

Marie Curie increases productivity, creates a more supported workforce and improves quality of care with eCommunity



Marie Curie care for more than 50,000 terminally ill people in the UK, each year through a team of around 2,000 clinical and non-clinical staff. Their aim is to support everyone in the UK through all aspects of dying, death and bereavement – and to fight for a world where everyone gets to lead the best life they can, right to the end.



Managing a community schedule through emails

Before the introduction of a rostering and workforce planning tool, Marie Curie would manage their workforce schedule through emails and calls. At its busiest time, one person would be managing the schedule for Wales, the South East and South West of England - having to ensure messages to healthcare assistants and nurses were received for changes in visit times or updates to patient needs.

Relying on phone calls to update staff in the community about changes to appointments was almost impossible. If signal was poor, or messages weren't seen or heard in time, staff could be late or visits missed completely. The introduction of eCommunity has allowed details to be quickly updated and immediately reflected on team devices.

Rhys Jones, Senior Coordinator LCCC - Wales Region, Marie Curie says **"It was always difficult to get timings of contact right. The carers could be with a patient at the point of a call being made, so were unable to answer. Then, when they're free, the chances were that they'd be unable to return the call as we were most likely trying to reach someone else."**



Less admin and more time to care

In 2021, eCommunity was introduced as part of a wider procurement programme to help support community services. Once the implementation of eCommunity was complete, teams were trained and the workforce started to use the system, Rhys and his team started to see the benefits of one streamlined schedule.

Rhys Jones: **"From a co-ordinators perspective, it's easy to use and navigate. And whilst we use multiple solutions across our communities, eCommunity is by far the easiest system to train new staff on. It's the first one they are able to adopt and use quite quickly. It's all self-explanatory."**



Before we had this software, we had to ring in the day before to get our schedule. Our visits would start from 8:00am and the managers wouldn't be in until 9:00am so we'd often be ringing on our days off for 20-40 minutes at a time. There was just so much information we needed to know. And when you have up to 13 visits in a day, you can imagine how stressful that would be to keep on top of."

Tim Davis,
Healthcare Assistant,
Wales Community, Marie Curie

Tim now has the ability to view his schedule at any time, right up to five minutes before the day starts, allowing him to plan his day effectively.

The eCommunity system has also helped the team to navigate potential data protection issues when accessing contacts details for district nurses. All contact details are right there in the system, saving time searching for and requesting access to contact details. **“The eCommunity system has become a real base for all the information and work we have to do”,** said Tim. **“The link to Google Maps in the system also means travel is much easier! We cover the entirety of Cardiff and Vale in our team, so I’d previously be pulling all of the postcodes – again adding to the amount of admin and reducing the time of care. With eCommunity we get up and go!”**



Putting patients and families at the heart of care

Since introducing eCommunity Marie Curie has been able to offer more certainty to patients and their families. **“When booking in visits with families, all the details are a lot clearer for families and they understand they have a set call time. Everyone involved has a clearer picture”** commented Rhys.

Moving forward, Marie Curie will use the system to more accurately forecast demand and plan schedules, allowing them to inform families of support available well in advance, providing even more assurance at a time of great need.



Future focus on care and data quality

Whilst the organisation is already seeing the result of the solution, it’s widely recognised that there are still many more benefits to be achieved, as Marie Curie move into a second phase with eCommunity.



Productivity and supported staff is a great start, but where we’re really beginning to see an impact is with our senior nurses and clinical nurse managers who are being freed from the admin and have more time to care and supervise the wider workforce. It releases them to gain more oversight on care quality.

We don’t have a huge amount of historical data and trends yet, but we hope to soon start using the data we’re capturing to identify themes, allowing us to further understand our demand versus capacity.

Similarly, with our billing and invoicing – we hope to improve in this area so that we can correctly get paid for the work that we do through Commissioners.”

Julie Pearce,
Chief Nurse, Executive Director of Quality
& Caring Services



Closing the Loop

The final piece to the puzzle for Marie Curie, as they look to complete their digital transformation, is the launch of Loop.

Julie Pearce reflected: **“As a chief nurse, I’ve always wanted to be able to communicate directly with people who are delivering care in people’s homes because it’s very isolating.**

Loop is going to close that gap for us by providing an immediate and direct means of communication with all our staff and will provide us with a way of housing information for our frontline staff, so that they don’t have to visit our website or intranet for policies.”



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