



FDS Consultants makes the NHS patient journey safer with Advanced Docman Connect

The referrals administration service reduces costs while delivering better transparency and robust services for the patient journey

FDS Consultants is a consortium of dental and medical NHS consultants based in the North West of England. The clinical team is supported by specialist administrators who needed an electronic system to ensure a robust and seamless referral process.

Securing a complete view of patient records

We are primarily a 'go-between' that is pioneering the flow of patient record information between dentists and other health professionals. Our mission at FDS Consultants is: 'To deliver the safest, most effective and responsive dental referral management system across the UK.' As such, it is our responsibility to make sure that all stakeholders in a patient journey (when someone is referred or requires further treatment at a dental surgery) have the latest information on each individual's record.

It is vital and an NHS requirement to get this right. From a safety perspective all clinical staff, including GPs or surgery teams at the local hospital and administration teams, need to have the latest and most complete picture of the patient record. It is also a customer service issue as often, when patients face the stress of a health problem, they want to be reassured that medical teams are collaborating with the right information.

Previously we managed the process through a mix of email, fax and post. As with any manual system

it was administration-heavy, there was the risk of error and the security of data was impossible to guarantee. We couldn't, for instance, see if a GP had read an email, or be sure a hospital had received a letter.

In a broader context, the NHS and its Five Year Forward View strategy seeks to leverage the potential of technology and innovation to better manage pressures on the service, like the health requirements that come from a growing elderly population. With the potential frailties of the manual systems we use, our commitment to safety, and the technology direction of the NHS, we began to search for an electronic solution.

"Advanced's Docman was the outright winner," says Anne Lamb, our Director of Operations. "It had the reach, and it is already used by 5,400 GP practices, 115 NHS Trusts (hospitals) and 178 Clinical Commissioning Groups. Additionally, it was recommended by the Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership commissioning body."

Saving time to focus on added-value activities

"Docman is not just more effective, it is much simpler and more economical than the previous system."

Anne Lamb, Director FDS Consultants

Client >

FDS Consultants

Sector >

Health services

Project >

Implement workflow and information sharing platform, Docman Connect.

"Docman is not just more effective, it is much simpler and more economical than the previous system. We used to post 4,000 letters a month, so postage costs alone have been reduced by circa £24,000 per annum."

Anne Lamb, Director - FDS Consultants Care Group

How Docman Connect helped

A fuller picture of the patient journey

We now use Docman Connect to facilitate correspondence with patients' GPs. If a patient goes to the dentist and surgery is performed, Docman Connect will automatically send details of the procedure back to the patient's GP. Also, as it is all electronic and encrypted, the information is secure and we can see a receipt that information has been delivered, accepted or rejected.

If care needs are complex and referred to a hospital, FDS automatically receives the completed discharge summary electronically into the Advanced Collection Console solution once the patient has had their treatment. This means we have a fuller picture of the patient's journey.

Improved efficiency and better customer service

Anne continues, "It is an administrative system. But it is aligned to our patient safety mission and the duties of health and care organisations to deliver the highest standards."

Using Docman Connect, we are assured that sensitive patient data is delivered to the right people at the right time, instantaneously, with a transparent audit and governance trail. This means clinical teams are better informed and can act with greater certainty on current and future care plans.

Anne adds, "It also means we can be more certain patients receive a better service. That when they have had surgery at a dentists, GPs are aware of procedures and the patient's specific needs."

It also helps us stay abreast of regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). And, as it is a Cloud solution, it is future-proofed and we are confident it adheres to current NHS standards. This clear and efficient approach also directly supports the NHS on its 'journey to becoming one of the safest and most transparent health systems in the world.'

Anne says, "All-in-all it has been a great success and we would recommend Docman to others. We are reducing administration and costs, improving the visibility of critical patient information, saving time so we can focus on added-value activities, and improving the services delivered to all stakeholders."

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