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ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING & DRUG ORDERING IN PALLIATIVE CARE – PATIENT & HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS

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St Catherine's Hospice has been 'paperless' since 2007 with all clinical notes and communications for hospice and community patients on Crosscare clinical management system (CMS) software (Advanced Health and Care) except the drug prescription and administration record card. The pharmacy has a secure live link to the CMS.

We have now embarked on a project to implement electronic prescribing and drug ordering. The initial stage has been to identify potential benefits.

Key patient benefits of electronic prescribing include:

- ▶ Increased safety at the point of prescribing – flags drug interactions, allergies, medicine information (MI) pop ups for drugs as prescribed.
- ▶ Handwriting and 'inky scribbles' eradicated.
- ▶ Dispensing turnaround times reduced.
- ▶ Consistent and 'approved' MI for healthcare professionals (HCPs) involved in care 24/7 and for patient education.

Key benefits for HCPs include:

- ▶ Live up-to-date drug history and current regimen available 24/7 anywhere with web access.
- ▶ Education tool – EMIS datasheet pop up PLUS any local practice guidelines pop ups where appropriate.
- ▶ Audits facilitated via database interrogation and reporting.
- ▶ Major aid for 'treatment re-capping' at HCP/patient counselling and consultations.
- ▶ 'On call' remote prescribing enabled eradicating 'verbal orders' issues.

Key pharmacy specific benefits include:

- ▶ Enables remote prescription monitoring from any PC anywhere with web access. Clinical information conveniently available to pharmacist on screen.
- ▶ CDs consistently prescribed legally.
- ▶ Electronic stock requisitioning streamlines supply function and management functions such as invoicing and drug use and expenditure analysis.
- ▶ Up to date prescriptions, medication history and regimens live in pharmacy.

Having identified numerous benefits, the next phase of the project will entail development of standard operating procedures and education of key staff.