

Volume 1, Issue X

March 2011

Statistical Update March 2011

No. of GPs using
HealthlinkOnline:
2179

No. of Practices:
971

No. of Practice Staff:
1633

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Welcome to the tenth edition of the Healthlink newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners and colleagues for their support last year and I look forward to our continued collaboration in 2011. I hope this newsletter will be a useful source of information and am keen to hear your thoughts and feedback.

Gemma Garvan

General Electronic Referrals

Healthlink is participating in the National Electronic General Referral project being piloted by the HSE South West, Cork and Kerry. The pilot will also include AMNCH as a single site hospital. A reconfiguration team from the South West, Cork and Kerry has been appointed in the lead role to develop and manage a national pilot programme which will implement the system. This group is working on the processes required to enable the receipt of electronic referrals within the hospital setting. This new electronic form is based on the agreed ICGP/HIQA standard general referral form and we plan to have it available for use within HealthlinkOnline for the pilot regions later this year. We are also working with the accredited practice management systems to ensure it is also built into their software. This is an exciting project which should enable GPs to send all referrals into hospitals electronically over the coming years. GPs and patients will further benefit from a confirmed receipt of referral from the hospital.

NIMIS Project

The HSE National Integrated Medical Imaging System (NIMIS) project is investing over €40m in providing state of the art electronic radiology systems for 35 Irish hospitals. NIMIS will make Ireland's radiological services 'filmless' and provide a seamless data flow of patient images between hospital sites. Healthlink will be interfacing with NIMIS to send the electronic reports to GPs. Testing is underway and GPs connected to the phase 1 hospitals (Sligo, Beaumont, Mater and Waterford) should have access to radiology results via Healthlink in Q2 this year. Other hospitals shall follow based on the national rollout plan for the NIMIS project. In the long term we hope that this system will facilitate our introduction of online radiology ordering for GPs.

Services at a glance

The following tables show which services are available to GPs and Agencies from our participating hospitals.

Table 1. Outbound Messages per Hospital

√ = Live ✕ = Planned

Hospital	Lab	Radiology	OPD Appt	Dis-charge Summary	Discharge Note	A&E Note	Death Note	Waiting List	Co-op	Inpatient Admission	Cardiology Report	Outpatient Clinic Letter
Mater	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
Mater Private	✕	√	√		√						√	
Beaumont	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				√
St. James's	√	√	√	√ Pilot								
St. Vincent's	√	√	√	✕								
St. Michael's	√	√										
AMNCH	√	√		√ Pilot	√		√			√		
Connolly	√	✕										
St. Colmcille's	√	✕										
Naas	√	✕							√			
Limerick	√	√							√			
Ennis	√	√							√			
St. Joseph's Nenagh	√	√							√			
UCHG	√	√		√					√			
Merlin Park		√		√					√			
Mayo	√								√			
Roscommon	√								√			
Portiuncula	√											
Portlaoise	√											
Mullingar	√											
Tullamore	√											
Cavan	√								√			
Our Lady's Drogheda	√								√			

New Messages

A number of new messages have been recently introduced from existing hospital sites. St. Colmcille's Lab are piloting Microbiology reports with a number of local GPs. The pilot shall run for 4 weeks meaning we should have Micro results available to all practices before the end of April. Beaumont hospital has begun sending a new message type, Outpatient Clinic Letters. These letters are sent from the Epilepsy clinics which are held weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays and contain information on the patient's current condition, medication and any changes to their current therapy. Over in the West, Discharge Summaries are now being sent to GPs from UCHG and Merlin Park Hospital.

Table 2. Referrals per Hospital

√ = Live ✕ = Planned

Hospital	Breast Cancer	Lung Cancer	Prostate Cancer	Upper GI Cancer	Neurology	Chest Pain	MRI Request
Mater	√	√	√		√		
Mater Private	√					√	√
Beaumont	√	√					
St. James's	√	√	√	√	√		
St. Vincent's	√	√	√		√		
Limerick	√	√	√		√		
UCHG	√		√				
Letterkenny	√						
Cork University Hospital	√	√			√		
St. Luke's, Kilkenny					√		
Waterford	√				√		

Cancer Referrals

The first phase of our NCCP referrals project is nearing completion. Breast referrals have been signed off and are currently operating in each of the 8 national cancer centres. Prostate is live in 5 of the hospitals while Lung is still in pilot in 4 of the centres. The second phase of this project is the integration of referrals into the accredited practice management systems: HealthOne, Helix Practice Manager, Socrates and CompleteGP. Each of the vendors should have the 3 referral forms fully functioning in their systems during Q2 which will greatly improve the ease and speed of form completion for GPs. Acknowledgements are automatically received providing reassurance that the referral has been received by Healthlink. Furthermore, responses from Consultants can also be integrated with patient files in these systems, giving a full record of communication with the hospital cancer team.

Co-op Messaging

At the beginning of this year we ran a pilot of co-op reports with SouthDoc. The pilot was deemed a success so we went live with this service in March. SouthDoc covers the Cork and Kerry regions and has a membership of approximately 500 doctors at 26 local treatment centres. We are delighted to further establish Healthlink in this large area and provide GPs with the many benefits of these electronic messages.

Plans for 2011

- ≈ General Referral message creation and pilot in Cork/Kerry and AMNCH.
- ≈ Migration of regional messaging projects to Healthlink national messaging.
- ≈ Development of inter-disciplinary primary care referrals.
- ≈ Provision of cervical smear results to GPs.
- ≈ Transmission of histology results to the National Cancer Registry of Ireland (NCRI) and Cervical Check.
- ≈ Release Lab results from Navan and Dundalk hospitals.
- ≈ Continued roll-out of new services from existing sites eg. Microbiology reports from Midland Hospitals, Discharge summaries from St. Vincent 's.

About Healthlink

Healthlink is an electronic communications project funded by the Health Service Executive. The project was initiated in the Mater Hospital in 1995 but quickly evolved into a national project with the launch of HealthlinkOnline in 2003. Our service is available free of charge to all GPs. Some initial investment is required by Hospitals and Health Areas to become involved.

Our messages fall into two categories, in-bound and out-bound, reflecting the two-way communication capabilities of HealthlinkOnline. These messages are all specified in HL7 2.4 and formatted in XML 2.0. Full training and support is available to all users of the application. Training is usually provided over the phone however group sessions are organised periodically to cover specific areas such as Lab Order or use of online Referrals.

Would you benefit from an electronic referral service or other messaging from your local hospital?

Would you benefit from further training?

Please contact us to discuss your requirements.



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