

Appointment Card System Case Study

West Road Medical Centre

sends a clear message to patients with the new LabelTrace Appointment Card system



Software & Hardware Partners:
QuickTrace and Zebra



Executive Summary

Part of the Newcastle Primary Care Trust, West Road Medical Centre is an urban surgery in the west end of Newcastle serving an inner city area with a diverse social and cultural mix of patients. The surgery has 5 GPs, 3 practice nurses and 17 healthcare professionals who are supported by 12 administrative staff and a practice manager.

It is a busy inner city medical centre, and each week between 150 and 200 patients drop into the surgery to book an appointment in person. The receptionists use the Vision clinical system from INPS for booking appointments quickly and patients were given a hand written appointment card to remind them of the date and time of their next appointment and who the appointment was with. Occasionally patients would misread the information on the card or the information would be incorrectly written, which meant patients turning up for appointments on the wrong day or at the wrong time, leaving the surgery with unattended or unscheduled appointments.

The Challenge

Part of practice manager Ian Armstrong's remit is to advise the practice on how technology can help the surgery to run as efficiently as possible. The surgery uses the INPS Vision clinical system, and each year Ian takes a day out of his schedule to attend the National Vision User Group Conference and see first hand how the latest technological advances and developments for Vision could make further improvements to the way the Medical Centre operates.

The Solution

It was at the most recent INPS user conference that Ian discovered the LabelTrace Appointment Card System from Codegate, the suppliers of LabelTrace in England and Wales. LabelTrace works with most clinical systems and enables users to print key patient data directly from the clinical system onto multipart labels designed to go onto the request forms and tubes.

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Benefits

LabelTrace comprises the LabelTrace software that integrates seamlessly with the clinical system and a compact Zebra LP2824 printer. Printing an appointment card only takes one or two mouse clicks and a couple of seconds to print out.

Ian could immediately see that LabelTrace could eliminate the problems that were occurring with handwritten appointment cards and ordered the solution on the spot. "I could see that LabelTrace had the potential to solve our problems with handwritten appointment cards. The information used to create the card comes straight from the clinical system and it is printed in a clear bold type face that is easy to read. The cards also look a lot more professional than our old blank bits of card, so patients are less likely to lose them."

Both reception desks have now been set up with LabelTrace and the feedback from the receptionists and the patients has been very positive. Ian continued "The receptionists and patients love it! It removes the potential for errors in handwriting or confusion caused by poor handwriting. Now, when the receptionists create an appointment all they have to do is click the print option and within seconds the card is printed and the appointment is confirmed. This has reduced the amount of time taken to create the appointment card from an average of half a minute to just 2 seconds!"

LabelTrace checks the patient record and prints out all the appointments for that patient, for all GPs or nurses, thereby creating a single point of reference for the patient. As part of the standard set up, the cards are printed with the name of the medical centre, important telephone numbers such as the appointment cancellation number and a line of text that can be used as a reminder to cancel the appointment should it no longer be required. It also has a 2 card printing option enabling surgeries to print out two cards at the same time, the second with important "marketing" messages for patients. Ian intends to use this over the coming months with messages reminding patients of the importance of getting flu jabs in winter, and holiday vaccinations in summer, amongst other things.

West Road Medical Centre is no stranger to the benefits of QuickTrace's solutions. 6 months before installing LabelTrace, the surgery rolled out the LabelTrace sample and test labelling system in its consulting rooms and on the results desk that handles inbound test results and is responsible for ordering re-tests and sending results out to patients.



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**Ian Armstrong
Practice Manager**



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Ian recalled: "Since starting to use LabelTrace to print out the labels for all our test requests and samples, we have achieved zero errors going out on test requests. And, we have not received a single mismatched test result. When you consider that we serve such a culturally diverse area, and many of our patients share the same surname, this is an amazing statistic because this is exactly the sort of situation that can cause confusion at the labs, especially when typing up the results."

The surgery can now guarantee zero errors going out on test requests and samples sent to the laboratory. Ian knows that soon the laboratories will be introducing barcodes to test requests and sample tubes so they too can guarantee zero errors. As LabelTrace already supports the barcoding of patient data, the West Road Medical Centre is already well prepared for these developments ensuring minimal disruption to the surgery and its patients.

Ian concluded "The other day, a GP came up to me to say thank you for buying LabelTrace. They thought it was fantastic that I had brought something into the surgery that made such an impact on the service they deliver to patients, rather than something the Government wanted them to use to reach a new target. With a testimony like that from my GPs, I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending QuickTrace solutions to other practices."

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**Ian Armstrong
Practice Manager**



LabelTrace is developed by QuickTrace Ltd, Edinburgh.
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