

# Staffordshire County Council to Manage Social Care Records With Tower Software

Submitted by: WiseTiger - DO NOT USE

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Electronic document and records management software, TRIM Context, to embrace estimated 225 million pieces of paper across 4,500 users in the authority's social and health services

Staffordshire County Council is set to overhaul its social care operations with the introduction of TOWER Software's TRIM Context electronic documents and records management (EDRM) software. The initiative will ensure that critically important information is available to the right people, all of the time – supporting all members of staff, particularly those working on the 'front line' and outside of normal office hours.

The authority employs more than 3,000 people in social services, and serves around 500,000 clients - 35,000 of which are 'live' cases at any given time. Each social worker handles between 25 and 45 cases, for which there are currently 400 different paper-based forms. Information contained within these forms is manually entered into the existing line of business system, "CISS" (Client Information for Social Services). The new EDRM system will address risks associated with the accuracy of such data entry. With an estimated 225 million pieces of paper across the council's Social Care and Health Directorate, it also anticipates cost savings and efficiencies by reducing the overwhelming volume of paper being used, storage capacity required.

Brendan Sullivan, Resource Manager at Staffordshire County Council, Social Services explains, "County Councils are complex organisations that traditionally operate with silo data bases. We see the development of an Electronic Social Care Record as the first step on a longer journey towards a truly user focused information strategy. The first step on this road, to keep it manageable for front line staff, will be to link our Client Information System "CISS" to the Electronic Social Care Record using the "TRIM Context" software via an on-screen icon. This will provide efficient and easy access to electronic case files for front line staff that 'need to know'."

"As well as using the software to develop the Electronic Social Care Record, we will also be using it to develop a Council Wide County Children's Record in anticipation of Children's Trusts," continued Sullivan. "The software is also incrementally being used to provide a systematic approach to electronic file management across the organisation, delivering administrative efficiencies and ensuring the Council can respond efficiently to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. More importantly though, will be the positive impact of delivering timely and accurate information to those who need it, 24 hours a day, 365 days per year," he concluded.

"The whole project at Staffordshire was borne out of the mandate by the DoH for better information management to deliver better care," added Tony Sumpster, Managing Director EMEA at TOWER Software. "By October this year, councils should be able to locate and analyze information electronically – gaining a holistic picture of each case file. By October 2005, they should be sharing information electronically with associated and linked public services, hospitals, care trusts and education services – probably via remote, browser access. To achieve all of this, while complying with the Caldicott\* principle related to the management and exchange of patients' personal information within the NHS, is

an onerous task, but is easily achieved with EDRM technology,” he concluded.

TRIM Context will also be a component in Staffordshire County Council’s management of the Data Protection and Freedom Of Information Acts. It will work alongside the authority’s existing CRM, SAP, CISS and Intranet systems.

\*The principle of the Caldicott rules is that individuals should always be referred to by their NHS Number in the exchange of data and information within the NHS. Even if names and addresses are removed, the combination of date of birth and postcode, for example, can allow individuals to be identified. This applies particularly to the transmission and storage of data, such as minimum data sets. Wherever practicable, the Practice will endeavour to adhere to this principle.

#### About TOWER Software

TOWER Software, a leading enterprise content management (ECM) provider, delivers electronic document and records management (EDRM) solutions. TOWER Software's award-winning solutions empower organisations to manage and secure their vital information assets. The TRIM Context solution is a single, integrated platform that manages business information throughout its complete lifecycle. By relying on its proven domain expertise, strong strategic partnerships and powerful solutions, TOWER Software enables organisations to improve the accuracy of information on which business decisions are made; maximise efficiency by finding business critical information more quickly and easily; and achieve and maintain standards compliance across industries, resulting in sustained competitive advantage. TOWER Software is a privately held company with operations in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

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