospital and at some GP practices. The first users will go live in December, and the system will be fully operational by the end of March.