

Digital transformation of dermatology outpatient care

Background

Social distancing, self-isolation and the reduced availability of staff presented by the realities of the pandemic brought about significant challenges to the Dermatology Outpatients Department at Basildon University Hospital, part of Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust. Before the pandemic, the service was already under pressure with over 200 two-week-wait (2WW) referrals per week.

Open Medical and Basildon University Hospital worked together to adapt the department's use of the Pathpoint™ eDerma software, a smart triage and teledermatology technology, to deal with the growing backlog of patients awaiting treatment while reducing any unnecessary appointments for face to face clinics.

Challenges

- ✓ Manage an increasing number of dermatology referrals into the unit, while dealing with a significant backlog of patients who have had their treatment delayed
- ✓ Governing and auditing of virtual referrals and assessment of skin lesions, including secure clinical images transfer
- ✓ Improve efficiency while reducing face to face clinic attendances, to minimise the risk of covid-19 infection
- ✓ Reduce the patient journey from referral to treatment while maximising clinical utility
- ✓ Manage outcomes and next steps for a large volume of patients who have not been required to attend face to face clinic appointments
- ✓ Patient recorded images for triage directly on the eDerma system

Solution

Open Medical's **Pathpoint™ eDerma** digital solution provided the following benefits:

- ✓ **Complete patient pathway captured digitally:** referral, assessment, biopsy booking and procedure, MDT, clinic booking, discharge, and any subsequent pathway
- ✓ Outpatient referrals are efficiently and **remotely triaged** utilising smartphone or tablet devices, placing patients into the appropriate pathways immediately at the point of triage
- ✓ **Referral and procedure lists managed digitally** to allow clinical prioritisation and overview of patients by department-defined metrics



eDerma has removed the barriers to care that patients referred to dermatology used to experience. We now benefit from a joined up model through this easy to use digital platform. High quality images combined within an accessible workflow system have made huge efficiency savings.

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- ✓ Reduced need for in-person consultation, with **virtual communication tools** utilised to allow remote pre-attendance assessment and post-attendance review;
- ✓ **Remote monitoring** of outpatients to easily track all biopsies or procedures delivered, without requiring further follow-up appointments;
- ✓ Improved support for **self-management with patient-initiated follow-up**;
- ✓ COVID shut down the face to face clinics across the country - eDerma allowed patients to send in photos from their own smartphone for Consultant review
- ✓ Clinics are shifted out of the hospital and into community settings making use of a full dermatology service accessible on the ipads with the nurses travelling to satellite sites to make use of the space
- ✓ A **secure and centralised platform** for dermatology service coordination, compliant with NHS Digital and Information Governance criteria

Results

- ✓ Reduced patient attendance to the hospital pre and during COVID
- ✓ Cost savings achieved within the department by utilising trained clinical nursing staff to complete the referral and provide the remote imaging, reallocating consultant time accordingly
- ✓ Allowed 2366 patients be reviewed from home with patient provided images during the pandemic
- ✓ Increased patient satisfaction and reduced waiting list for the department during COVID
- ✓ More than a thousand patients a month reviewed virtually on the eDerma platform
- ✓ 30% percent of 2WW patient discharged with dermoscopic images

