



Bleepa independent evaluation: Northern Care Alliance

Independent evaluation of Bleepa demonstrates time and cost efficiencies for patients, clinicians and the wider healthcare system

The safe and efficient management of patient referrals can play a key role in tackling delays, lowering the administrative burden of clinical staff and reducing patient length of stay.

It was with these objectives in mind that the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust adopted Bleepa within parts of clinical specialties with high referral numbers (including cardiology, respiratory and gastroenterology) in 2019.

Bleepa is an application that enables clinical staff members and those in multi-disciplinary teams to communicate, share and review relevant patient information and complete inpatient referrals.

In order to better understand the application's efficacy in facilitating faster clinical referrals and the benefits that could arise from this, Feedback Medical commissioned Unity Insights – a research and insights company experienced in evaluating healthcare innovations – to conduct a real-world evaluation, using historical data and forward-looking economic modelling.

The evaluation was composed of quantitative data covering 10,000 patient referrals from two trust sites where Bleepa has been in use (Royal Oldham Hospital and Fairfield General Hospital) and qualitative data from interviews with staff using the platform.

Unity Insights was also tasked with using the available data to gauge the impact of Bleepa at a hospital, trust and integrated care board (ICB) level.

Overall, it was found that use of Bleepa leads to highly significant benefits for staff, patients and the region's wider care system. These include shorter average referral times, time savings for staff, shorter length of stay for patients, and non-cash releasing savings to the system from both a trust and ICB perspective.

87%

reduction in clinical response time

74%

reduction in average time from submission to review

Key findings

Referral response times

- Within the respiratory specialty it took 0.28 days on average for a referral to receive a response. This is a decrease of 87% from the 2.1 day average identified in a previous study (Beattie, 2020)
- Bleepa referral data from July 2021 to April 2023 found that the average time from submission of a referral to first review across the trust's respiratory, cardiology and gastroenterology specialisms was 0.55 days. This was a reduction of 1.55 days (74%) compared to the 2.1 day average time lag recorded before the platform's deployment at NCA.



76%

of staff identified time savings through using Bleepa vs previous referral methods



80%

of staff identified an improvement in staff communication using Bleepa



88%

of staff said Bleepa was easy to use

Get in touch today to see how Bleepa can work for you.



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Staff experience

- Surveys highlighted that 76% of staff using Bleepa identified time savings, which was consistent with the quantitative findings.
- 80% of surveyed staff identified an improvement in staff communication when using Bleepa compared to previous referral methods.
- 88% of staff identified Bleepa as easy to use.

Patient experience

- The referral response times indicate that patients may receive treatment faster, which could yield a reduction in their length of stay.
- Approximately 32% of referrals could be handled without having to see the patient, suggesting that Bleepa could successfully handle at least 32% of patient referrals remotely.



*Net present value

Economic benefits

- The research estimates that the collected time savings from faster referrals, efficient clinical messaging and reduced length of stay for patients from NCA's use of Bleepa could unlock savings of £819,000 over the five years to the 2027/28 financial year (net of the cost of Bleepa).
- If effectively adopted across the whole Greater Manchester ICB footprint, it could free up £7.7 million in non-cash savings over the same period.

Conclusion

As the health and care system navigates its way through heavy elective care backlogs against the backdrop of both a tough financial environment and demands from the centre for even greater efficiency gains, the results of this evaluation offer encouraging signs around the benefits that Bleepa can yield.

By enabling efficient and effective clinical communication within the key specialties where it was deployed, Bleepa has demonstrated that it offers the potential to release valuable time back to care teams when compared to previous referral methods.

This is in part down to the fact that staff using the platform observed the ease with which they could use Bleepa to carry out key tasks associated with patient care. The vast majority of those who discussed their experience using the application (over 80%) told evaluators that it had improved their communication with their colleagues.

Finally, these findings also point to the economic benefits that can be afforded to the wider care system when Bleepa is implemented and used effectively to make referrals and collaborate within and between clinical teams.

Download the full report on our website



How to procure Bleepa

NHS organisations can procure Bleepa directly through the G Cloud 13 framework. It can be purchased and used across a hospital site or integrated care system.

Bleepa licences operate on a per user/per year subscription basis with discounts available for multiple users.

Get in touch today to see how Bleepa can work for you.