

Cancer services:

# National Cancer Action Team use Fr3dom Health to evaluate National Pathway initiative

## About NCAT

The National Cancer Action Team (NCAT) is a national team that reports to the National Cancer Director. Its role is to support the NHS and facilitate the implementation of the NHS Cancer Plan. It works closely alongside the Cancer Policy Team in the Department of Health and the Cancer services Collaborative "Improvement Partnership". The CAT also works closely with the SHAs and cancer networks.

## Overview

NCAT have been working on the National Information Pathways in order to deliver a consolidated bank of information to cancer patients that is both consistent and comprehensive. Regional and sometimes local differences exist in what information is distributed and the intention was to ensure a consistent baseline of available information throughout the networks. Information was created and supplied by the charities, notably Cancer Research UK and Macmillan and access was through the pathways website with print outs generated locally.

Fr3dom Health was asked to create a strategy for the evaluation of the initial pilot phase of the activity to look at both the impacts on patient experience and the reality of using the online information pathways. The strategy had to include the users of the system (Cancer Nurse Specialists) and the recipients of the information (patients). The intention was to *audit* the response to the new system, not to research its impact. Initially five networks across four tumour types were recruited by Fr3dom for the project.

## Evaluation Strategy

Culminating in an integrated debrief with analysis carried out by the Picker Institute the strategy had three components: CNS weekly feedback undertaken through Fr3domHealth's PDA solution on site. Face to face interviews with patients before system implementation and again after implementation who had *experienced* the pathway system. To add a further layer of insight depth interviews with CNS were undertaken to evaluate views and attitudes towards the new system. Two stages of research were planned, a pre and post stage to assess the movement experience.

## Outcomes

The process is ongoing but interim results presented at the Cancer Action Team launch on the 21st July 2008 proved positive.

Feedback from CNS in respect of using the Fr3dom platform has been very strong and the implementation of PDA based interviews on site was highly effective. Subsequently the methodology has been enhanced by utilising other forms of data capture for low throughput clinics and this reflects the flexibility of the Fr3dom platform.

The online pathway information system is delivering tailored information across the UK and is set to continue rolling out. The users of the system found that ease of use improved over time and indicated strongly that availability of and access to information was greatly increased through the pathway system.

## National Cancer Action Team: United Kingdom

### Fr3dom Health provided

- Site recruitment
- PDA based CNS questionnaires
- Patient interviews on PDA and paper variants
- All quantitative field work
- Online data access
- Project management

