



CASE STUDY:

Mobile Clinical Photography Increasing Contactless Patient Care

The Challenge

COVID-19 is a new challenge – critically unwell patients, with a long disease course, requiring cross-specialty working and collaboration, compounded by difficulties in communication between isolated areas.

Without access to a full electronic patient record, Leicester's Hospitals immediate realisation was that communication from within the isolation area and access to quarantined patient notes would be a challenge. So new ways of working were rapidly needed.

Already a long-term Nervecentre Customer and currently implementing the Nervecentre Next Generation EPR, Leicester's Hospitals approached Nervecentre to look at ways of working which would reduce patient contact whilst also

ensuring quality of patient care was not jeopardised. One of the initiatives was the expanded use of Nervecentre Clinical Photography.

The Solution

With nurses and doctors carrying a mobile device, smart-phones revolutionise how clinical photography is used in hospitals. Originally the use of Nervecentre Clinical Photography, which fully integrates the photos directly into the patients record, was mainly for areas such as: reviewing pressure ulcers, wound management, tissue viability etc. But clinical teams at Leicester's Hospitals quickly realised that there was now a way to use clinical photography to spend less time in COVID-19 areas without compromising on patient safety and care.

The mobile clinical photography solution from Nervecentre only allows photos to be captured within the patient record and then securely stores them immediately after they have been taken. The photos are efficiently organised and categorised in an intuitive photo library on the chosen patient’s record. The mobile software is completely secure and compliant with clinical and information governance.

After some preliminary consultation work and working through governance procedures, the usage of clinical photography was expanded for use in the challenging COVID-19 hospital environment.

Dr Christopher Hebbes, Consultant in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care Medicine, Leicester Royal Infirmary explains:

“The clinical photography function allows images to be communicated out of the isolation area – our paper documents are accessible for remote review – for example by a supervising consultant and by dietetics, microbiology, pharmacy, relative communication and data analysis teams. Remote reviews can be communicated back via Nervecentre, fully audited with journaling. We have been using clinical photography to record images of surgical wounds, which have contributed to review by specialist colleagues, to minimise their exposure, and allow for a targeted patient assessment when in PPE.”

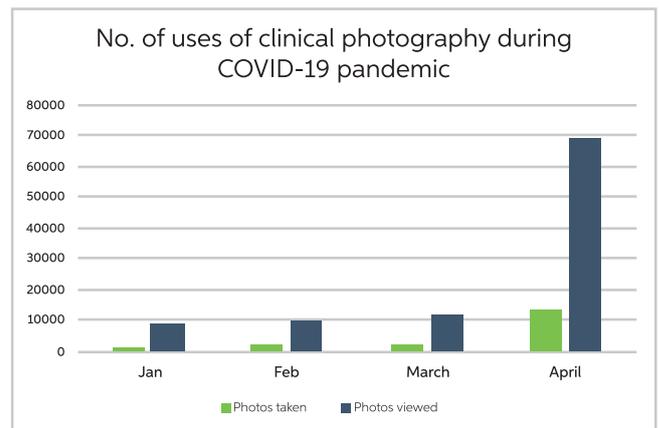
There were many other specialist users of clinical photography, including aiding the pharmacy team. Feedback from the pharmacy team found the functionality very useful to use in conjunction with face to face visits. Photography of drug charts and notes allowed the pharmacy team to prepare properly prior to a bedside visit in a red zone, improving their confidence when attending in person. It provided the space and opportunity to discuss new and challenging concepts with the permanent team outside of the clinical area. The pharmacy team felt that this improved their efficiency, and reduced the time needing to be spent in COVID zones, especially with the added complexity of working in full PPE.

As a large three site hospital Trust, a key use of Nervecentre Clinical Photography was for the management of cardiac/ respiratory patients at Leicester Royal Infirmary ED Department. By using mobile clinical photography to take pictures of the ECG paper readings, the clinical staff could quickly send the results to cardiac specialists at Glenfield Hospital site with the reassurance that the photos were stored within the patient record.

The Outcome

Clinicians at Leicester’s Hospitals are now viewing up to 2,000 Clinical Photographs, a day which is potentially 2,000 patient contact points, reducing the risk of infection spreading, the use of PPE whilst saving time and speeding up decision making.

In March 2020, before the expanded use of clinical photography on mobile devices, staff members took 1900 photos. Then during April, when the additional uses were identified, over 13,000 photos were taken and instantly stored in the patients record. Of those photos taken they were viewed over 70,000 times by staff members.



“Clinical Photography encouraged and transformed our way of working as a multidisciplinary team as the pharmacy team was enabled to check drug charts from the ‘hot areas’ without being physically present”.

Clinical Facilitators Team