

Vision Case Study

Taunton Road Medical Centre Reduces Time to Complete Patient Request Forms by 80% with LabelTrace & Eliminates Errors

Overview

LabelTrace is a low cost labelling solution that enables primary care staff to print labels for patient test requests and samples directly from the clinical system, saving considerable time and greatly improving the quality of data provided to the labs. LabelTrace was developed by QuickTrace Ltd.

Software & Hardware Partners:
QuickTrace and Zebra



Dr Tim Taylor, GP Principal and IT Lead

Executive Summary

When Somerset Health Informatics identified poor handwriting on patient requests to be a cause of duplicate records in their laboratories, it turned to the LabelTrace labelling solution to remedy the problem. It asked Taunton Road Medical Centre to trial the system and the results were so successful that the surgery immediately purchased 12 printers.

Practice Profile

With over 13,800 registered patients, Taunton Road Medical Centre employs a large team to ensure it can fully meet the needs of its patients. Overall, there are 50 employees attached to the practice including 9 GP partners, a salaried GP & 2 registrars, 2 healthcare assistants, 3 minor illness nurse practitioners and 5 practice nurses. It also has an on-site pharmacy.

The Challenge

As with all practices, Taunton Road generates a huge number of patient test requests. GPs complete some of these themselves and refer requests for bloods to a nurse or healthcare assistant. A 10 minute timeslot is allocated for blood tests and of this time typically five or more minutes are spent filling in the request forms and completing the labels on the tubes. Despite the huge amount of time being spent on administration, a large percentage of the forms and tubes were causing problems for the laboratories due to poor handwriting or missing information. This was resulting in duplicate records and delays to patients who often had to be recalled for tests.

Somerset Health Informatics identified one of the main causes of duplicate patient records at laboratories to be a result of poor handwriting on test requests. The number of duplicate records was resulting in a large amount of wasted time spent trying to identify the patient prior to creating a new record. This was proving difficult to manage and it decided that it needed to find a solution to resolve the issue of poor handwriting at the surgeries.

Vision Case Study

The Solution

The Informatics Team decided to trial the LabelTrace label printing solution from Codegate, and, in order to conduct a conclusive trial, it tested LabelTrace with a variety of different clinical systems. As Taunton Road Surgery uses the INPS Vision clinical system it was selected to pilot the use of the LabelTrace system in its practice.

LabelTrace is an easy to use labelling system that integrates seamlessly with most clinical systems, including INPS. It comprises LabelTrace software and a very compact Zebra LP2824 label printer that is small enough to fit onto any desk or shelf. LabelTrace enables practice staff to quickly and easily print labels containing the key patient information directly from the clinical system. This can then be printed out onto perforated multipart labels – one that is designed to go onto the request form and two identical labels for the tubes.

Taunton Road piloted 5 label printers in its surgery for 3 months. These were used by 3 GPs, a Healthcare Assistant and a Nurse. Louise Alderwick, Data Manager for Taunton Road recalls “It took just two hours to set up the LabelTrace system. After the initial software was set up it took less than 10 minutes to install each printer.”

The Benefits

Both the software and the printers themselves were very easy to use and proved to be an immediate hit with the users and the patients. The benefits to using LabelTrace were immediately apparent.

“We realised in just half a day that LabelTrace was going to make a massive difference to the surgery. The potential to reduce errors caused by poor handwriting was immediately obvious to everyone. The additional benefit that we hadn’t considered was the huge time saving caused by the elimination of form filling. Everyone using LabelTrace has been overwhelmed by the amount of time that has been saved in the practice and during consultation times. The patients are happier as well as they no longer have to sit and wait while forms are being completed.” Continues Louise.

The information provided on the labels is easy to read and free from errors virtually eliminating duplicate records at the lab or the need for repeat tests. Nurses and healthcare assistants can now complete the forms and tubes for blood tests in less than a minute – a reduction of 80%. This enables them to free up time for urgent same day requests and to have more time to complete important QOF tests for patients. GP time has also been saved enabling them to spend more time listening to patients, rather than focusing on form filling.



LabelTrace Printer

“We realised in just half a day that LabelTrace was going to make a massive difference to the surgery.”

**Louise Alderwick
Data Manager**



Helen Chin, Practice Nurse

Vision Case Study

Following the pilot, Taunton Road immediately purchased an additional 12 label printers for the practice, clear testament to the return on investment LabelTrace provides. Louise installed these herself, with each printer taking less than 10 minutes to set up and the user requiring only a few minutes of training.

Dr Tim Taylor, GP Principal and IT Lead has certainly noticed the difference “One of the regular annoyances has always been how to fill in all the paperwork needed in a working day. We were also worried about the learning curve, the costs involved, maintenance and the likelihood of systems crashing and so on. We’ve had the system for 15 months now and we have been amazed by the time saving it provides. We thought the learning curve would take weeks if not months, but it’s actually been minutes and none of the printers has ever crashed.”

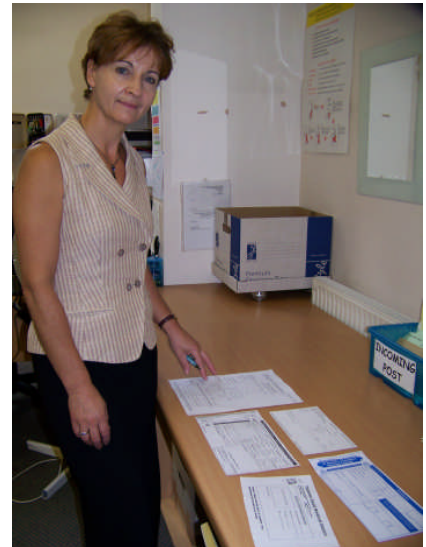
It didn’t take long for the practice to realise that the flexible LabelTrace system could also be applied a whole host of other applications within the surgery.

Louise continues “Because the printers can easily handle different label sizes and designs, the labels can be used for anything. We use them for lots of forms including private referral forms, swab samples, ECG requests, patient self assessment forms, the list goes on. In fact we are now producing forms to stick the labels on – that’s how good it is!”

“Our supplier, Codegate, have been very supportive, resolving any questions on the same day. They know their product and they understand primary care and I wouldn’t hesitate in suggesting to any practice currently completing requests by hand to implement LabelTrace.”

LabelTrace operates directly on the patient data held in the practice’s clinical system and is available directly from the consulting screen.

LabelTrace works with all popular clinical systems



Carol Keirl, Practice Business Manager



LabelTrace is developed by QuickTrace Ltd, Edinburgh.
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