

Frimley Park Hospital boosts operating theatre efficiency and uses data to drive improvements in practice



Whilst so many industries now rely upon an IT infrastructure, its adoption within the NHS has often been controversial. Too frequently, NHS IT is discussed in terms of budget overruns and implementation delays. That view ignores the enormous progress that has been made, not least at hospitals such as the Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in Surrey. It's implementation of Picis integrated software for surgical, anaesthesia, post-anaesthesia and critical care areas of the hospital has led to significant and measurable efficiency improvements within months of going live. It's also allowing hospital staff to review and refine practice based on near real-time data, thus helping them to improve patient safety.

Quick Profile

Frimley Park Hospital

Institution profile:

700-bed NHS hospital serves a population of around 365,000 people in North Hampshire and West Surrey.

Key business/clinical drivers:

Frimley Park Hospital is committed to improving efficiency and patient safety on an ongoing basis, and information technology, when used strategically, can assist the hospital and staff in meeting these objectives.

Picis solution:

Picis integrated perioperative and critical care solution including:

- Theatre Manager
- SmarTrack®
- PACU Manager
- Anesthesia Manager
- Critical Care Manager
- Extelligence® OR
- Extelligence Anesthesia
- Picis Perioperative Dashboard

Interoperability:

iSOFT Patient Centre and CliniSys WinPath.



Picis Customer Story: Frimley Park Hospital

- ▶ Frimley Park Hospital opened in 1974, and the 700-bed NHS hospital serves a population of around 365,000 people in North Hampshire and West Surrey. The hospital has an Accident & Emergency department, Special Care Baby Unit and numerous other departments. Its Intensive Care Unit has 12 beds and cared for 650 patients in 2009, whilst approximately 33,000 people were treated in the hospital's 16 operating theatres.

Frimley Park Hospital can already claim to be one of the top performing hospitals in the UK. For example, independent health assessor Dr Foster Intelligence has ranked the hospital among the top 10 safest in the country, and it is amongst the top five safest hospitals in the UK according to the CHKS Patient Safety Award for UK hospitals. Even so, the hospital remains committed to improving performance in all that it does.

Senior management at Frimley Park Hospital is firmly committed to improving efficiency and patient safety on an ongoing basis, and was convinced that information technology, when used strategically, can assist the hospital and staff in meeting these objectives. It decided to focus on the most critical areas of the hospital, namely the intensive care unit and operating theatre suite, and started looking for software solutions which could help them move forward.

“The results have been impressive. Within just a few months of going live the Picis software was helping the team at Frimley Park Hospital to improve operating theatre utilisation by 5%.”

“I’ve worked in hospital environments utilising Picis in North America, where its software has a great track record,” said Dr Loua Shaikh, Consultant Anaesthetist/Intensivist at the hospital, and one of the key driving forces behind the decision to implement Picis solutions. “We looked at a broad spectrum of systems, but to derive any real benefit from an implementation such as this the key is to have a Computerised Physician Order Entry (CPOE) system. This limited the number of systems available to us, and to achieve fully integrated perioperative care through the surgical and critical areas of the hospital, it was clear that the Picis software solution ticked all the boxes.”

Picis software has been delivering operational efficiencies and improved communication, as well as helping to enhance clinician and patient experiences at hospitals worldwide since 1994. Specifically Frimley Park Hospital purchased the following Picis modules: Picis Theatre Manager, SmarTrack®, PACU Manager, Anesthesia Manager, Critical Care Manager, Extelligence® OR, Extelligence Anesthesia and Picis Perioperative Dashboard. The Picis software thus provides an information backbone through the entire perioperative journey.

The process begins when a patient arrives at the hospital for their pre-operative assessment. “Everyone now uses



▶ the same documentation,” says Becky Gosling, staff nurse responsible for pre-assessment. “The system ensures that every patient, regardless of specialty, has the same pre-operative assessment. This eases our administrative burden, reduces illegibility and saves a lot of time, particularly with patients who need to visit us regularly, as we can now easily retain and retrieve the information they have given us for future appointments. It saves both patient time and nursing time, and means we can spend more time on patient education and less time on administration.”

This consistency is just one way in which Picis is helping staff to improve theatre management at Frimley Park Hospital. “We had no consistency in the way in which theatre bookings were managed,” says Suzanne Wills, Acting Deputy General Manager. “Picis has standardised the process of entry and booking. We now have one format, and one process. It means we can schedule operations far more efficiently, whilst always recognising that any number of factors might influence the length of procedure. If there are unnecessary delays at any stage we can identify the source, and take corrective action if required. We’re cutting down on wasted time, and that saves money.”

The results have been impressive. Within just a few months of going live the Picis software was helping the

team at Frimley Park Hospital to improve operating theatre utilisation by 5%. This represents the equivalent of just over six operating sessions a week. It means the hospital is less likely to incur the cost of working outside standard hours in order to meet waiting list criteria, and improves operating theatre throughput, which boosts the Trust’s financial performance.

Picis software helps the hospital to improve patient safety, as well as boosting efficiency. “We now have total perioperative automation,” said Dr Shaikh. “With remote access, I can review patient care with up-to-date information in front of me. I’m not reliant on anyone else’s interpretation. All this is done securely. Rather than interpreting opinions, I’m basing my advice on the interpretation of facts.”

“This will help improve quality of care. We can easily review our work to see if what we ask to be done is actually done. It will help us understand our deficits and allow us to do something about it.”

“Our records now contain many more data points than previously,” adds

Dr William Jewsbury, Consultant Anaesthetist and Lead Clinician for Critical Care at the hospital. “But the beauty of the system is that although we’re collecting more data, so much of it is automated, which frees up more of my time to focus on patient care.”

“It is helping us to improve safety. The system reminds people of what they’ve got to do, and ICU nurses love checklists and having a clean slate. I like the system. It’s also very easy to use.”



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▶ This is a theme also taken up by Sharon Burfield, clinical matron within the Frimley Park Hospital ICU. She says “we regularly review incidents within the ICU, and by definition that involves review of masses of data. Before Picis, that involved a request to medical records, a delay whilst that request was fulfilled, and then several hours spent analysing the relevant data. Now, that data is available immediately, and the review is a much quicker process. A morning’s work becomes an hour’s task. This doesn’t simply save time. It means data review becomes easier, which will allow us to think about how past experience can drive improvement in future performance. It gives us the evidence to evolve best practice care within the ICU.

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Indeed staff across the hospital find the Picis software easy to use, but Dr Jewsbury, who has acted as clinical project lead for the last year, feels it is important not to make assumptions. “Change can be challenging for anyone, and it’s important to sell the benefits of such a system to all staff,” says Dr Jewsbury. “It’s easy to forget that some people are still intimidated by IT, and no one should underestimate how challenging that can be. People can become negative about change if it isn’t explained clearly. Then people start to look for problems with the system, even if in reality they don’t exist. Small things can become major issues if they aren’t dealt with quickly. Once people start to experience the system, and see how it can help them to

perform their job more efficiently and effectively, objections soon diminish.”

Dr Jewsbury also feels that although the implementation went smoothly and met all key deadlines, it would be a mistake to ever view a project of this nature reaching completion. “It’s like the change many of us went through when we stopped looking up information in the library, and instead relied on a search engine. Hospitals produce huge amounts of data, but until now that data has been a negative, constraining factor. Traditionally NHS management has always worked with data as much as three months in arrears. We’ve always been reactive. In terms of data capture we’re now streets ahead of anything we’ve ever had before. Now we’re starting to see this great body of data as an asset which is helping us to run a more efficient organisation. It’s very powerful for clinicians.”

“We’re all being challenged to do more with less in the NHS, but clearly within the acute-care areas of hospitals, we cannot and will not take risks with patient safety,” concludes Andrew Morris, who has been Chief Executive of Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust since 1991. “The Picis software is already making a significant difference to operating theatre utilisation, and it’s also helping us to learn from what we do and helping us improve the service we deliver to patients. Thus it’s delivering on both of its promises, helping us to boost efficiency and performance, and driving up our standards of care. Of all the computer applications we’ve implemented here at Frimley Park Hospital, this has been the most successful.” ■

About Picis

Picis, now part of Ingenix, is a global provider of innovative solutions that enable rapid and sustained delivery of clinical documentation, financial and operational results in the emergency departments, surgical suites and intensive care units in nearly 2,200 hospitals in 19 countries.

For more information about Picis, visit www.picis.com.



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