

An Audit to Assess the Impact of Electronic Patient Records on New Patient Clinics within the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute

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Introduction - The switch from paper based to electronic patient records (EPR) is an inevitable switch that will affect all hospitals. Enormous investment goes into the process of switching to EPR yet to the author's knowledge, there is no evidence that evaluates the effect this has on clinical practice within dentistry.

Aim - The aim of this audit was to assess the impact of a EPR record system on the smooth running of restorative clinics at the Leeds Dental Institute (LDI).

Objectives - Ascertain whether EPR systems are more efficient than paper based systems and identify any unforeseen problems with EPR. Furthermore, develop recommendations for other institutions planning to switch to EPR.

Method – The time taken to complete an restorative history and examination was recorded for a total of 100 patients over two data collection periods (50 patients per data collection period). The two data collection periods were; before the introduction of EPR, and immediately after the introduction of EPR. Data was collected from patients attending consultant restorative new patient clinics.

Results – The amount of time taken to record a history and examination using EPR took significantly longer than for traditional paper based systems.

Conclusion – The introduction of EPR is unlikely to increase the efficiency and smooth running of new patient clinics within restorative dentistry in the short term.

Abstract topic – Clinical Governance, Patient records, Dental records.