

NHS Calderdale CCG achieves patient safety and cost saving benefits with FDB OptimiseRx



NHS Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) covers 25 GP practices and has a registered population of more than 213,000 patients.

OptimiseRx is now the UK's leading medicines optimisation solution for primary care. OptimiseRx is the only solution that delivers patient-specific prescribing information, integrated with prescribing workflows, supporting medicines optimisation at the point of care.

Background

The Medicines Management team at NHS Calderdale CCG were keen to share important clinical safety messages with their GPs and prescribers (such as information on red and amber drugs) while at the same time realising cost savings across prescribing. They identified a need to upgrade from their previous point of prescribing software, which triggered too many non-patient specific alerts for clinicians and were more likely to be rejected for that reason.

The team was looking for a solution that provided patient specific alerts and that was integrated into the primary care clinical systems used across the CCG. The team set about comparing other solutions in the market creating a spreadsheet of functionality and benefits.

Nicola Booth and Rachel Bastow are part of the Medicines Management team at NHS Calderdale CCG with the lead for OptimiseRx. Rachel explains: **"The product comparison was a really useful exercise for us, and OptimiseRx was a clear winner for a number of reasons.**

Firstly, the solution offers patient specific alerts, something that was really important for our GPs, as our old system gave

too many alerts. OptimiseRx also offered integration into primary care clinical systems such as SystmOne and EMIS, which was another key factor in our choosing OptimiseRx."

The CCG involved their governing body GPs in the approval process, and once they had decided on OptimiseRx, set up an initial trial for six of their 26 GP practices.

Successful trial deployment

Once the CCG had made the decision to trial OptimiseRx, they set about working with the expert team at FDB. A decision was made to set up the trial which would involve six practices (five of which were the Calderdale CCG Governing Body) with users on TPP's SystmOne and EMIS clinical systems.

Rachel explains: "We were really keen to ensure that our GPs were aware that OptimiseRx was not like our previous solution, so we kept the first trial as a very basic look at the system and turned off some messages in order to get GPs' buy in.

We wanted to keep the messages really relevant, so they aligned with our Action Plan messages – i.e. those that provided a good clinical reason to prescribe and / or those that saved a lot of money. We also set up messages that the GPs were able to see unit cost savings quickly and easily."

"It was absolutely vital for us to have a system which would not 'over alert'. The GPs had become frustrated with the last system, so we were keen to communicate that OptimiseRx had many more benefits. We spent some time and effort communicating with end users and I'd highly recommend this approach for other CCGs going forward."

NICOLA BOOTH *Medicines Management team, NHS Calderdale CCG*



“We regularly report to the Medicines Advisory Group, who really value the OptimiseRx safety messages.”

RACHEL BASTOW *Medicines Management team, NHS Calderdale CCG*

To ease transition to a new system, and focus on maximum adoption and acceptance, the team limited the number of messages for the trial to 100, although the solution holds significantly more.

This enabled the team to monitor acceptance and rejection rates and understand the needs of the clinicians to improve system usage.

The trial period was very successful. Rachel explains: “Getting buy in from our GPs in the trial was absolutely key to the success of the project. One of our clinicians had initially said that their intention was to dislike the system, so we were up against it! However, feedback from the trial was excellent.”

Nicola says: “The feedback from the clinicians was that they love OptimiseRx. **They were particularly impressed with the safety element of the solution, while of course the CCG likes the cost savings!** Our objective of the trial was to demonstrate the quality aspect, improve compliance with the Medicines Management Action Plan and show how easy implementation could be and we really achieved this.”

Engaging with clinicians

During the full deployment of OptimiseRx across the rest of the CCG, the Medicines Management team worked hard on communicating to their GP surgeries.

Rachel explains: “Our Medicines Management Lead was very proactive about emailing out information that could be shared with clinicians and practice managers, and would email them directly which was an important channel.

We took every opportunity to share information with clinicians and practice managers. We carried out webinars and ensured

that CCG representation was there each time, so that Nicola or I would be able to answer any questions. We also had a lot of help from our FDB Account Manager, Ben Welford – who was very accessible throughout the process and sent out his details out with all the emails.”

Clinical safety

Nicola says: “Clinical safety is vitally important for our CCG and OptimiseRx has been excellent for supporting this agenda. For example, the combination of Trimethoprim and Methotrexate can be fatal when prescribed together. This prescribing combination has been prevented 24 times across the CCG since the implementation of OptimiseRx – which is incredible and something you cannot put a figure to.”

Quick and easy to update messages

Nicola adds: “We also love the instant nature of turning OptimiseRx messages on or off. We recently had to do this for an item that went out of stock, and it was a simple case of getting off the phone with the person reporting the issue and amending it within the system – it’s so easy and this is absolutely vital for us.

As a Medicines Management team, we really need know what messages are live and that they are relevant for practices and prescribers, and this is something we can easily do within OptimiseRx.”

Rachel concludes: “We have invested time and effort in this project and it is an ongoing piece of work to ensure that we make the most of the solution, however we have gained such amazing results – both clinical and cost savings – with OptimiseRx, that it is completely worth it.”



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