

## CASE STUDY

### UCLH Pharmacy Department create InForm - a formulary based drug information system

The University College London Hospitals Foundation Trust (UCLH) is one of the largest and best performing NHS trusts in England. When the hospital's widely acclaimed paper-based formulary - containing leading practice-based guides to good prescribing - became too unwieldy and difficult to update, the Trust identified a need for an electronic version of the formulary. UCLH chose to use the Multilex Drug Data File (Multilex DDF) from First DataBank Europe (FDBE) to add further functionality and value to the web-based browser.

The resultant system, InForm Online Formulary, now provides valuable access to current drug information, guidelines and protocols, and helps the Trust deliver pharmaceutical care with enhanced patient safety, reduced costs and improved efficiency.

## SECONDARY CARE

"We chose First DataBank Europe because its Multilex Drug Data File is a unique product and we felt that they would be willing to support us in achieving our aims."

Anita Jena-Smol,  
Pharmacy IT Project  
Manager, UCLH

### Situation

The seven hospitals belonging to the UCLH Trust, including the Heart Hospital and the University College Hospital, provide specialist and general hospital services for patients locally, regionally and nationally. The hospitals are also important centres for academic research and medical, nursing, midwifery and dental training.

In 1999 UCLH's Pharmacy IT Working Group identified a requirement for easily accessible, comprehensive drug information that could be updated on a more regular basis than their published book. The group faced many common issues - limited budget and resources, a variety of systems and practices already in place and a need for co-operation across the Trust. Early in the project, the team agreed to work with existing standard software that could ensure an intuitive transition process, encompass minimal training for staff and still meet clinical requirements.

Work started on InForm in 1999 and shortly after, the Pharmacy Department started working with FDBE, suppliers of Multilex DDF, the UK's leading

drug knowledge base. Multilex DDF was chosen as the basis for their drug information, as it contained trusted and comprehensive data on drugs and appliances in the UK.

Anita Jena-Smol, Pharmacy IT Project Manager at UCLH, said: "We chose First DataBank Europe because its Multilex Drug Data File is a unique product and we felt that they would be willing to support us in achieving our aims."

### Usage

The system opens with a Google-like search screen, which allows the user to enter a medicine or clinical keyword to search for drug information and clinical guidelines. The search brings up all matching drugs and related guidelines, protocols and any other pertinent information.

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First DataBank Europe is the UK's leading provider of drug knowledge bases and active clinical decision support.

Through the effective integration of our products into clinical systems, we enable safer prescribing, dispensing and administration.

NHS Connecting for Health has chosen First DataBank Europe to provide drug-related clinical decision support.

If drug information is required, users can click through to access all information held about the drug on Multilex DDF. This includes extensive information on interactions, side effects, precautions, warnings, contraindications, mandatory instructions, action groups, pack sizes and ingredients.

InForm version 1.0 was launched Trust-wide in 2000 and again (version 2.0) in 2006 and has proved to be an extremely valuable application for clinicians, pharmacists and members of staff throughout the Trust. Over the years the team has piloted InForm within the Trust and worked hard to incorporate user feedback to enhance the system. InForm is still evolving and recent improvements have included adding hyperlinks from medicine names within clinical guidelines to their appropriate drug monograph page within Multilex DDF and linking to the electronic patient record.

### Benefits

The project team's aim was to make InForm easy and intuitive to use so that little or no training would be necessary, and this has proved to be the case. InForm is increasingly used throughout the Trust, with clinicians suggesting developments to its functionality.

InForm also allows any clinical decisions made by the Use of Medicines Committee (UMC) to be implemented quickly and easily.

The procedure to update the formulary is much more structured and streamlined. New drug additions are discussed at monthly UMC meetings and once approved, they can be uploaded to the formulary almost immediately.

Clinicians now have quick and easy access to drug information, as well as Trust-specific protocols and guidelines. Information can be relied upon to be more up to date than before due to FDDBE's regular electronic updates.

"InForm is now the ultimate reference source for UCLH formulary medicines and drug-related clinical guidelines. The introduction of this system has vastly improved medicines management and governance across our hospitals" said Anthony Grosso, Formulary & Medicines Management Pharmacist, UCLH.