

Reducing patient falls and minimising the impact when an incident occurs.

Patient Monitoring Technology



Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust (SRFT) were looking for a solution that would help reduce incidents of patient falls, serious incidents and the cost of providing one-to-one nursing care for high-risk patients.

The challenge

Maintaining patient safety on a busy ward is a constant challenge. As the pattern of admissions cannot be predicted, work to support patients vulnerable to falls is often undertaken by agency/bank staff to deliver one-to-one patient care.

This level of care incurs a high level of spend and Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust (SRFT) were keen to explore technology options that could help reduce their staffing costs, whilst maintaining patient safety.

Prior to project initiation, SRFT Emergency Admissions Unit (EAU) was spending up to £18,000 a month (£216,000 per annum) on one-to-one nursing care for patients assessed as a high risk of falls.

The solution

NHS SBS undertook a tender to identify aids that would help reduce the number of incidents and minimise the impact when an incident occurs.

The Trust adopted a fall prevention system which integrates with the nurse's paging system and monitors the patient's movement to alert staff to the potential of a fall, before the patient is in danger.

Understanding the benefits that could be realised from the use of this technology, NHS SBS placed the technology free of charge within the Trust, on the provision that the Trust committed to procure consumables (accessories per patient that enable patient movement monitoring), totalling less than £500 per machine, per annum.

To ensure maximum benefit to EAU, which was used as the

Key points

- Client:** Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
- Project:** Patient Monitoring Technology
- Timeframe:** February 2015 - February 2016
- Result:** Annual saving of £161,000.
Potential to save £1 million per annum on agency staffing costs.
Reduced reliance on agency/bank staff to deliver one-to-one patient care.
Increased patient safety - no reported incidents of patient harm during piloting.
Improved staff morale - 80% of staff feel the technology makes their job easier.
Clear demonstration of commitment to patient safety, delivering Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) and Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) targets.

pilot ward, testing was carried out and product and packaging modifications were suggested to better fit the Trust's protocols.

The NHS SBS framework supplier, Approach Medical, used this feedback to make the required changes to meet the Trust's individual requirements.

The result

Since the pilot project in EAU, the technology has been adopted in five units using ninety machines, with an intention to roll-out further across the entire Trust. Annual Trust spend on technology accessories will be £45,000 based on an annual the commitment to spend £500 per machine.

In the first six months of the project Trust spend was halved, and by the end of 2015, the use of over one hundred agency staff was eliminated and no reportable incident occurring.

The reduction in the number of patient falls using this technology provides the Trust with an opportunity to save £1 million per annum of agency staffing costs.

Following the success of the pilot, SRFT surveyed nursing staff to gather feedback on the technology and training provided:

- 96% stated the technology was easy to use, commenting how a simple idea had improved the patient experience
- 80% responded that the technology made their daily work much easier
- All staff responded that they would be happy to use the technology again
- 99% of staff would recommend the technology to others.

With a focus on reducing the costs incurred by trusts on agency staffing, the project has demonstrated huge savings from a minimal outlay, while increasing patient safety and freeing nursing time to focus on patient care.