



**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
ROTHERHAM PRIMARY CARE TRUST
ROTHERHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL TRUST
DONCASTER AND SOUTH HUMBER HEALTHCARE TRUST**

SINGLE ASSESSMENT PROCESS ELECTRONIC PILOT EVALUATION OCTOBER 2005

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1. INTRODUCTION

The electronic SAP pilot commenced on 12th July, 2004, to pilot mobile technology in both community and acute hospital settings. A total of 49 SAP assessments were undertaken over a 12 month period.

2. AIMS OF THE PILOT

The aims of the pilot are as follows:

- To promote an electronic system of assessment.
- To monitor the use of the Easycare assessment document.
- To monitor the effect on operational activity of mobile working.
- To promote information sharing across agencies.
- To find out the views of patients and service users on the Single Assessment Process and the use of mobile computer equipment by assessors.

3. PILOT SITES

The pilot sites are:

- Maltby Social Services
- Keppel Ward
- Thurcroft District Nurses
- Wath District Nurses
- Fast Response Team
- Dynamic Case Managers
- Mental Health Discharge Co-ordinator

4. STAFF SURVEY

In order to evaluate the pilot a staff survey was conducted to gain views and experiences of the electronic SAP pilot. A total of 13 questionnaires were completed.

The following findings represent a summary of the results of the staff survey:

- The principles of SAP are an excellent idea. However, information technology requires further development for the process to be fully effective.
- The electronic pilot has not been successful, due mainly to problems with connection of the mobile technology.

- Access to SWIFT for look-up purposes has enhanced professionals' knowledge of patients/service users and has saved time in duplicating information.
- It takes approximately 15 minutes to gain access to SWIFT on the mobile technology via the Vodaphone GPRS card.
- The majority of IT equipment and network issues have been resolved satisfactorily. However, connection problems are still ongoing.
- Questions contained in the Easycare document can prompt staff to ask additional questions to gain more knowledge about the patient/service user.
- The majority of staff felt that the Easycare document was much easier to complete on paper.
- Staff felt that if they were sharing information across other sections they would see the benefit of SAP. Social Workers are now the only pilot site completing SAP assessments electronically.
- There is no review facility so assessments cannot be updated on SWIFT.
- There is not enough time to complete the SAP assessments as staffing levels are low and there is a large turnover of staff in some areas.
- 70% of staff reported that the new assessment process has increased their workload. This is mainly due to having to complete "two" assessments – one for their own records and a separate SAP assessment. 30% stated that there has been no change in their workload.
- Each SAP assessment takes between 1 to 2 hours to fully complete.
- 62% reported that other professionals completed the overview assessment to a standard that they could use. 30% have never seen an assessment completed by another professional. Only 8% could not understand the assessment.
- 77% found the Easycare assessment document easy to use. Only 7% experienced difficulty in completing the document, due to some staff requiring more I.T. skills.
- 77% felt that all questions contained within the Easycare document are relevant. However, family history/tree and falls assessment should be included.
- 38% said that patients/service users understand the new assessment process. However, 53% felt that patients/service users find the process too complicated to understand.

- 70% said that the new assessment process gave service users/patients the opportunity to contribute and ask questions.
- 61% gave a copy of the SAP leaflet to the patient/service user.
- The majority of staff felt that the SAP Pilot Working Party was useful as it was helpful to know that other pilot sites were experiencing the same problems.
- All staff was satisfied with the frequency of the meetings, which takes place on a monthly basis.
- The majority of issues/problems were resolved satisfactorily at the meetings. However, problems were experienced in selecting patients who met the criteria for the Single Assessment Process.
- 50% stated that the SAP IT Pilot Information file was useful, 50% have not made use of this. The file was a good resource of information but did seem very lengthy and complex in some sections.
- 53% were satisfied with the training that they received. However, 47% require additional or refresher training including the navigation of SWIFT screens, basic IT skills, Easycare and SAP.

5. SERVICE USER SURVEY

In order to evaluate the pilot, a service user survey was conducted to gain views and experiences of the Single Assessment Process. Home visits were undertaken and service users/patients who had been involved in the pilot were interviewed face-to-face. A total of 4 questionnaires was completed.

The following findings represent a summary of the results of the service user survey:

- All patients/service users were informed that they were involved in the pilot scheme. However, the information they could remember was limited, but this may be due to the time lapse between the professional visit and the Project Officer visit.
- All patients/service users were informed of the reason for the pilot scheme and they understood that professionals would not need to keep asking the same questions as information would be stored in one place.
- All patients/service users were fully informed of the assessment process and timescales for services provided.
- All patients/service users understood the assessment process and written information was provided for themselves and family members.

- All patients/service users felt that they were able to contribute to the assessment and were given the opportunity to ask questions.
- All patients/service users were happy with the length of time the assessment took which was approximately one hour. If the assessment was to take longer, they would be comfortable with this, as long as their needs were met and services were provided.
- All patients/service users understood why they were visited by more than one professional, who made clear the reason for the visit and the support/services they would receive.
- 75% of patients/service users felt that some questions were duplicated unnecessarily by different professionals. They felt frustrated that they had to provide the same basic details on numerous occasions and considered it a waste of professional time. Also in a crisis situation this could cause a delay in receiving an emergency service.
- 25% of patients/service users did not have questions duplicated unnecessarily because the two professionals from different services had already shared information before visiting their home.
- All patients/service users felt comfortable with professionals using a computer in their home, as long as they were told the reason for this and were given an explanation of what details were being recorded.
- Patients/service users felt that mobile working could be improved if an ID card system with medical history details could be put in place which would provide easy access and save professional time. It would also be easier to identify someone in an emergency situation.
- 50% of patients/service users received a copy of their assessment. 50% were still awaiting a copy but this was due to a replacement worker taking over the caseload.
- 50% of patients/service users had read the assessment document and understood the care they would be receiving.
- 75% of patients/service users felt that the scheme could be improved if person held records were left in the home. Home Carers currently operate this system so that other workers can access client information. However, they would not feel comfortable if financial details were contained within records.
- 25% of patients/service users thought that the Single Assessment Process was a very good idea as it would mean that all professionals would work together more closely and better services would be provided.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Staff and patients/service users were surveyed to find out their views and experiences of the Single Assessment Process, use of the Easycare document, use of mobile technology and the sharing of information.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED

From the findings it can be seen that progress has been achieved from the pilot:

- Patients/service users responded positively to the new assessment process. This is evident from professionals sharing information prior to visits which has resulted in collecting information on only one occasion. They also agree with the principles of SAP and feel that it is a positive step for the future.
- Patients/service users are comfortable with professionals using mobile technology in their own homes, as long as the process is explained to them beforehand. If the assessment in their home was to take longer this would also be acceptable.
- The majority of staff responded positively to the Easycare document as it is easy to use on paper and questions cover all areas of work. The document can also prompt staff to ask additional questions to gain more useful information.
- Some workers have had access to SWIFT for look-up purposes and found the information on the system invaluable.
- The use of the questionnaire on SWIFT has benefited social care staff but not Health staff.
- The outputs from the questionnaire on SWIFT have improved the quality of information available for service users/carers and providers.
- Mobile equipment has been used by a variety of staff in a variety of settings. Tablets are preferred by some staff as they are easier to transport but laptops have larger screens.

ONGOING ISSUES

From the findings it can be seen that the progress of the electronic SAP pilot has been influenced by:

- Issues associated with the SWIFT system – logging on, slowness of operation and connectivity problems. The replacement in October 2005 of all GPRS Vodafone cards to 3G cards will solve the slowness and connectivity problems.

- The present IT skills of workers and lack of training is impacting on the numbers of assessments undertaken.
- A number of workers reported that SAP has increased their workload over the past year. This is mainly due to having to complete “two” assessments – one for their own records and a separate SAP assessment.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

- A joint staff development strategy has been drafted to ensure that relevant and timely training is available to all staff .
- A SAP implementation strategy will be developed with recommendations to expand the use of Easycare across the Health and Social Care community.
- Discussions are currently taking place to enable Nursing and therapy records and assessment documentation to be replaced by the Easycare document, thus avoiding duplication.
- The Liquidlogic Protocol product supplies an integrated SAP solution that will address the issues raised as part of the pilot i.e. duplication, ease of use of SWIFT etc.
- The use of a person held record will need to be established using Easycare – as a paper version initially but ultimately electronically.