

SUCCESS STORY

NORTHERN IRELAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION



Achieving data sharing and application integration whilst demonstrating real partnership and collaboration

The Challenge

Many healthcare applications were developed at a time when information sharing and synchronisation was of little concern to the providers and users.

Population demographics continuously evolve. New trends emerge whether that be a propensity for parents to give their children more modern names, the movement of citizens throughout the EU or the rise in the number of properties converted from single to multi-tenant dwellings. Such trends present new challenges in the refining of processes and software which identify and match patient records.

In 2004, the Northern Ireland Department of Health's Business Services Organisation (BSO), in partnership with Sopra Steria, undertook an ambitious project to enable the sharing of patient demographic data across all Northern Ireland Health Trusts and the embedding of a new unique patient identifier for all patients across regional and line of business applications. This number is referred to as the Health and Care Number (HCN).

Key Points

- Integration of all Hospital Patient Administration System demographic data
- Providing quality assured demographics for all connected systems
- Implementing and managing the Health and Care Number initiative
- Providing the tools to enable BSO to focus on their data quality strategies and ensuring patient risk is lowered by having the right data at the right time

- Reduction in direct and indirect costs associated with duplicate datasets
- Transforming the efficiency and accuracy of patient registrations and tracing patients.

Our solution

Sopra Steria were selected by BSO to deliver a unique patient identifier Programme, as BSO needed a partner with enterprise scale capability, who had a successful track record in delivering transformation programmes for Government.

Together, we developed a custom Master Data Management (MDM) platform to facilitate the regional amalgamation of patient demographics and to enable enhanced patient searching and the updating of the central patient index.

Sopra Steria and BSO have developed a close working relationship which has ensured that the solution continues to be enhanced. For example, the demographic requirements of BSO have evolved, in that the focus in recent years has been on how HCN can propagate quality patient demographics and numbering to other connected systems. BSO's Data Stewardship team has been pivotal in the success of this propagation.

How we work together

As the relationship evolved and new challenges emerge for BSO, it is clear that working in partnership to provide sound advice from both a technical perspective and a deep understanding of the customer's business requirements has proved to be critical to the success of the Health and Care Number.

Sopra Steria realised that the critical success of the HCN Programme was in providing the right services at the right time to BSO. For both parties, working in true partnership was pivotal to the success of the Programme. Examples include:

- Early establishment of the Programme to manage the various projects and work streams
- Work with our partners to jointly identify and assign subject matter experts to the Programme
- Manage the approach to data sharing and governance from the beginning - share and endorse data flows, business rules and processes
- Effective change management - understand the impact on business users.

Results and benefits

- All Patient Admission System sites integrated within twelve months
- Creation of a holistic view of a patient's data, using a consistent and accurate identifier for patients across all health care systems
- Creation of a trusted master index of patient demographics reducing duplicate records
- One authoritative central source of standardised patient demographics
- All 350 GP practices integrated within six months
- Enabled the deployment of an Electronic Care Record (ECR) for the population of Northern Ireland.

For BSO, the master index has provided many operational efficiencies, such as:

- Ability to locate patient records quickly across the province
- Increased quality of care by working with a de-duplicated index
- Improved data quality on end point systems, with data being orchestrated by the central index
- Reduced costs in:
 - Identifying and consolidating patient records
 - Efficiency in patient administration and registration
 - Prevention of redundant examinations.

“Our relationship with Sopra Steria is one where we have a partner who can challenge us, be challenged and offers innovative solutions to complex problems. They understand our business.”

Gary Loughran
Head of eHealth



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Sopra Steria
+44 (0)370 600 4466
info.uk@soprasteria.com
www.soprasteria.co.uk

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