

Industry view

Intelligent systems cut costs

Ensuring back office systems are accurate and up to speed is helping the NHS to reduce costs but not quality

It is widely known that the NHS needs to find up to £20bn of efficiency savings by 2014 just to stand still but how many people fully understand why these savings are so important? We have an ageing population and providing for the future care needs of our people represents an immense challenge. The UK population is predicted to rise to 71.6m by 2033, an increase of 17 per cent over the next 20 years, while the number of people aged 85 will reach 3.3m.

The solution is to drive efficiency in all areas of the NHS, maximising use of financial and human resources, and moving the delivery of care out of hospital into the community and nearer to the home. Delivering care in the community is not only in line with patient preference but is more cost-effective than traditional institutionalised care. Wider use of information technology is the key to meeting these objectives and Advanced Computer Software Group is central to that agenda.

Advanced is a leading provider of back office and management information systems to the NHS including out-of-hospital solutions. Supporting both health and social care providers in the community, Advanced has IT solutions targeted specifically to help the NHS meet its prime objectives of reducing spending, increasing safety and improving the patient experience and outcomes for all. Solutions can also be deployed efficiently and safely via the Advanced Application Cloud to reduce the cost of managing essential IT functions.

Doing more with less

The key is to understand the requirements of commissioners responsible for purchasing care, and of the providers responsible for

delivering that care. Their focus is improved efficiency and the ability to deliver effective outcomes for care that will be increasingly delivered in the community setting. To achieve this, both commissioners and care providers require better information about patient needs and the resources available to serve them. This is where Advanced is helping the local NHS.

In 2010, NHS Wakefield District invested in a business intelligence solution from Advanced. One of NHS Wakefield District's biggest IT investments to date, the solution provides valuable insight into how the primary care trust (PCT) is performing in relation to the health needs of its population. Health in the Wakefield District is generally poorer than other parts of England, which provides the PCT with considerable challenges and a requirement to measure needs and performance accurately. Since implementation, thousands of pounds of savings for NHS Wakefield District have been realised through improved operational efficiencies and more streamlined procurement.

In addition to business analysis and measurement tools, Advanced can provide the business systems required to support the NHS back office function and has supplied multiple NHS customers with Advanced Financials. These systems underpin efficient delivery of finance, procurement and HR functions and proven savings of £5.2m have been realised at the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, while the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation has realised savings of £500,000 as a result of their effective deployment.

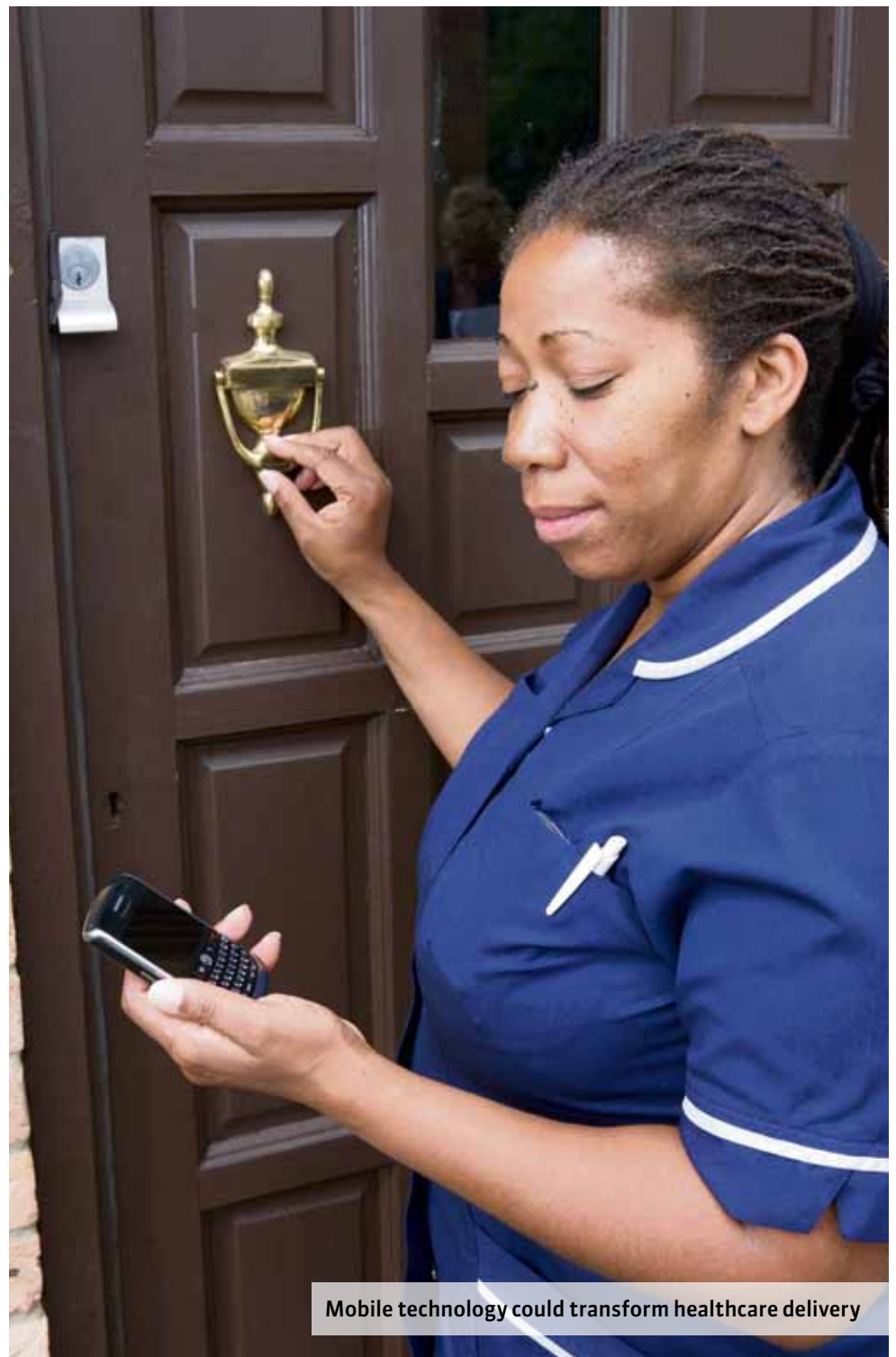
Going mobile

Most of us have come to depend on and expect mobile technology as part of our day-to-day lives but within the NHS it is surprisingly underutilised. Advanced believes that mobile working and mobile technology generally have the potential to deliver transformational benefits for health.

Mobile solutions are undeniably a means to gain substantial efficiency savings. They also provide good quality and essential clinical data at the point-of-care, enhancing patient safety by making key information available to clinicians and removing the need for confidential health records to be carried in paper form.

Advanced mobile solutions deliver core patient data securely and accurately via a variety of mobile solutions. This data capture can be configured to include access to the national Summary Care Record and may include end-of-life preferences.

Advanced recognises the need to provide solutions appropriate to the nature of the service being delivered and offers mobile solutions on laptops, smartphones, mobile phones, tablet PCs and digital pens, which can all be integrated with national clinical systems. Moving to mobile working will allow clinicians



Mobile technology could transform healthcare delivery



All at the touch of screen

to deliver more and better quality care by eliminating the time they currently spend performing lengthy administration functions and reducing travelling costs and time.

Adding capacity

iNurse, one of Advanced's clinical mobile devices, is a patient management system that enables community nursing teams to record and communicate patient care data using handheld mobile devices. iNurse is proven to save each nurse a minimum of one hour per working day. For example, if the product was used by a team of 300 nurses, saving only half an hour per day, the results would be the equivalent of adding 18.7 full-time nurses per year at a salary cost of over £748,000. More importantly, this would translate into an additional 28,500 patient visits per year. With this kind of return on investment there is arguably no reason for a health provider not to embrace technology and, specifically, mobile technology as a way to drive down costs

and improve patient care.

A similar mobile product from Advanced for the social care market is iConnect, an intuitive and revolutionary point-of-care solution designed specifically for providers delivering home care, extra care and supported living. This product frequently results in efficiency savings of over 20 per cent. If all 111,700 local authority care workers achieved a 20 per cent efficiency gain, an extra 34.4m visits per year could be delivered. If all private providers followed suit then a further £112m of savings for local authorities could be delivered.

Ultimately the task of the restructured NHS will be to reduce costs while protecting the frontline to deliver the best possible patient-centred care. The Advanced approach is to work with all providers and the widest range of technology partners to deliver robust, innovative solutions to help the NHS in delivering its objectives.

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