

Case Study

Newborn infant Physical Examination (NIPE) gives babies the best start in life

Northgate Public Services is working with the National Screening Committee (NSC) to roll-out a national failsafe service in England to ensure that all babies undergo an examination to identify congenital health conditions.



The Challenge

Identification of new born babies with congenital conditions of the heart, eyes, hips or testes. As some conditions can develop later, the examination is repeated at six to eight weeks of age.

The Solution

NIPE SMaRT is a software solution that is combined with a new protocol for undertaking the examination, combined with reworked processes and procedures to ensure quality assurance and quality improvement.

The Outcomes

Provision of a failsafe service for examinations not offered or missed, as well as a way to track children through the healthcare system, make it possible to ensure that follow-up consultation and treatment are timely.



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The purpose of the examination is to identify babies likely to have conditions that may need further monitoring, investigation or treatment. However, as some conditions can develop later, the examination is repeated at six to eight weeks of age – the 'infant' part of the physical examination.

Every year a number of children have some form of congenital condition, this varies depending on the condition they have. For example:

- **Hips: 1-2 per 1,000 live born infants require operative treatment.**
- **Eyes: 2 or 3 in every 10,000 births have conditions such as cataracts and retinoblastoma.**
- **Testes: 2% of male infants have undescended testes at birth.**

Following a rigorous evaluation of the pilot outcomes of NPS' SMaRT solution, the new protocol and processes were given a unanimous green light by Department of Health and the National Screening Committee. The programme is being rolled out nationally.

Detecting congenital medical conditions early presents the best opportunity for swift diagnosis and treatment. It can be distressing for any parent to discover that their child has a medical condition at any point in their life.

Working with the NSC's NIPE Programme Centre, Northgate Public Services ("NPS") developed a solution (NIPE SMaRT). This, combined with a set of reworked procedures and processes, was piloted between 2009-2012 at 21 maternity units to assess whether the introduction of screening programmes could be monitored and assessed more easily. The pilot involved the examination of 36,000 babies (approximately 10% of babies receiving the newborn physical examination).

Late diagnosis can, for some children, mean living with a condition that has a major impact on them and their family; an impact that could have been avoided or reduced



Instant secure online access to patient records through SMaRT enable clinicians to provide better patient care.



Early diagnosis and treatment achieves better outcomes for children and their families.