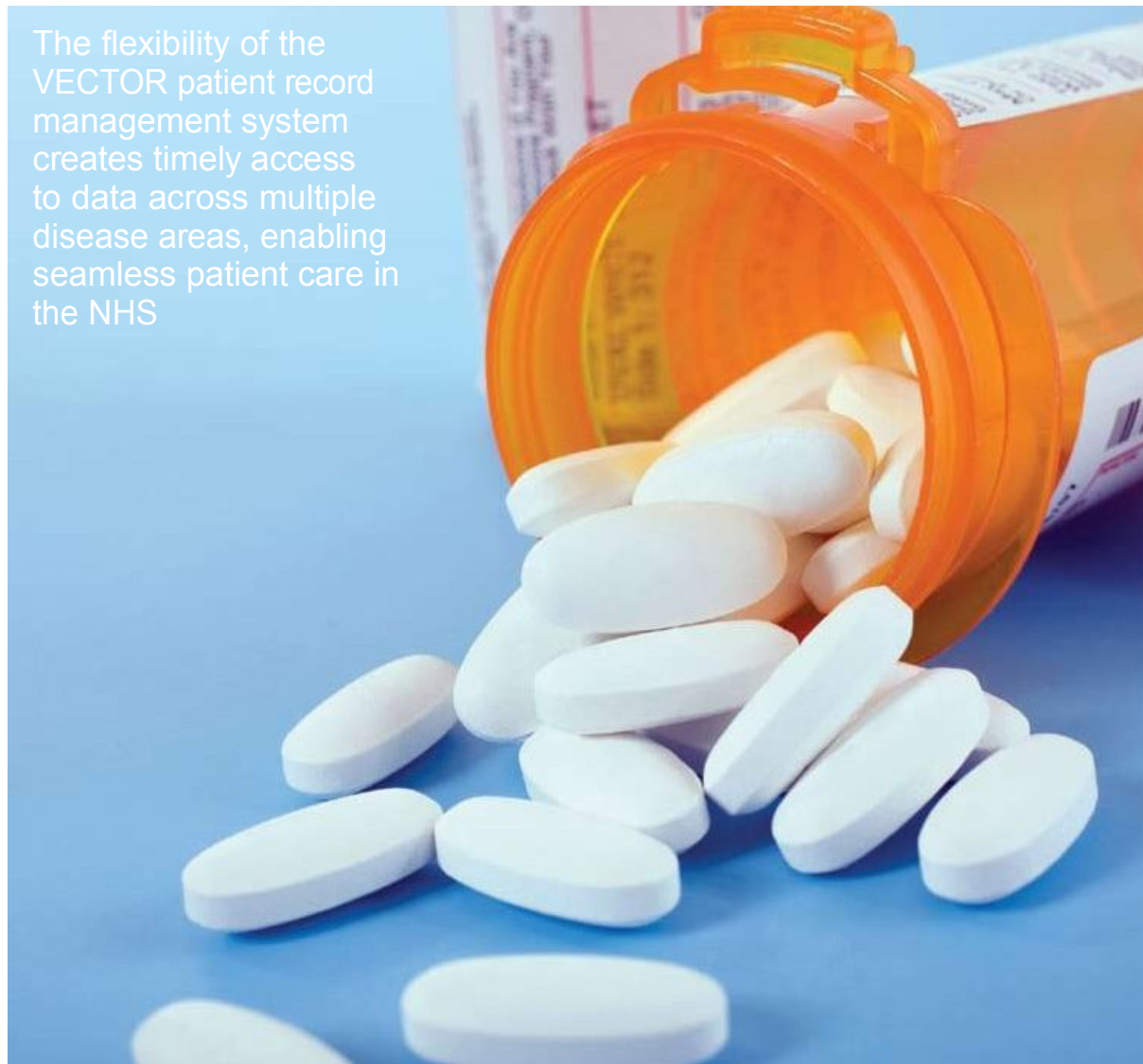


Supporting disease management

The flexibility of the VECTOR patient record management system creates timely access to data across multiple disease areas, enabling seamless patient care in the NHS



Health Information Systems (UK) Ltd (HISL) supplies clinically-rich electronic patient record systems (EPRs) to health institutions throughout the UK and around the world. Originally based at the world-renowned Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in London, the company has its roots in developing team-based EPRs, the first of which was 'Diabeta3', used in diabetes management.

With the product range being developed for new disease areas, there was a need for re-branding, and the generic name of VECTOR was chosen. There are now versions of this diverse EPR application for Diabetes, Diabetic Retinopathy Screening, Cardiology, Orthoptics (Cataract, Glaucoma, Vitreo Retinal, Low Vision, Medical Retina, Orthoptics & AMD), Hypertension, Urology (bladder, testicular and prostate cancers), Lipids, and Sickle Cell, with further disease areas under discussion.

PERSONAL SERVICE

The core of the HISL Team have been together for over 10 years now, although the roots of Diabetes Clinical System are in the 1970s. 'With the team initially based in the hospital environment and working with clinicians day to day developing and evolving systems, HISL brings an unrivalled depth of experience to help healthcare professionals to implement a system to match their own particular clinical requirements', according to CEO Steve Courtney.

'The stability of the VECTOR Team, with many years of health experience, is invaluable, both to us when designing a system, and to our clients so that we can help them get the most out of the technology available. Working closely with our clients every day, we consider ourselves less as a third-party supplier, and more as a part of their team. Additionally, we maintain

close relationships with the client's own IT department, which is fundamental to the success of any system. Our track record speaks for itself. We have happy customers around the UK where VECTOR is configured to fit in snugly with clinical practice. We foster close relationships with team members at each hospital, allowing us to ensure that VECTOR supports and enhances all aspects of the care process'.

VECTOR HISTORY

Formally known as Diabeta3, VECTOR was developed at St Thomas' Hospital, London in the academic Department of Medicine by a team of systems analysts and programmers, in

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close liaison with the St Thomas' diabetes care team. VECTOR now supports every aspect of the multidisciplinary care of patients with diabetes, and its users range from administrative and clerical staff through to nurses, podiatrists and dieticians to consultant Diabetologists.

The first version of the diabetes clinical information system was developed in the early 1970s. Since then, the system has become increasingly sophisticated, evolving into Diabeta3, and is now in use in over over 20 acute clinics around the UK, supporting the full range of disciplines involved in the provision of long term care.

FLEXIBLE BY DESIGN

As Steve Courtney explains, VECTOR has been designed, above all, to be flexible. 'Over the many years we have supported clinical care, we have found that modifications to the system are required as standards and practices change.

Initially, we found that medical staff all shared information, but needed the facility to record their own specialised data. From this premise, VECTOR has grown to allow a depth of knowledge to be available to each discipline, as well as the facility to share core common information across specialities and disease areas.'

When a site chooses VECTOR, they don't just purchase a fixed set of screens around which their clinical practice must adapt; they get a tailored system. Specialised report writing, and ordering which is unique to the way individual organisations work can be incorporated. VECTOR has therefore been written to be flexible enough to meet the needs of today, and to adapt to the needs of tomorrow.



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With the constantly changing needs of clinicians and management and the diversity of technology available within the NHS, the direction taken in developing VECTOR has centred upon meeting these changes. This in-built flexibility ensures that an investment in VECTOR is an investment in clinical service for the long term'.

SEAMLESS PATIENT CARE

Health Information Systems is now a successful commercial concern, with sales funding the further development of the system to meet NHS needs.

As Steve Courtney says, 'NHS innovations such as the N3 network are being exploited and the inherent flexibility of VECTOR means it can be easily adapted to support the information needs across the whole care team. GPs, via access to N3, are now able to view their patient's record, held on the VECTOR database within the acute hospital, from their own surgery. Further, linking to N3 via secure tokens will benefit clinicians making home visits by allowing access to the main system via any PC or laptop accessing N3, thus enabling updates from remote sites.

VECTOR has also been developed for Diabetic Retinopathy Screening and has been deployed across the UK, including Greater Manchester, which covers over 100,000 patients across nine PCTs, with data being captured from some 104 High Street Optometrists and a variety of static and mobile camera stations.

VECTOR now offers a multi-disease electronic patient platform, covering a care pathway across diabetes management, diabetic retinopathy screening and the Orthoptics sub-specialities of Cataract, Glaucoma, Orthoptics, Low Vision, Primary Care, Vitreo Retina, and Medical Retina. This multi-disease platform approach obviates the need for a healthcare organisation to procure a multiplicity of systems from several different suppliers, which would result in the duplication of data and effort, and a maintenance nightmare.

With VECTOR, one EPR services many disease areas, with the ability to link into other Trust and national systems via an in-built integration engine, using industry-standard methodologies.