

Q-Pulse Case Study

Company: Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre (CROC)

Industry Sector: Healthcare

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Summary

Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre (CROC) offers a full range of treatment and support services to patients with cancer. The introduction of Q-Pulse facilitated the implementation, management and development of CROC's QMS.

Q-Pulse has ensured both the security and availability of documents on CROC's network. Q-Pulse has also simplified audit management, the reporting, recording and managing of incidents and the subsequent follow-up of outstanding actions. Q-Pulse's comprehensive training overview also provides for the organisation of courses to meet employees' needs.

Q-Pulse facilitated both CROC's compliance to ISO 9002:1994 in early 2000 and their successful Cancer Standards Peer Review assessment. Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre are supported by Q-Pulse during their current transition to ISO 9001:2000.

Background

Opened in 1988, the Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre (CROC) offers a full range of treatment and support services to patients with cancer. Part of one of the largest hospital trusts in central England, the Centre's 130 staff provide comprehensive support to over one million people across Coventry and Warwickshire.

CROC is also one of ten members of the Midlands Organisation of Specialists in Quality Improvement for Therapeutic Oncology (MOSQUITO), five of which are now using Q-Pulse in the implementation and coordination of their quality management systems (QMS).

The Challenge

In late 1997, CROC appointed Jill Emmerson, a dedicated QA Representative for Radiotherapy, following the Department of Health's recommendation that the 1994 Quality Assurance of Radiotherapy (QART) standard should be implemented nationally. Jill was assigned to work with QA Representatives in Radiotherapy Physics and Chemotherapy in the development of a joint quality management system (QMS).

CROC purchased Q-Pulse in the early stages of their accreditation to ISO 9002:1994, following an extensive review of similar products. With only Radiotherapy Physics already operating an internal paper-based QMS and with no formal system in place elsewhere, the introduction of a software-based system simplified the implementation, co-ordination and management of CROC's QMS. This in turn maximised the time available for its further development.

The Solution

Within CROC, Q-Pulse is used throughout the document control process, and of particular interest was the ability both to view documents within Q-Pulse without requiring a licence, and to customise individual users' access rights to the system. This ensured both the security and availability of documents held on the Centre's network, with a central database facilitating internal and external requests for documentation.

By encouraging the entry of findings directly into the system, Q-Pulse has simplified audit management and the co-ordination of inter-departmental auditing both within the Centre and MOSQUITO. In addition, the reporting, recording and management of incidents and the subsequent follow-up of outstanding actions have been simplified by the ability to view open non-conformances at-a-glance.

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Currently within the NHS, the ability to demonstrate familiarity with new equipment and techniques is of vital importance. Q-Pulse provides a comprehensive training overview for the organisation of courses to meet employees' needs, and operational procedures can be recorded and identified as training needs. In using Q-Pulse to manage objectives and action plans using the new Initiative module, CROC now has an ideal framework for supporting further initiatives.

Conclusion

CROC received certification to ISO 9002:1994 in early 2000, with Q-Pulse proving instrumental in both the provision of evidence to external assessors and their demonstration of compliance to the standard. Q-Pulse also facilitated CROC's successful assessment in their Cancer Standards Peer Review. Following awards in 1996 and 1999, CROC anticipate that Q-Pulse will assist in the future reassessment of their Charter Mark, as use of Q-Pulse increases and relevant documentation is added to the system.

Currently partway through the transition to ISO 9001:2000 with BSI, Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre are supported in doing so by Q-Pulse 4.2.

“Q-Pulse offered what we required at a reasonable cost, compared to other products, and was relatively easy to use...”

Jill Emmerson, QA Representative for Radiotherapy, Coventry Radiotherapy and Oncology Centre