

Case study



Charing Cross Hospital Taking interactive technology to heart

Charing Cross Hospital is a specialist hospital in West London acting as a 'trauma centre' for the area. Established in 1823, it was originally located in Villiers Street, near Charing Cross.

It is now located several miles to the west of the city centre, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It is one of the Imperial College School of Medicine's teaching hospitals and part of the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. Technology is now widely considered to be a vital part of any healthcare service, from local GPs right through to hospitals. Although funding is becoming increasingly available, choosing the right tools and software to support doctors and nurses is a serious business, especially when lives are at risk.

Prior to this year, the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department at Charing Cross Hospital encountered a number of problems when recording patient data. The problem was not clinical, but administrative. Nurses were inputting and displaying patient information in two separate places - on a 'pen and ink' manual whiteboard that was regularly updated throughout the course of a shift, and digitally via a central PC.

At the time, the A&E Department had recently purchased a software package called 'Symphony' from Ascribe - one of the world's leading Emergency Department software packages - to provide a structured display of the location and status of current patients.

Information was being entered into the Symphony solution via a PC, but the manual 'pen and ink' whiteboard was still being used as the main administrative tool by the Charge Nurses. As a result, information was being fed into both, inconsistencies were a regular occurrence and records were often out of date or contained conflicting information.

Challenge

To centralise the inputting of patient data throughout the course of a shift from an existing 'pen and ink' manual whiteboard and a central PC.

SMART solution

A SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard was introduced to record more specific information and provide more precise patient care due to easier sharing of information.

Result

A time saving of up to 20 minutes per patient and increased staff morale as updating information became more fun and interactive.

Henry Dowlen, a Doctor working in the A&E Department at Charing Cross, identified the possibility of using interactive whiteboards to combat these problems and combine both methods into one.

Following the decision to trial an interactive whiteboard, Dowlen contacted Steljes, the exclusive UK representative for SMART Technologies. Steljes then worked with its Trade Partner, Leapfrog, to conduct a pilot project in January 2007, consisting of a single board installed in the A&E Department. As all staff had already been trained to use the Symphony product, no further training was required. Charge Nurses were asked if they would be prepared to take part in the trial, and were then shown the SMART Board interactive whiteboard as a group to ensure they all supported the idea.

The trial was initially meant to be one month long, but after collaboration between Charing Cross, Ascribe and Leapfrog, it was extended to two months after a larger SMART Board was deemed more appropriate for the amount of information that needed to be viewed simultaneously. This larger interactive whiteboard allowed an electronic notepad to be shown side by side with the Symphony solution, to record more specific information or extended patient data.

At the end of the two-month pilot, the hospital conducted a short retrospective questionnaire with staff to help make its purchasing decision. Henry Dowlen says: "After I presented the hospital with an in-depth analysis of the pilot, the resounding response from doctors and nurses was that they loved the technology. The easy-to-use boards helped increase staff morale, as updating patient information became more fun and interactive."

In May 2007, Charing Cross decided to buy a SMART Board due to overwhelming demand. Centralising all records created a time saving of up to 20 minutes per patient in busy shifts. Not only were patients happier with the faster treatment time, but staff were also able to provide a higher quality, more precise level of patient care due to easier sharing of information. Following the pilot period, all staff readily accepted and began to rely on the interactive whiteboards; "When the pilot finished, the nurses were up in arms at the thought of returning to a manual whiteboard - even those who were less accepting of it to start off with," says Dowlen.

Some of the factors that impressed the Charge Nurses included more legible and movable information, freeing up time to spend on clinical duties rather than administrative tasks and smoother handover meetings held within the A&E Department.

Steljes has provided an easy-to-use SMART Board interactive whiteboard solution for Charing Cross Hospital, which has played a part in improving staff morale, as well as making administrative tasks more fun.

As part of the survey with staff following the pilot, one of the nurses commented; "I find I have much more time to carry out clinical duties than I did before we started. It has improved communications between people in the department, as messages are clearly read, instead of just left unnoticed."

The relationship between Steljes and Charing Cross has been positive, contributing to an additional pilot on the ninth floor of the hospital. Charing Cross is currently trialling another SMART Board interactive whiteboard as a bed management system. If successful, it is considering rolling them out across all patient wards. The end result has seen an increase in morale as staff are now free to spend their time concentrating on patient care as opposed to administrative duties.

"The most satisfying part of the project is the response from staff. Although they are keen to try out any solution that makes it easier for them to provide a better level of care, the integration of a new technology solution isn't always accepted by all staff-members."

**Henry Dowlen, A&E Doctor,
Charing Cross Hospital.**

About SMART

SMART Technologies Inc. is both the industry pioneer and global education market segment leader in easy-to-use interactive whiteboards and other group collaboration tools. The award-winning SMART Board interactive whiteboard is the most widely installed interactive whiteboard in the world.

Many school jurisdictions have standardised on the product, which is used to provide interactive learning opportunities and enhance student achievement in more than 450,000 classrooms spanning every U.S. state, every Canadian province, every Local Authority in the UK and in more than 100 countries worldwide. SMART products also include interactive pen displays, interactive digital signage, wireless slates and software. Using SMART products, groups can access and share the information they need to meet, teach, train and present. SMART's education customers include New York City Board of Education (U.S.), Oxford University (UK), Kobe City Board of Education (Japan), Barrier Public School (Australia), University of Ottawa (Canada), United World College (Singapore), Stephen-Hawking-Schule Neckargemuend (Germany), Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (U.S.) and Harvard University (U.S.).

SMART is a private company founded in 1987. Employing more than 900 people, SMART is headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, with assembly facilities in Ottawa, and offices in Bonn, Tokyo, China, New York City and Washington, DC. SMART has been issued and maintains a broad portfolio of patents with numerous U.S., Canadian and other patents pending. In 1992 SMART formed a strategic alliance with Intel® Corporation that resulted in joint product development and marketing efforts, and Intel's equity ownership in the company. SMART products are sold through dealers across North America and distributors worldwide. For more information, visit www.smarttech.com.

About Steljes

Steljes creates opportunity for partners, customers and end users by pioneering innovative technologies that enable people to interact and communicate more effectively while working and learning.

