

Brighton & Hove Integrated Care Service

VEDAS Referral Management Application

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sales@dcssoftware.com**Executive Summary**

Following Brighton and Hove Integrated Care Service's (BICS) first year in operation, the not-for-profit organisation had a comprehensive understanding of its core values and recognised the need to implement a tailor-made patient data management system. BICS, created to improve primary care in Brighton and Hove, employed database solutions specialists DCSL Software to work in close partnership to design and build a system that had specific functionality to meet the needs of the organisation and guarantee secure patient data.

This investment has since enabled intelligent data capture across the organisation and continues to ensure patients are referred to the best available care provider within strict SLA timescales.

Background

BICS is a collaborative venture involving the GPs of Brighton and Hove, designed to offer patients in the local area alternative options for care, as well as develop new specialist services within the region and provide a choice of hospitals or care providers where necessary. All outpatient referrals made by local GPs are reviewed by specially trained doctors at BICS to confirm that the referral is going to the most appropriate service or specialist to suit that patient's needs, as well as checking that necessary tests and paperwork have been completed. This ensures that patients are being seen in the right place, by the most appropriate person first time around, together with helping patients make an informed choice about where they want to be seen.

With the coalition government firmly in place, the new plans surrounding reforms within the NHS detailed by the Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, look likely to see GPs taking the reigns of budget and operations in their local region.

The new plan offers great opportunities for BICS to flourish through its existing partnerships with local GPs and their commitment to improving healthcare services for the residents of Brighton and Hove.

Challenge

Previously utilising a system that had been acquired from another NHS organisation along with various disparate spreadsheets, BICS recognised from the outset that a more specialist system would need to be deployed to manage the organisation's expanse of data effectively.

Matthew Riley, Operations Manager at Brighton and Hove Integrated Care Service, comments, "We required a system that could be configured to meet our specific requirements and help improve internal procedures as a result, allowing us to continually track the progress of patients through one system. We recognised that the best approach for our organisation was to go down the tailor-made route rather than off-the-shelf and get exactly what we wanted, as well as have the opportunity to adapt as the organisation continues to evolve."

"The system developed by DCSL Software has enabled us to improve the quality of the service we offer to patients as we are now able to deliver more within shorter timescales."

Selection

Riley adds, "We selected DCSL Software due to their experience in the healthcare sector and their ability to really understand our business requirements. DCSL Software added substantial value in the development stages of our patient management system; Vedas, and presented ideas and integrated additional functionality beyond our expectations."

Solution

For BICS, the implementation of a tailor-made system and the birth of Vedas was business critical; the organisation needed an efficient way to manage the

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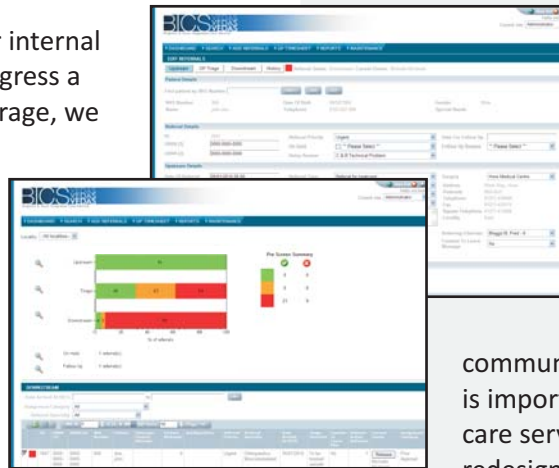
deluge of data and most importantly ensure patient information remained secure at all times. Riley adds, "Vedas has greatly assisted in how we now manage data within our organisation. With the previous system, we were often duplicating data from various applications, which was very time-consuming and impossible to analyse. It is critical to our operation that we are collating the correct data during the patient referral process to ensure we are meeting the needs of those patients in a timely manner, as well as meeting internal operational targets."

Riley continues, "For example, our internal target is to obtain contact and progress a referral within three days. On average, we receive 1,000 referrals per week meaning that patients sit at different stages of the referral and appointment process at any one time. The Vedas system provides an instant overview of a patient's status. Through its colour coded status we can easily identify where each patient is in the referral process, which enables us to progress additional contact with the GP and those that require extra attention as and when necessary."

Riley adds, "The system developed by DCSL Software has enabled us to improve the quality of the service we offer to patients as we are now able to deliver more within shorter timescales." For GPs it can often be difficult to stay abreast of the very latest information about every single symptom and the services available to treat them. The partnership between GPs and BICS offers the people of Brighton and Hove the reassurance that they are being transferred to receive the treatment required in the most appropriate care setting first time.

A fundamental requirement for the Vedas system was the ability to import and export patient information from the NHS Choose & Book system. Choose & Book is a national service that combines electronic booking and a choice of place, date and time for first hospital or clinic

appointments. The local GPs refer those patients that require specialist care or hospital appointments to BICS via the Choose & Book system. BICS then utilises the patient's records and its team of specialists to analyse each referral to ensure the patient is directed to the right service or professionals best placed to help that patient. Riley comments, "The functionality to import data from Choose & Book into Vedas significantly reduces the administrative burden, enabling BICS to add patient records rapidly and make contact with the patient as quickly as possible. Ultimately, we are able to assist patients in making better informed decisions about where to be seen and offering alternatives to lengthy hospital waiting lists if possible."



Riley continues, "We now have a rich data set held in Vedas through the continued collation of patient information and the details of the services/specialists those patients are currently referred to. We are able to hyper-analyse this data and identify where additional

community-based care services are required. It is important to us that we utilise the specialist care services that are already in place as well as redesign services to meet particular

requirements of patients in the local community. In many cases, patients are able to be seen in shorter timeframes rather than having to wait for a hospital appointment and are often seen closer to their home.

Riley adds, "The rapid development of Vedas and the operational benefits the system offers us leaves us in no doubt that the system is critical to our business operations. We are continuing to be supported by DCSL Software to ensure the system runs at all times as we simply cannot afford any downtime."

As a fledgling organisation, the continued partnership with DCSL Software allows BICS to develop Vedas as they grow.

To learn more, please get in touch by phone, email or via our website at www.dcssoftware.com