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associates
and

cloud2

Confer

Don't Refer, Confer

Key Benefits

There are significant benefits for GPs, patients, PCTs, Acute Trusts and the SHA as a whole which include:

- The ability for GPs to access expert advice when they and their patients need it;
- A reduction in the number of inappropriate referrals into secondary care;
- Improving the patients' experience, the right advice, the first time and in the right place ;
- Supporting the Planned Care Closer to Home Agenda;
- Better patient outcomes and improved observation and management of chronic diseases in primary care;
- Quicker treatment pathways for patients, treatment can commence in primary care weeks before an outpatient appointment would have been available;
- More appropriate use of specialist time and reduced interruptions to inpatient work from unscheduled calls and unnecessary referrals
- Improved quality of referral into secondary care where appropriate;
- Improved management of long-term conditions within Primary Care



Background

NHS East of England generated over **1.8 million** GP referrals during 2008/09, resulting in over **1.5 million** new patient attendances. This represents approximately 4,178 referrals per day.

Referrals into just 6 of those specialties: trauma & orthopaedics; cardiology, nephrology, gastroenterology, rheumatology and neurology represents approximately 20% of total referrals and generated over **331,000 new attendances**.

The cost of each of these referrals ranged from **£135 - £385 per appointment**.

Reducing referrals by **20%** across these 6 specialties alone could save the East of England over **£10 million per year**.

Existing NHS initiatives

A similar but more limited concept has been developed and implemented in a number of organisations including NHS City and Hackney who have utilised a referral management centre. This has delivered a 17% reduction in referrals where the specialties have been added to the service catalogue. The service provided for NHS City and Hackney is an 'off-line' service, with limited availability. 'NHS Confer' however will bring together traditional communication tools with web based technologies to expand the availability of services and will facilitate real-time

FACT SHEET

GP to Consultant discussion reduces referrals

conferrals between GPs and Consultants

The introduction of NHS Confer and the associated change management and analysis is designed to:

- Provide an efficient mechanism by which referrals can be avoided;
- Embed this through use of technology and change in practice;
- Quantitatively assess the benefits against robust baseline measures;
- Provide an evidence base and an understanding of the process for introducing NHS Confer more broadly in order to achieve a greater proportion of the potential savings.
HES data

Outpatient referrals have risen by as much as 13% during 2008/09

Many referrals could be avoided if the GP had ready access to expert clinical advice

The Solution

Cloud2 has been engaged to build the software component of NHS Confer.

The Pilot Solution, which will commence roll out in April, will offer:

- Powerful people search, filtered by specialty, trust etc.
- User profiles, Presence
- Instant Messaging, email and voice based conferrals
- Immediate Confer or Confer scheduling with calendar appointments
- Desktop Sharing for review of clinical data
- Buddy list, Star Ratings
- Conferral feedback

The technical solution is a simple to use custom web client which uses Microsoft Office Communications Server and Exchange Server. This is a state of the art technology using the very latest APIs for these technologies. Users are presented with a simple to

Confer
CLOUD2



About Cloud2

Cloud2 are a specialised IT solutions provider operating in the health sector.

We are known for our high quality SharePoint projects and support for clinical applications

About CMA

CMA Associates delivers high-quality support, change management and interim management for the UK's healthcare market.

What Next?

If you would like any further information on the Confer approach or any other services Cloud2 and CMA offer please get in touch.

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understand browser-based interface that allows them to identify a suitable consultant, see whether they are online and available for an immediate conferral or book a conferral at a later time.

This is supported by an embedded instant messaging client, email launcher and the ability to start up a voice call using a conference calling system. Support for VOIP is included.

The majority of GPs etc. have a locked down PC environment and are running IE6 (though support for modern browsers is required). By delivering all the functionality through a browser, there is no requirement to install anything on the client desktop.

The entire system is secure, using NHS standards compliant SSL

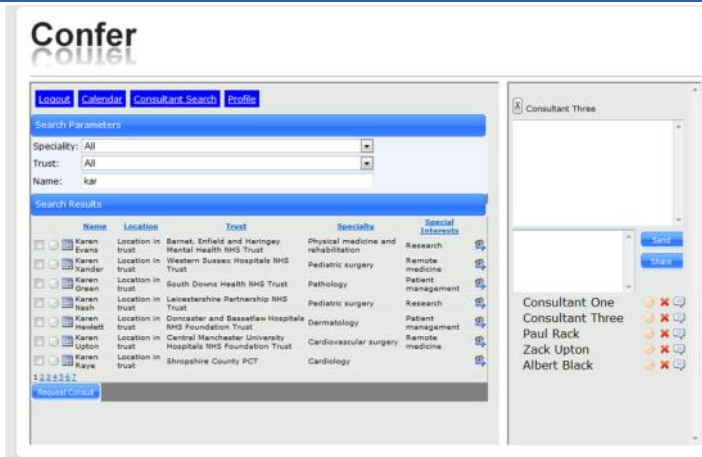
NHS Confer is securely hosted within the NHS N3 network. Development has been supported throughout by Cloud2 partners, POST cti.

CMA Associates—Experts in Healthcare Transformation Management

The success of a project like this requires sophisticated and well-engineered technology; however the way it is rolled out within the NHS organisations is absolutely key to ensuring user adoption and effective use. There is a need for a change in processes and the ability to demonstrate that this change in referral practice is delivering real financial and clinical benefits. The technical aspects of NHS Confer are being driven by strong change management, robust benefits management and engagement of key clinicians and stakeholders. This activity is being driven by CMA Associates Limited.

NHS Confer will be rolled out in a pilot phase lasting from April 2010 to September 2010, across 3 Essex PCTs and their associated Acute Trusts. A successful conclusion will lead to development of a regional implementation. There is also interest at a national level, with a future version expected to integrate with NHS Mail and take advantage of Smartcard login.

A substantive business case supports the economic benefits of adopting NHS Confer in the GP to hospital consultant setting.



Confer Main screen

The future

NHS Confer provides a powerful platform for a range of clinician to clinician scenarios, as well as other communities of interest.

Anywhere that colleagues need to be able to rapidly seek advice, based on expertise, location and organisation; where they need to schedule a call, irrespective of where they are; where they need to securely display content from their systems without transferring it, Confer has an application.

Adoption by other Strategic Health Authorities and health boards, application to specialist networks, such as cardiac networks or extension to different clinical and non-clinical scenarios are all suitable roles for the Confer technology.

Why choose us?

- Through our partnership we bring the best in technology and business change to deliver a complete solution;
- We understand the problems, issues and solutions;
- We only deal with the NHS;
- You can draw on our experience of delivering complex and feature rich solutions across a wide range of NHS organisations.
- Whatever the need, we can analyse it, recommend & build technology solutions, support roll out & adoption and manage the change & benefits realisation required to deliver success.

Next steps

If you want to explore the use of Confer in your setting please talk to us.

A short scoping project is an effective first step; over the course of a few days engagement we will review the current position, make recommendations for action and provide some innovative tools that provide immediate value.