



LabelTrace delivers better data in less time for GPs

As health authorities move towards electronic systems to improve patient care such as electronic patient records, electronic prescription transmission, and on-line laboratory test results, it is key that the fundamental processes are in place to support these new systems.

Problem for doctors

GPs are the front line in patient care and yet often have to rely on manual and inaccurate systems. In the case of sending samples to be tested in local hospital laboratories, doctors often use handwritten labels to identify the sample. Logging the patient ID, name and requesting doctor is key, and yet if one piece of this information is missing, then the results cannot be accurately transferred back to the GP.

A survey carried out by Argyll & Clyde found that a high percentage of test requests did not carry the necessary information. Only 15% of requests from doctors in general practice carried a patient ID; therefore introducing an electronic system for recording results would be of little benefit as 85% of samples would be unidentified.

Labelling system cures the problem

A solution to this problem was developed by QuickTrace Limited, in partnership with NHS Lothian and NHS Argyll & Clyde. Called LabelTrace, it interfaces with the patient record held on the GP system and with the click of one button, the software will generate a set of labels for each test request.

The label details key information such as

Patient ID

Surname, forename

Date of birth

Requesting doctor

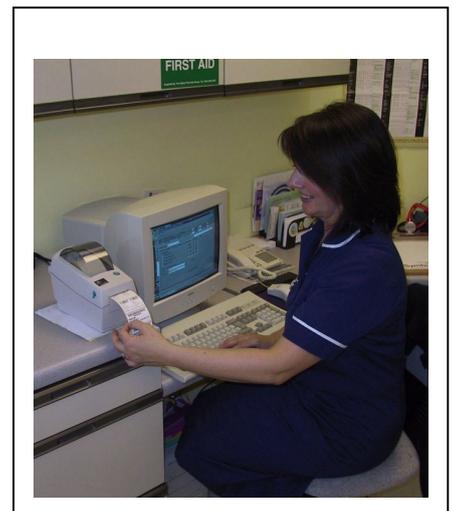
Labels are printed on a Zebra LP2824 label printer which was selected for several reasons:

Its small size doesn't take up too much room on the doctor's desk.

The serial connection option means it doesn't interfere with other printers connected to the pc.

The printers are easy to use and the direct thermal option means that there is no ribbon to change, keeping things simple.

All of the above combined with Zebra's reputation for robust, reliable printers made the LP2824 an ideal choice for this application.



Solution Technology

Zebra LP2824™

LabelTrace by QuickTrace Limited



After the label set has been printed, one label is attached to the actual sample and the other to the request form, which accompanies the sample. The sample is then sent off for testing at the laboratory.

When the request forms and samples are received at the laboratory, they are then scanned in, ensuring the requests are carried into the system with the correct patient details.

When testing is complete the results are then available to the doctor's practice.

The end result

Pilots of this system showed that following the implementation of the labelling system, 98% of requests contained the minimum data required for accurate testing and reporting through their new system (the remaining 2% were resolved through further training).

The improvement was immediate, saving up to 5-6 hours per week compared with the handwritten process.

After the success of the pilots, funding was made available by central government to allow laboratory labelling to be rolled out across all GPs in Scotland. Some 4000 printers are now utilised by LabelTrace systems.

For further information on LabelTrace, please visit <http://www.quicktrace.co.uk>

Data accuracy increased from 15% to 98% following the implementation of the system

5-6 hours per week saved by printing the test request labels

LP2824 is small and easy to use – perfect for this application

4,000 printers deployed in doctors' surgeries across Scotland

