

## **Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals roll out VitalPAC**

**26 June 2015**

Patients at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are to benefit from the latest developments in hand-held mobile technology as clinicians use electronic tablets to record patient observations. The hospital has been successful in attracting funding from the Nursing Technology Fund to support this project.

Currently, every time a nurse takes a set of patient observations, such as blood pressure, heart rate or temperature they are recorded on old-fashioned paper charts that are kept at the end of each patient's bed. The nurse then uses this data to work out their 'Early Warning Score', a point score which represents how sick the patient is.

From the end of June, nurses will begin to record this information onto a system called VitalPAC using handheld electronic devices. VitalPAC then automatically and accurately calculates the patient's Early Warning Score. If the patient's Early Warning Score is higher than it should be this can be quickly flagged to doctors or specialist staff who can access the patient's clinical observations and test results from any device connected to the hospital's computer network.

In other hospitals where it is used, the system has been shown to reduce the time it takes nurses to complete a set of observations by up to 40%, reduce rates of avoidable deaths by 15% and reduce the average length of stay by 10%.

The system will be rapidly rolled out across the hospital from 29 June. Around two wards a week will begin using the system with the roll-out complete in the autumn.

Speaking about the decision to install the system, Heather Caudle, the Trust's Chief Nurse said:

"Installing VitalPAC across the hospital will put better information in the hands of our clinical staff to enable them to take better decisions about patient care - as well as allowing them to work more efficiently. It is a win-win.

The system acts like an electronic personal assistant supporting our staff to ensure that every patient receives the highest standards of care at all times. The information that the system gives us about what is happening across the hospital will also help us to ensure we have the right resources available in the right place."

Director of Customer Engagement at The Learning Clinic, Nick Elliott, said:

"We know that where VitalPAC is used in other hospitals there have been sustained improvements in efficiency and patient outcomes so I am delighted that Ashford and St Peter's have chosen to install it. We look forward to continuing to work with the trust to help them maximize the benefits they get from our system."