

NHS Scotland's Right Decision Service built on Tactuum technology

Once-for-Scotland project uses Tactuum's Quris platform to make clinical guidance and policy tools available to clinicians when and where they need them

Clinicians in Scotland have easy access to clinical guidelines and validated decision support tools using the Right Decision Service (RDS), built on technology developed by Tactuum.

The RDS is a once-for-Scotland national project funded by the Scottish Government and run by Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

It supports or hosts clinical guidance and policy intranets, websites and apps developed by health boards and specialist services, using Tactuum's Quris Clinical Companion software.

It also holds a unique suite of UK Conformity Assessed decision support tools developed with InnoScot Health as registered manufacturer.

Dr Ann Wales, programme lead for knowledge and decision support at Healthcare Improvement Scotland, said: "The Scottish Government set an objective for the Right Decision Service to deliver a once-for-Scotland decision support platform: a single place that users could go to for national guidelines, local guidelines, pathways, calculators, risk scoring tools and other types of decision support.

"Now, we have a single platform, with a single website, and a single app. We have a series of controls to ensure the quality of what is being shown to users, while clinicians can pick and choose what is relevant to them.

"It's all about providing quick and easy access to validated guidance with the aim of delivering more standardised, safer care in line with evidence-based practice."

Alongside national advice published by Healthcare Improvement Scotland, NHS boards and partner organisations invest considerable time and effort in developing clinician guidance and decision support tools for their staff. However, these can often be held on paper or on intranets, from where they are hard to maintain and access.

Tactuum's Quris Clinical Companion has been developed to enable NHS health boards and trusts to manage the development, governance and publication of clinical guidance and policies and make tools available to clinicians when and where they need them.

The Quris Clinical Companion offers templates to help governance leads and guideline or policy creators to develop action-focused content, which is exposed to clinicians through a website, their electronic patient record, or an app.

The tools are available offline, so they can be used even when there is no internet access or in an emergency. Tactuum worked closely with clinical experts in the US and Scotland on the technology.

Over a decade, the Scottish Government funded pilots and guideline websites and apps for health boards and national hospital services.

When the Covid-19 pandemic arrived, 25 apps were in use in health and care services across the country, and the decision was made to consolidate them into the RDS single platform, to provide a single, national service and a platform for further development.

Mark Buchner, chief executive of Tactuum, said: “Because we had different deployments of Quris across Scotland, it made sense to integrate them into a single service. It’s exciting to see the RDS in use as a single resource for professionals across the whole country and available to more than 90,000 users.

“Quris has also been able to reduce the number of systems health boards have been using into a single, joined-up collaborative platform. We look forward to working with Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Digital Health and Care Innovation Centre on further innovations that directly impact front-line staff and patient care.

“We also hope the success of Quris and RDS will show other health organisations what can be achieved at a range of scales; from individual clinical departments, to hospital, trust or health board level, right up to integrated care system or national delivery of sharable, linked clinical resources.”

Twelve territorial health boards, six health and social care partnerships, six national NHS boards, three national social care organisations, and ten programmes and networks are delivering tools through the RDS.

Current developments for Quris and RDS include the integration of decision support into electronic health record systems and the use of AI to speed up guideline development, management and measurement of impact.

ENDS

About Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Healthcare Improvement Scotland’s statutory role is to help improve the quality of health and care, provide information to the public about the quality of health and care services, monitor public involvement, and to evaluate and provide advice on the clinical and cost-effectiveness of medicines and health technologies.

About Tactuum:

Tactuum is a collaborative and progressive IT partner for organisations that want to deliver large-scale, complex digital projects to improve health and care, with offices in Glasgow, Inverness, London, Seattle and Toronto. Its Quris platform supports the development of guidelines and resources and puts them into the hands of those who need them.

The Quris Clinical Companion can lead to a 64% improvement in the use of clinical guidelines, pathways and protocols, and a 35% reduction in the time and effort that clinicians spend locating those resources. Tactuum has also developed a Quris Patient Companion to support the development and use of self-management, referral, triage, and rehabilitation tools.