

Media release - 17 June 2024

Northern Ireland's blood transfusion service migrates to Clinisys WinPath

Go-live is the latest milestone to be achieved by the CoreLIMS programme to create a single technology platform to support pathology transformation

Northern Ireland's CoreLIMS programme has achieved another significant milestone by migrating the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS) away from its 15-year-old laboratory information system and onto Clinisys WinPath.

The CoreLIMS programme, delivered by Business Services Organisation (BSO), has been set up to support the transformation of pathology services in Northern Ireland by combining the seven information systems used by laboratories across the country onto a single platform.

It is being implemented as a series of go-lives at health boards and pathology services. The NIBTS go-live is the first time the Clinisys WinPath system has been deployed across a national service. It will help NIBTS to deliver a more efficient and safer service to Trusts, GPs and, ultimately, patients.

Karin Jackson, Chief Executive of NIBTS and SRO of CoreLIMS, expressed her gratitude, "Thank you to all at NIBTS, BSO and CliniSys for all your long hours, commitment, support and enthusiasm over many months to make this happen so smoothly. Well done to all."

The CoreLIMS project is supporting the Health and Social Care Northern Ireland pathology transformation programme, which is working to create a regional model for pathology services.

The aim of this programme is to address some of the pressures facing pathology by introducing more standardised ways of working and creating better working conditions and career pathways for pathology staff.

Jennifer Welsh, Chief Executive of NHSCT and SRO of NIPIMS Programme, said, "I am delighted this go-live has been implemented successfully. I would like to acknowledge all the teams and individuals involved, for all the planning, preparation and long hours worked. These steps, together with enabling the continuation of this important digital project, will bring real benefits to staff and patients alike."

The programme will see Clinisys WinPath deployed at the laboratories serving the five health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland's Genomics Medicines Centre, as well as NIBTS.

Karen Bailey, Chief Executive of BSO, said the smooth go-live was a tribute to the careful preparation that had gone into it. "Congratulations to the BSO NIPIMS Team within the BSO Digital Directorate and to all in BSO that played a part in supporting the delivery of the programme."

Its first go-lives were delivered last November, when Belfast and South Eastern Health and Social Care Trusts went live in microbiology, blood sciences and new-born screening within three days of each other.

Since then, Clinisys WinPath has supported the production of more than 4.4 million reports for hospital clinicians and 1.5 million reports for GPs.

NIBTS is an independent special agency of the Department of Health established to collect, test and distribute blood and blood components from more than 55,000 blood donations per year.

It was using a legacy system developed in-house before going live with Clinisys WinPath in June. Belfast Health and Social Care Trust went live with the blood transfusion module of Clinisys WinPath soon after, to create a seamless service.

Robin Bell, Programme Manager at Clinisys, said the move to a new LIMS means NIBTS will be using a future-proof system that will always meet the latest regulatory requirements.

It also means that both NIBTS and hospitals will be using Clinisys WinPath to send and accept blood and blood components, reducing the need to transfer information from one IT system to another.

“This was an exciting go-live for Clinisys,” Bell said. “It is the first national system that we have deployed with WinPath and it keeps up momentum on the CoreLIMS project. It will deliver significant benefits to the blood transfusion service, which plays such a vital role in healthcare across Northern Ireland.

“The success of the go-live was down to the professionalism and collaboration of everybody involved. Now, we are looking forward to the next go-lives in this important programme.”

The CoreLIMS programme will continue to roll-out until 2025. It will also integrate with other, significant technology projects in Northern Ireland, to create a single, integrated electronic care record for every person in the country, that patients will be able to access through a portal.

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Notes to editor:

About Clinisys

Clinisys enables healthier and safer communities as a global provider of intelligent diagnostic informatics solutions and expertise that redefine the modern laboratory across healthcare, life sciences, public health and safety. Millions of laboratory results and data insights are generated every day using Clinisys' platform and cloud-based solutions in over 3,000 laboratories across 34 countries.

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About the BSO CoreLIMS Project

The Core Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) will combine the seven regional information applications used within HSC Pathology onto a single, regional platform. When this programme is completed, HSCNI will have in place a significantly modernised, improved, and rationalised Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). This will bring benefits of improved clinical care, risk and inequality reduction, with the capability to support wider organisational change taking place within HSCNI.

The Programme will be delivered through collaborative leadership across the HSC network and the supplier Clinisys. To learn more visit:

<https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/digital/nipims/laboratory-information-management-system-lims/>