Summary

CUSTOMER

eConsult

CHALLENGE

To make eConsult data usable across the NHS

OUTCOME

Improved experience for clinicians and reduced waiting times for patients

eConsult + InterSystems

eConsult Transforms NHS Triage with InterSystems IRIS for Health

The partnership between InterSystems and eConsult, the leading mobile consultation platform in the UK's National Health Service (NHS), is improving the delivery and efficiency of primary, emergency, and outpatient care.

As mobile innovations continue to drive a digital revolution within healthcare, digital triage, in particular, is taking off.

Digital triage helps healthcare providers scale their services and respond to patient demand in a data-informed manner. Using automation technology to solicit information from patients (e.g., reason for visit, symptoms), digital triage optimizes how patients are directed to care settings, assigning provider resources in ways that are cost-effective and supporting better healthcare experiences.

Since its founding in 2013, eConsult has become a leader in the space. The company's safe, effective digital triage solutions enable providers to deliver care at scale. eConsult currently powers triage for over 3,200 general practices in the NHS, which serves 28 million patients. According to Ernst & Young, the NHS could provide an additional 1,000 appointments per month per general practitioner (GP) practice and reduce the missed appointments per GP by 60 percent through the use of eConsult's solutions.[1]

An independent study at Queen Mary's Hospital Urgent Care Centre found that eConsult drastically reduced total waiting times: More than 99% of Queen Mary's visitors underwent initial assessment within just 15 minutes.

[1] "Potential Benefit of eConsult to the NHS: Summary Analysis," Ernst & Young. 8 September 2022.

InterSystems™
IRIS for Health

Filling the Interoperability Gap

But to truly unlock its value potential for the NHS, eConsult faced the challenge of making its data available and usable across a complex health system. For that to happen, eConsult needed to integrate its patient data with NHS health records and patient management systems.

Among the benefits of making data interoperable was providing a holistic, comprehensive picture of the patient journey throughout the NHS, one informed by various touch points over time. But first, eConsult had to access advanced data management capabilities. That's where InterSystems came in.

Previously, eConsult attempted to fill the data interoperability gap themselves, only to find the challenge incredibly difficult. "While our engineers are good at this," said Dr. Mark Harmon, eConsult's Chief Strategy and Brand Officer, "it is not our expertise."

InterSystems track record on healthcare data management made it an ideal partner for achieving full data interoperability and integration. "Our expertise is in clinical triage and the patient journey," Dr. Harmon said, "which is why our relationship with InterSystems is so important. It enables us to integrate with all patient record systems."

InterSystems IRIS for Health™ is a comprehensive data management platform, built to clean and prepare health data at scale. It is engineered to facilitate the seamless integration of proprietary data with pre-existing clinical data, supporting data standards such as HL7 V2 and Fast Health Interoperability Standards (FHIR®).

In this case, InterSystems flexible deployment options allow it to integrate fully with eConsult's database in the cloud. Using the capabilities of InterSystems IRIS for Health, eConsult validates patients against the NHS Spine system, which allows data to be shared securely between 23,000 healthcare IT systems across 20,500 providers. The result: eConsult data flows among NHS providers usably and accessibly, allowing eConsult to better serve a range of health systems.

The financial benefit to the NHS of adopting eConsult is currently estimated at £1.0 billion to £1.6 billion yearly. If eConsult were adopted more widely, an additional £1.0 billion yearly benefit could be realized.[2]

"We know InterSystems will play a critical role in helping us to become an integrated triage platform," Dr. Harmon said. "Their extensive expertise means that we can move data between or within integrated care systems and trusts to inform commissioning decisions and, in turn, improve patient and clinical outcomes."

"THEIR EXTENSIVE EXPERTISE MEANS THAT WE CAN MOVE DATA BETWEEN OR WITHIN INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS AND TRUSTS TO INFORM COMMISSIONING DECISIONS AND, IN TURN, IMPROVE PATIENT AND CLINICAL OUTCOMES."

Mark Harmon MD, eConsult, Chief Strategy and Brand Officer

2 "Potential Benefit of eConsult to the NHS: Summary Analysis," Ernst & Young. 8 September 2022.

Looking to the Future

Both triage and data interoperability can make processes more effective in achieving objectives. And for both, the key is data.

"Data is becoming a really interesting component of our strategic thinking going forward, so the InterSystems relationship is critical to that," Dr. Harmon said. "Our strategic aim is to have a digital ecosystem of triage, moving patients seamlessly between systems, so clinicians can see patients by clinical need at the right time, in the right place. Intelligent triage will quickly highlight, for example, if back pain is a symptom of cancer and enable routing into a [two-week wait] pathway or refer A&E patients to more appropriate care provided by their GP."

Looking ahead, eConsult has big plans: The company intends to partner with the NHS to share data for research. To assess patients even more accurately, eConsult is exploring ways to capture vital signs and patient history during triage. It's looking into ways of integrating diagnostic testing after triage with other clinical decision-support tools. More long-term, eConsult has a vision to support the development of preventive medicine through the examination of trends, bio-markers, genomics, and propensity-to-disease data.

According to Dr. Harmon, eConsult's partnership with InterSystems is supporting its future direction and its most important measure of success: healthy patients. "Thanks to our partnership with InterSystems, the potential for data is hugely exciting, and has the potential not only to fuel research, but also improve the all-important patient outcomes as well."

Learn More

To learn more about InterSystems IRIS for Health, visit **InterSystems. com/intersystems-iris-for-health**. For more about our role and offerings in healthcare, visit **InterSystems.com/healthcare**.