

Profile of Patient Experience & Outcomes raised

- Sir Bruce Keogh says Trusts need to focus on what is happening in all wards and clinics as a matter of routine, not just selected ones

DH Toolkit- Feb 2010:

- "All hospitals will be expected to start using, or extend the use of, near real-time techniques to collect patient experience feedback"
- "The more complete the data you collect, the more accurately your indicator will represent the quality of care in your organisation."

Quality Accounts require local measurements

The Department of Health is now consulting on the use of wider measures of patient experience and quality to be reported in the new Quality Accounts required to be submitted later this year. In their new toolkit, they have made clear that health economies will be expected to develop local measures to support quality accounts in addition to any measures which come out of the consultation. http://www.dh.gov.uk/dr_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_112360.pdf

Public engagement is an important component of quality measurement - what is important to patients has often not been covered by central targets. Trusts know that some of the most useful feedback from patients comes from free – text comments made by patients rather than responses to posed questions. Trusts which have robust systems to actively seek comments from all patients as a matter of routine as well as quantitative measures will be in a much stronger position than those which rely on sampled surveys.

Multiple channels needed

We know from current societal patterns that different ages and groups prefer different means of communication - younger people use social networking and text—rarely email or letters. However, most patients are elderly and with some minor exceptions, are still more familiar with pen & paper for more detailed measures. In a recent study, where offered the choice, most patients preferred to respond on paper in their own time rather than on line or on a device.

Touch screen device capture can be useful in a clinical setting for a few generalised questions, but you know nothing about the person pressing the button. For routine engagement of the majority of patients, paper based systems play a major role as long as they are concise and relevant to each patient and are not a burden for staff. The COM-Q fully managed service provides this level of service with the benefit of measurement consultancy. The learning point here is that multiple channels are needed for different age groups and caution should be exercised that a single route can provide valid answers.

South Tees Hospitals Measure Patients Experience - Perceptions of cleanliness and pain management

South Tees Hospitals 
NHS Foundation Trust

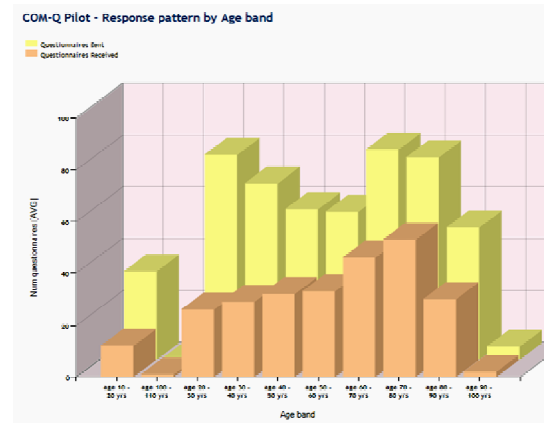
When South Tees Hospitals Foundation Trust wanted to measure patient's perceptions of cleanliness, cleanliness practices and pain management on their wards, they chose the COM-Q service provided by CoMetrica. The reason for choosing this fully managed service was that they wanted to concentrate on the results and any actions required rather than have to manage the data collection.

Anne Sutcliffe, Deputy Director of Nursing and Patient Experience said that the project "had been a great success with the direct commentary back from patients to wards particularly useful"

The trust was delighted to find that patient response rates were very high and they were quickly able to see any problems through the comprehensive reporting facilities and patient comments coming back to wards daily through the system. This proved an advantage over sample surveys and those which required front-line staff to administer since care could be measured for all patients and this gave patients an important message about inclusion.

Focus on results

CoMetrica helped the Trust choose the appropriate measures and co-ordinate the data flows to generate the daily creation of dynamic electronic questionnaires. CoMetrica managed the secure communication with patients on the Trust's behalf and once the project went live, the Trust concentrated on logging into the system daily to check recent patient outcomes & experience.



A brief case study of the South Tees implementation is available from CoMetrica - email us at Stuart.Mathieson@CoMetrica.co.uk for a copy

Inside this issue:

- Quality Account requires local engagement strategies **1**
- South Tees hospital uses COM-Q service to measure patient experience **1**
- Nutricia takes up national contract to measure patients experience of training **2**
- Therapy & PCT provider services to measure patients' valuation of treatments & service **2**

OUTCOMES is published by CoMetrica limited.
www.CoMetrica.co.uk



Nutricia take up COM-Q Service

Providers and Commissioners recognise the enhanced value of outcomes and experience measures which are linked to patient data

Nutricia is the UK's leading provider of medical nutrition and enteral feeding services to NHS patients in their homes and in care. When they wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of the training their nurses gave to patients and carers, they chose the COM-Q service provided by CoMetrica.



This service allows them to comprehensively measure the standards of training provided by their nurses to patients nationally and identify any specific needs not being addressed. Nutricia is using the COM-Q system to include measures of communication, understanding and patient confidence in the use of feeding pumps and products. The fully managed service allows Nutricia to concentrate on the results and continuous monitoring rather than managing questionnaires and devices.

CoMetrica liaised with Ethitec, Nutricia's clinical information system provider to establish the systems integration

for rapid implementation. This was as straightforward regular download from the clinical system into COM-Q.

Using CoMetrica's print & post service, national coverage is provided with results by area and team available daily.

The dynamic nature of the COM-Q service means that experience measures can be refined and updated in real time centrally without having a legacy of pre-printed questionnaires or having to re-programme devices. Response rates are optimized because every question is relevant to that patient through the dynamic matching system.

This gives an advantage over a sampled survey in that it provides an inclusive measurement of all patients going through a service. It also has the added benefit of demonstrating to all patients that you are listening.

Reducing questionnaire overload

The COM-Q system from CoMetrica combines clinical and non-clinical outcome and experience measures into one concise electronic form matched to each patient.

Measures are linked to each patient's condition and the services actually used and so are more relevant

Multiple completion routes increase response rates

Outcomes for Therapies and PCT providers

As many PCT provider services around the country prepare for integration with other providers including acute trusts and consortia, many services are facing demands for quality measures to inform their contracts with commissioners and justify investment decisions.

Therapy services in particular have shown great interest in measuring clinical outcomes using Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS). Some generic PROMS are useful in measuring treatment effectiveness, but many therapies see a need for more specific measures related to conditions and treatments.

The COM-Q service is particularly useful where PROMS and experience measures are to be developed as it allows questions to be tested in real time and modified if necessary with immediate effect. This dramatically shortens the timescale for producing robust new validated measures.

Traditionally, measuring the value of acute interventions such as joint replacements has been much easier

than measuring the effectiveness of therapies. Now many therapy providers are keen to establish baseline and post-treatment measures themselves to help understand the patient perceived value of treatments. This can help make investment decisions and prioritise budgets.

While this is a developing area, the good news for therapy services is that there are many clinical PROMS already published internationally which can be used or adapted to make quick progress. CoMetrica can advise on these as part of the consultancy package provided with their COM-Q

For further information about any of the articles in this newsletter or for further information about the COM-Q service or how CoMetrica can help your organisation measure patient's outcomes & experience, contact Stuart Mathieson at CoMetrica on 07973 212306 or via email

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