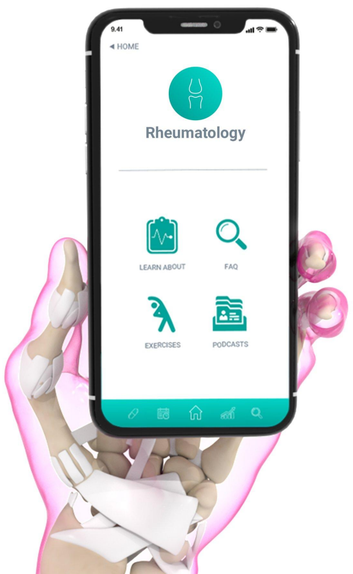


CONNECTPlus® Rheumatology



Background

A new diagnosis can be overwhelming. A patient receives lots of information about their condition, but remembering what the clinician said can be difficult. Patients have expressed fear and confusion over diagnosis, treatment and medication options and details.

In addition, Torbay & South Devon NHS Foundation Trust were receiving an unsustainable amount of demand and phone calls to the Rheumatology Department; the growth in patient numbers, the expectation of more information and support, and the need to start new medications in the timeframe set out by NICE guidelines.

These growing demands were causing delays in medications becoming therapeutic and ultimately, delays to early remission. To improve outcomes and increase department capacity, we wanted to create a safe place to share assured advice and information to patients and their families, that could be accessed 24/7.

Our solution

Working in close partnership with the Rheumatology Multi Disciplinary team, Torbay Arthritis Project and patient focus groups, a mobile app called CONNECTPlus was co-designed with Health and Care Innovations Limited (HCI) and launched in 2 phases.

Phase 1 - Information and Support

To educate, support and empower patients to enable them to better self manage their care at home and to reduce the need for face to face or phone consultations and calls to the helpline.

Phase 2 - Interactive PROMs & Medicines Management

To empower and engage patients with symptom trackers and interactive features that allow more interaction between patient and consultant, allowing patients to get feedback on their disease progression and the healthcare team to intervene more precisely with the benefit of more information.

Features and benefits

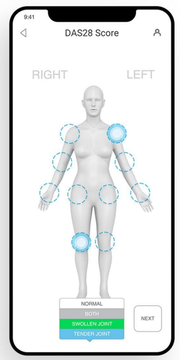
Patients are directed to the CONNECTPlus app by their clinician during an appointment or through patient letters and other Trust communication channels.

Information - Videos and Text

Clear and concise condition specific information available as video and text, to enable the delivery of patient education 24/7 or when face to face isn't possible.

FAQs

Department specific frequently asked questions to personalise the information given to patients and reduce calls to the department helpline.



Symptom Trackers

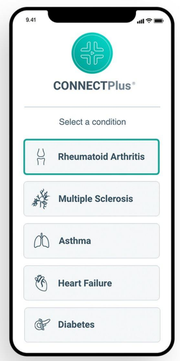
A range of trackers and health scores to ensure accurate and regular monitoring of condition progression. Enables remote and patient initiated follow ups based on trusted data.

Medication Management

Add prescribed medications, dosage and reminders. Improves medication management and reduces wastage costs.

Appointment Reminders

Add appointments, links to local clinic locations, logs questions to ask and provides reminders, in order to reduce 'did not attend' rates and focus appointments.



Meet the Team and Contact Us

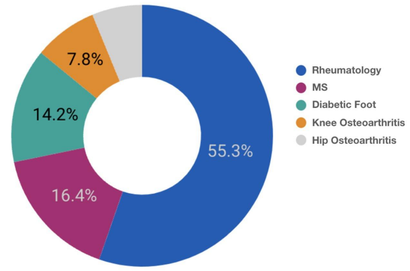
Makes the connection between patients and their health team with direct click to call and email functions.

Multiple Conditions, One App

Because 25% of patients have more than one condition, CONNECTPlus is a digital platform that supports the whole patient (not just their diseases) by enabling Trusts to offer support in many different conditions, procedures and care pathways, all in one place.

Usage statistics

Date Range: April 2020 - October 2021



Total number of users: 4,943
Total number of sessions: 8,098
Most popular pages: 'Meet the Team', 'Learn About' and 'Contact & Clinic Locations'

Key results

- 12 hour saving in nursing time each week due to patients being educated through app content group education clinics. The team previously ran 4 x 4 hour clinics, now reduced to 1 x 4 hour clinic.
- Waiting times to start new medication reduced from 3 weeks to 1 week.
- 100% removal of all face-to-face subcut Methotrexate appointments.
- Patients feedback scores that average 9 out of 10.
- 100% of new start patients for DMARDs, subcut Methotrexate, and Biologics are now educated remotely through the information videos in the app.
- Over 40% reduction in daily calls to the helpline (calls reduced from 70+ calls a day to around 40 calls a day.)
- Shortlisted in the HSJ 'Driving Efficiency through Technology' Award.
- Winner of the Building Better Healthcare Award for Patient Centred Software.

See what patients say about the CONNECTPlus® App by scanning here:



To find out more contact info@hci.digital