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West Yorkshire and Harrogate hospitals share test results using Clinisys ICE OpenNet

Clinicians across five NHS trusts can now see pathology and other diagnostic test results from across the region, using the familiar ICE button

Clinicians working at five of the six trusts in the West Yorkshire Association of Acute Trusts (WYAAT) can access test results from across their pathology network, following a summer roll-out of Clinisys' ICE OpenNet.

Clinisys ICE is an order communications and results reporting system that is used extensively in NHS hospitals and GP practices. ICE OpenNet is a web-based application that enables clinicians using one instance of ICE to see pathology and other test results in another instance of ICE.

Across WYAAT it has been used to link the ICE systems used by Airedale, Bradford Teaching Hospitals, Calderdale and Huddersfield, Harrogate and District, Leeds Teaching Hospitals, and Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS trusts.

This means consultants, nurses, and other clinicians can see results from across the network: avoiding unnecessary repeat testing, saving print costs and time-consuming calls, and supporting better-informed patient diagnosis and treatment decisions. The final trust, Airedale, is expected to go-live this winter.

Janine Bontoft, LIMS implementation manager at WYAAT, said: "The priority for any pathology network is to work as a network and to share information for the benefit of clinicians and patients.

"We have been rolling out a single laboratory information management system (LIMS) from Clinisys, which supports standardised ways of working and information sharing for pathologists. However, the LIMS doesn't share results with clinicians. ICE does that, and ICE OpenNet is a cost-effective way to make results available to more clinicians, so they can support patients across the network.

"Many technology projects struggle because they require a lot of change management. With ICE OpenNet, nothing changes. People press the same button, but instead of seeing results from just their trust, they see results from across the network."

WYAAT's non-surgical oncology service (NSO) has embraced ICE OpenNet within their way of working. "NSO clinicians frequently need to share patient data between two separate cancer centres based in Bradford and Leeds," Bontoft explained.

"The new system enables the instant sharing of patient information, without the cost and waste of printing and posting, allowing for a smooth transition in patient diagnosis and care across the two centres."

Other NHS pathology services already use ICE OpenNet connections to enable clinicians working at one hospital to see tests results from another, or to share information with a local specialist centre.

However, the WYAAT roll-out is one of the biggest in the country, with each instance of ICE being connected to five others across six trusts that employ 50,000 staff and order over 50 million tests per year.

It has also been deployed in a complex IT environment, with each of the trusts having a different electronic patient record system. Integrating EPRs can be notoriously complex, but ICE OpenNet makes it relatively straightforward to link one instance of ICE to another, even if trusts are using different versions of the system.

Bontoft said: “This is something that all pathology networks would benefit from, not only to share data, but to ensure it is available safely and effectively when clinicians and patients need it.

“We have also been thinking about business continuity. If one of our laboratories needs to transfer work to another, it is much easier to make that happen if these connections are in place, because clinicians can access the results as normal.”

Simon Davies, project manager, Clinisys, said: “Many hospitals and GP surgeries would be unable to function without ICE, and ICE OpenNet means they can see more pathology and other test results in the same, familiar, view.

“That is a huge benefit to health services because, at the moment, results to support referrals from one site to another have to be sent by email or paper and may not be safe or efficient. Or patients may visit a different emergency department, where their tests have to be repeated.

“With an ICE OpenNet link in place, all their results are available, online, 24/7; wherever they were ordered or conducted.”

With the roll-out across WYAAT almost complete, the pathology network is looking at how it can share results with neighbouring primary and community organisations and with the local shared care record, which includes data from a wider range of trust, GP, and local authority systems.

Davies said: “This is another benefit of ICE OpenNet. Every trust in the NHS has links with organisations outside its region, and they can use ICE OpenNet to communicate with their ICEs. It’s a simple and effective way to achieve the NHS’ ambition to get data to flow around the system.”

ENDS

About Clinisys
Clinisys enables healthier and safer communities as a global provider of intelligent diagnostic informatics solutions and expertise that redefine the modern laboratory across healthcare, life sciences, public health and safety. Millions of laboratory results and data insights are generated every day using Clinisys’ platform and cloud-based solutions in over 3,000 laboratories across 34 countries.

About WYAAT

WYAAT is an innovative provider collaborative that brings together six trusts Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust. The six hospital trusts work together through WYAAT because they believe that the health and care challenges and opportunities facing West Yorkshire and Harrogate cannot be solved by each hospital working alone. By working together as a partnership of hospital trusts, WYAAT is helping to address health inequalities for the 2.7 million people who live across West Yorkshire and Harrogate, so that all patients can receive the same high level of care, no matter where they live.