

# Northumbria gets ready for portal

3 November 2011 Shanna Crispin

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is preparing to go live with a clinical portal from Orion Health this month as the first step towards establishing a full electronic patient record.

The trust is in the process of final testing and preparation for a go live of the 'Single View' portal. Its IM&T strategy sets this as a milestone towards implementing a full EPR, which will include replacing its patient administration system.

A trust spokesperson said the clinical portal would "allow clinicians secure access to patients' records." This access will be "based on admissions and attendances", while the portal will also "present pathology and radiology reports, PACS images and discharge letters" and give clinicians "access to place electronic orders."

"This development, in conjunction with Orion Health, is the foundation for an electronic patient record that will be expanded as further systems are integrated with the Single View portal," they added.

Recent board papers state the portal project team had encountered issues with data quality. These have now been resolved, although a larger trial of the portal has been undertaken than originally planned ahead of the go-live. About 400 doctors have been briefed on the new system.

Following on from the portal implementation, the trust intends to deploy a ward management system in 2012. The system will enable clinicians to record patient notes on the ward, act as a handover tool and produce discharge summaries.

It will also provide a bed management system and include whiteboards on wards and within A&E. The trust is in the final stages of procuring a provider for the system.

The final phase of the trust's EPR plan will involve the trust replacing its current McKesson Totalcare patient administration system.

EHealth Insider reported in September that the trust is understood to have chosen Silverlink Software to supply the new PAS, following a tender process that began last year.

The trust was one of 21 involved in a support deal for McKesson legacy systems, signed between the company and the Department of Health in January 2010, after CSC's roll out of Lorenzo failed to deliver within key timeframes.

Its decision to go with Silverlink makes Northumbria the first McKesson trust to choose an alternative PAS since the company acquired System C and its suite of clinical and administrative software.

The tender document stated that the trust wanted the PAS deployment to begin from 2012 onwards, but board papers say dates need to be defined.

The trust has already implemented an instrument and equipment tracking system and e-radiology reporting for GPs and clinicians.

It has also introduced an automated reminder service to patients about their outpatient appointments, which is expected to save the trust up to £500,000 from preventing missed appointments.

