Ewan Phillips, Managing Director of Deltex Medical, discusses the barriers to uptake of medical technologies in the NHS

ODM improves outcomes

Deltex Medical is the pioneering British company behind the revolutionary medical technology Oesophageal Doppler Monitoring (ODM). ODM is the only technology sensitive enough to detect small changes in blood flows, which allows doctors to optimise patients' circulating blood volume during surgery and avoid problems caused by reduced oxygen delivery. ODM patients recover more quickly and are able to return home sooner.

In his 2007 report, *A Framework for Action*, Lord Darzi said of ODM "seven randomised trials have shown simple use of cheap ultrasound technology to reduce length of stay consistently by two to three days in elective intra-abdominal surgery. The evidence-base is clear here and changes should be rapidly implemented across London".

"It is refreshing to have a clinician as health minister who understands the only two good reasons to adopt new medical technologies: to improve care or reduce costs – and in ODM's case, both," said Ewan Phillips, Deltex Medical's Managing Director. "This year's *High quality care for all: report of the NHS Next Stage Review* sees an important shift in policy thinking. Lord Darzi recognises that better quality care is often also cheaper care. Measuring, reporting and improving patients' outcomes could therefore free up huge amounts of NHS resources. The emphasis on quality and outcomes is crucial: while better care is often the means to cheaper care, cheaper care on its own is rarely the route to better care."

ODM has been endorsed by peer reviewed meta-analyses and a US government health technology assessment, yet this year it will be used on just 30,000 of the 750,000 patients who could benefit; a telling case study of the traditionally slow uptake of new medical technologies in the NHS. In April the Centre for Evidence-based Purchasing (CEP) published very positive results from its clinical and economic analysis of ODM, and ODM was selected in the first wave of projects for the new NHS National Technology Adoption Centre (NTAC) whose mission is to work with the NHS "to identify and overcome the barriers to adoption for innovative technologies which have already demonstrated clear benefits to patients and will improve system efficiency".

> "Wide-scale adoption of ODM alone could save the NHS substantially over £500m every year"

Whereas NICE looks at whether the health benefit of a treatment merits its additional costs, CEP and NTAC focus on technologies that improve health *and* reduce cost. The NHS may prioritise spending on technologies that increase rather than decrease costs, because they have been recommended by NICE rather than CEP or NTAC. Yet wide-scale adoption of ODM alone could save the NHS substantially over £500m every year, enough to allow NICE to recommend technologies with higher cost per Quality Adjusted Life Year.

Manchester Royal Infirmary has just purchased four CardioQ-ODM monitors to use on 40 patients a month during its NTAC project. This is a major breakthrough for Deltex Medical as, over several years prior to NTAC involvement, clinicians at MRI have had their business cases to implement ODM turned down. "We have started our clinical training programme and recruited an additional clinical trainer specifically to support the NTAC project in Manchester. We expect the hospital will want to expand usage before too long and to become a major global reference site for ODM as well as the success of this strand of the NHS innovation agenda."

To find out how your Trust could improve outcomes and reduce length of stay, please visit www.reducinglengthofstay.org or call Deltex Medical on +44 (0) 1243 774837.

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