

FlowStudy

CURING PROCESS PAIN POINTS IN HEALTHCARE

A large Irish hospital accelerates its focus on patient-centric care by taking paperwork out of processes using the FlowForma Process Automation tool, to meet clinician needs.

FlowStudy Summary

Processes:

- HR Processes
- Theatre Notes
- Waiting Lists

Pain Points:

- Excessive paper-based processes
- Legacy systems too expensive to change
- Inefficient use of clinician time
- Lack of buy-in on IT projects

Benefits:

- More efficient clinician-focussed processes
- Buy-in from healthcare teams
- Putting patient care at the centre of processes
- Reduced paperwork
- Efficiencies enable management to do more with less

Next Steps:

- The hospital continues to use FlowForma Process Automation to replace paper-based processes and advance the hospital's digital transformation journey.

The Challenge

An iconic institution in Ireland's healthcare system, home to pioneering treatments and a progressive approach to patient care. With 4,000 staff and 820 beds, it's on the frontline of services, providing emergency and acute care services across 54 medical specialities.

Like many state-funded hospitals, the challenge is maintaining the highest standards of clinical care within financial constraints. For the Director of ICT, the goal is to better enable 'white coats' – clinicians, nurses, doctors – and help them do their jobs more efficiently. A crucial part of this is replacing inefficient paper-based processes. Forms generated at the point of patient care in one part of the hospital, need to be accessed by administration in another. Like any manual process there is the risk of errors or paper getting lost.

"You have better outcomes when clinicians have access to digital data and are not running around looking for bits of paper to treat patients. That's our driver," said the Director of ICT. "In the next 10 years we'll be looking to digitize as much as we can."

Passionate about digital transformation but restricted by funding, he has to find ways to work around ageing IT systems

that are too expensive to replace. FlowForma Process Automation was a perfect fit for what he needed, a way to integrate new digital processes into legacy systems.

The Solution

The IT team has found a way to digitize processes and improve patient care, by using the FlowForma Process Automation tool to span multiple IT systems. Sitting on the hospital's Microsoft SharePoint platform – already used extensively by administrators and clinical staff – it has been instrumental in facilitating new ways of working.

FlowForma Process Automation has been all about 'doing more with less', using the no-code application to speed up processes without having to invest in complex system upgrades. A by-product of the new workflows is clinicians being able to access clinical data, in as close to real time as possible within the current architectural constraints.

No system or process gets approved without the sponsorship and support of users. In the past, IT staff would come up with an idea and develop something that wouldn't get used. Now, a small team of FlowForma Process Automation trained staff who know the business intimately, are

responsible for developing the flows.

The Director of ICT has enough experience of IT projects to know that 'buy-in' from stakeholders is key, in this case the doctors and nurses that use the FlowForma Process Automation tool every day. With this in mind, the IT department hosts monthly meetings with healthcare teams and listen to their needs. They return a month later with an idea for a solution. "We build systems based on what they tell us, not on what we think they need," he said.

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The business side of the hospital is also kept in the loop because processes have to span the front and back office of the hospital, mirroring patient journeys. To date, numerous forms have been launched across 14 different IT systems, ranging from clinical flows at the point of patient contact to around 20 back office forms for HR.

FlowForma Process Automation's integration into existing systems was designed to be as seamless as possible. Doctors now have the option of an eForm button on their screen that automatically launches five types of forms, including Waiting Lists, which provides patient referral details in advance of their admission, and Theatre Notes, filled in by doctors immediately after surgery. All the forms start with fields pre-populated with patient details, brought in from other systems.

The Outcome

The hospital has taken significant steps on its mission to digitize processes that allow clinicians to focus more on patient care. The Director of ICT has used the FlowForma Process Automation tool to simplify form-filling around recurring medical tasks, bringing a new efficiency that is widely appreciated by healthcare staff, particularly those on the frontline.

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Director of ICT

The electronic forms are easier for clinician to fill out, freeing them up to spend more time with patients. The Director of ICT praises FlowForma Process Automation for ease of use, for "simple interaction" and being "crisp and attractive" in its design. "It has to be a great user experience," he said.

The time saved and efficiencies gained have been

enormous. The Waiting List process takes around 30 seconds for the doctor to fill it in and send to admissions – no more cards or paper trails – with a PDF summary sheet stored digitally against the patient's record.

Theatre Notes is used for filling in procedure details, such as the name of surgeon, assistant, and anaesthetist, along with the theatre where it took place and details of the operation. By the time the patient returns to the ward all the information has been forwarded to the nurses who know exactly what needs to be done. "The whole process typically takes around two minutes with a PDF made available in the document repository," said the Director of ICT.

FlowForma Process Automation's low-code development has given the hospital a more agile way of doing things, traversing legacy systems and replacing manual processes in the service of patient care. "There is a huge amount of paper in every hospital and electronic processes won't replace everything in the short term, but we're chipping away at it," said the Director of ICT. The results have often been spectacular. Just by bringing letters online, FlowForma Process Automation has saved 905,000 sheets of paper and €279,000.

He talks in terms of a 10-year digitization process of incremental improvement, not just replacement. "You don't put new IT on top of bad process; you want to change the process at the same time. It's been really positive and we've had lots of positive feedback from doctors," said the Director of ICT. "We know it's something that's used and that it will make a difference."

About FlowForma

FlowForma, the leading provider of Process Automation tools for Microsoft Office 365[®] has been revolutionizing the traditional BPM space with an innovative approach to developing award winning products that empower users to create and streamline processes smarter and faster, utilizing the familiar SharePoint platform, without any coding.

FlowForma is a Gold Microsoft Partner, with over 150,000 users across America, Europe and Asia. The company is headquartered in Dublin with offices in London and Boston and is motivated by its values to innovate, evolve and achieve with employees, customers and partners.

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