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The NPE_x User Group 2017 went off with a bang!

On Wednesday 12th July 2017, the annual NPE_x User Group took place at the Imperial War Museum in Manchester where over 90 delegates (both users and prospective users) from over 60 laboratories attended.

Owen Johnson, Director of X-Lab Ltd, opened the day with introductions and the aim of the day. The Keynote speaker and Guest of Honour Owen Williams, Chief Executive at Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS FT, kicked off the day by emphasising that organisations must challenge existing ways of working and continue to drive change to enable organisations to become 'paper-lite'.

Following this, a number of presentations were delivered which were all very well received:

- **Steve Box, Business Development Manager from X-Lab Ltd and Patrick Davy, Software Developer from X-Lab Ltd**, presenting 'NPE_x Updates'
- **Dave Gibbs, Pathology Services Director, Severn Pathology**, presenting 'Connecting Laboratory Services in the South West'
- **Anil Saggi, UK Country Manager, Werlabs**, presenting 'Direct to Consumer Testing Services through NPE_x: A successful pilot'
- **Mark Hasselholdt, Project Manager, Manchester PHE**, presenting 'Enabling Bacteriology reporting with NPE_x'
- **Steve Davidson, General Manager for PMO and Transformation, Empath**, presenting 'Antenatal Reporting using NPE_x'
- **Ian Britton, Specialist Services IT Systems Manager, NHS Blood and Transplant Service**, presenting 'Red Cell Immunohematology Pilot'
- **Andrew Robins, Senior Analyst Programmer, UKNEQAS**, presenting 'Automating EQA Reporting with NPE_x'.

In the afternoon six workshops enabled a wealth of discussion amongst our speakers and users, these included:

- Driving Efficiencies in the Performing Laboratory Process: hosted by John Hewitt, Manchester Royal Infirmary
- New User Demo - Training and Walkthrough: hosted by Sam Gair & Abbie Marsay, X-Lab Ltd
- An NPE_x Specification for Microbiology - Challenges and Opportunities: hosted by Andy Harris, X-Lab Ltd
- NPE_x Reporting Dashboards: hosted by Sam Bates, X-Lab Ltd
- NPE_x for Enabling Genetics Testing: hosted by Hayley Millsom, X-Lab Ltd
- The Case for NPE_x: Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs): hosted by Chris Dunne, THIS & Dave Bottoms, STP Project Manager

Copies of all slides are available on the **NPE_x News website**. If you would like to contact us to discuss further details of any of the content covered on the day, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

npex.usergroup@x-labsystems.co.uk

On behalf of everyone from The NPE_x team, we would like to **t'ank you** for a truly successful event and we all look forward to seeing you again next year!



A word from our Guest Speakers



Mark Hasselholdt,
Project Manager,
Manchester
PHE - 'Enabling
Bacteriology
reporting with
NPEx'

“I was asked to speak regarding the work my laboratory undertook with the Microbiology department at Tameside to set up an NPEx link between our respective sites, with a specific emphasis on enabling the electronic transfer of MRSA screening results.

My presentation began by detailing issues involving time, volume and resources, but principally centred around the fact that this was the first Bacteriology link we had set up via NPEx. I described the end-to end processing of a specimen through the laboratory, detailing any changes and benefits added where appropriate.

In common with many Microbiology labs, our eventual aim is to enable the full electronic transfer of results in addition to the textual report currently supplied. We would be happy to work together with X-Lab and other laboratories in order to achieve this solution via NPEx.”



Ian Britton,
Specialist Services
IT Systems Manager,
NHS Blood
and Transplant
Service - 'Red Cell
Immunohematology
Pilot'

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“I was pleased to speak at the recent NPEx User Group about NHS Blood and Transplant's experience so far of using NPEx to enable EDI, our current activities, and our plans for the future. The ambitious pilot we planned a few years back had to be significantly re-scoped, but the proof of concept we finally created, that connected our own LIMS to a test Labcentre system was an important milestone. One thing we certainly proved was the need for a standard to cover blood transfusion results.

That is why we have spent the last year or so working with NHS Digital, major LIMS suppliers and the wider UK transfusion community to agree a first draft of a standard that covers simple 'group and screen' results and some virology tests. We are now planning a pilot to use that new standard with one of our antenatal testing customers. We are also encouraging other labs to start using the standard as well.

It is always great to meet with other members of the community, discuss our shared challenges and what we can learn from each other. Thanks again to X-Lab for making this possible.”



Steve Davidson,
General Manager
for PMO and
Transformation,
Empath - 'Antenatal
Reporting using
NPEx'

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“My presentation was concerned with a project to enable the seamless transfer of results between two trusts without the need to book-in samples on the customer site LIMS system.”

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John Hewitt,
Chief Biomedical
Scientist,
Manchester Royal
Infirmary - 'Driving
Efficiencies in
the Performing
Laboratory
Process'

“I hosted a workshop in the afternoon entitled “Driving Efficiencies in the Performing Laboratory Process”. Greater Manchester Immunology Service use NPEx to receive and report approximately 330,000 chargeable tests a year and have seen a number of recurring problems associated with the booking in process.

We're in the early stages of moving onto a pathology wide managed equipment contract and saw this as an opportunity to improve the way samples were booked in from the manifest. Ideally, we were looking for an analyser registration process however differences in barcode structures make this difficult without re-labelling. There was some discussion around printing compatible labels on either site and removing the need for the manifest however as the same lab number could be used by more than one site, the manifest was identified as a way of ensuring the site was identified.

Another option that was suggested was that rather than scanning barcodes individually from the manifest, which is a source of error, that the entire manifest be labelled and scanned. We're working with NPEx to evaluate these options.”



Anil Saggi UK
Country Manager,
Werlabs - 'Direct
to Consumer
Testing Services
through NPEx: A
successful pilot'

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“Werlabs presented an overview of how it works with NHS to provide preventative health monitoring for consumers using NPEx.

The day was very positive giving us the chance to interact with our partners and learn more about what their needs are, as well as talking to future partners that showed interest in working with Werlabs. A great experience and we look forward to next year's event.”



Andrew Robins,
Senior Analyst
Programmer,
UKNEQAS, -
'Automating EQA
Reporting with
NPEx.

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“This years' NPEx User Group was an eagerly awaited opportunity to let NPEx users know about the collaborative project between ourselves at Birmingham Quality UK NEQAS and X-Lab. Using NPEx to automate the electronic return of EQA data is proving to be a very exciting venture and we look forward to live trials this autumn prior to a full 'press release' later in the year.

The project announcement was clearly well received with many attendees asking when the functionality would be available for their laboratory, clearly recognising the benefits and time-savings they could achieve. As with previous years, the day was a friendly, interesting mix of presentations, feedback and workshops, with the added bonus of selfies in front of an armoured tank!”

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Werlabs



In January 2017, the private consumer testing service, Werlabs, successfully launched their services in the UK with a pilot at Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CMFT). This new service allows UK residents to order a variety of tests and healthcare checks at their own cost but through NHS facilities. The National Pathology Exchange (NPE_x) was used to enable connectivity between Werlabs and CMFT.

Background

Werlabs' focus is to promote health surveillance through blood analysis. By providing users with regular blood test results they can gain better control of their health and well-being. Possible examples of users who may be interested in this service could be those who are currently managing a chronic illness or seeking to reduce the risk of metabolic diseases such as diabetes and heart related diseases.

The partnership between Werlabs and X-Lab began in the summer of 2015, where work was completed to develop a new user interface for the Werlabs service, with two members of X-Lab staff travelling over to Sweden to initiate the project. For more details please see [here](#).

Werlabs and NPE_x

As this is a private service, and separate from the NHS, bespoke development was required to enable compatibility with the current NPE_x architecture. Results can now be sent and received via NPE_x between Werlabs and any NHS laboratories connected to NPE_x. The project was split into two phases where phase had some aspects of the process requiring manual

entry and phase 2 was a fully automated process. Imperial College and Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals are the first NPE_x sites to go live with the service.

How does it work?

A patient orders a test via the Werlabs website. They would then go to a phlebotomist to give blood and the sample is sent to the relevant lab. Once the test has been completed the results are transferred from NPE_x to the Werlabs journal and available to the patient instantaneously.

What next?

X-Lab are currently doing further development work to transform to a completely automated service ready to be launched at other NPE_x pilot sites across the UK.

Will Stoddart, CEO Werlabs: *“Working with X-Lab has enabled us to innovate in a difficult market at a speed that would have seemed impossible without the partnership. In fact, we built a probability tree estimating how likely it would be that we would be working with the NHS to provide vital digital information regarding blood tests directly to the end user. We estimated the chance at 30%. Here we are today, live in London and Manchester and rapidly expanding into new locations. This is all down to a strong relationship and collaboration between both our companies.”*

Matt Labiak, Senior Laboratory Order

Communications Analyst: *“Working with Will and Patrick on this was a great experience and a new challenge to both myself and the team, mainly due to the nature of private work being performed by the NHS laboratory. Historically, we have been limited when it comes to exchanging digital information between both public and private sectors but X-Lab made it possible thanks to the utilisation of already existing NPE_x interfaces. Care was taken to fulfil both the Information Governance and Specimen Acceptance Policy requirements ensuring that the same levels of safety and quality are maintained at all times. I wish great success to both the Werlabs and X-Lab and hope to be able to use the service for my own family in the near future.”*

First hospital in the SW peninsula subscribes to NPE_x



Fantastic news – Derriford Hospital will incorporate NPE_x into its service portfolio in Autumn 2017. Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust will be the first laboratory service across the SW peninsula to adopt NPE_x to digitally book in external test requests and send out results to send away laboratory partners.

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust is the largest hospital in the South West Peninsula, providing comprehensive secondary and tertiary healthcare, serving a local population of 450,000 and providing a range of specialist services for almost 2,000,000 people.

As a regional specialist teaching hospital, we provide a wide range of training and education working with partners in the medical school and local universities. The NPE_x deployment will enable connectivity to a DXC LIMS.

Richard Miles, Pathology Services Director, commented:

“We expect the go-live date for NPE_x at Derriford Hospital to be towards the end of 2017 and this hospital, in its decision to adopt NPE_x, anticipates that colleagues in the Peninsula are exploring this route to provide significant improvements in connectivity, reducing patient turn around times and removing manual process which are subject to error.”

New Starters

X-Lab are pleased to announce two new members of staff to have recently joined their team to further drive the company's current and future support and deployments across the NHS.

- **Sam Bates** – Deployments and Support Technician
- **Hayley Milsom** – Business Analyst

Sam is starting his full-time position as a Deployments and Support Technician following a placement year with X-Lab between 2015/16 as a Deployment Coordinator, where his main duties were to manage various deployment projects for new NPE_x subscribers. Having graduated with a 2:1 degree in Information Technology from University of Leeds, Sam is looking forward to continuing working on the NPE_x service, both managing new and existing projects and looking at further developing NPE_x in the future.

Hayley has worked at X-Lab since 2015 completing a placement year and working part time during her final year studies at The University of Leeds. After graduating with a First Class Honours degree in IT, Hayley has now started a full time position at X-Lab as our Business Analyst. She is now taking on the responsibility of working with current and new NPE_x customers to ensure that all laboratories across the network are utilising the system by maximising connections, whilst working towards reducing the amount of paper flows.

Outgoing Shipments...

After almost two years at X-Lab, Lana Younis is leaving the NPE_x family to pursue a career in Project Management in Digital Health and Social Care. Lana has worked as the lead contact on the NPE_x Support Desk during her time and has developed strong relationships with many users across the NPE_x network. We wish her the very best of luck in her future career!

We would like to emphasise the importance of the work which Lana has done to transform the Support Desk during her time at X-Lab, and we will be keeping the same high level of support standards which have been set during Lana's role within the NPE_x Team.

Therefore, we would like to remind all users for all NPE_x support related issues, please submit a Remedy on Demand ticket which can be found on the Help and Support section on the NPE_x User Interface. Alternatively, contact the Health Informatics Service Desk on 0845 127 2600.

NPE_x launches its own User Forum!



NPE_x has launched a User Forum as part of its move towards encouraging customers to participate in open discussions with the NPE_x Team and other NPE_x labs to share information through vital discussion and feedback.

The Web Forum is entirely user-focused and will centre on queries, questions or concerns which may have arisen during a lab's use of NPE_x. There is also a dedicated section providing a training/refresher guide which allows new and existing users to brush up on their knowledge to get the most out of their investment in the system.

The Forum is now available for all Live and Test users – please find a new link in the top left corner of your NPE_x User Interface and log in with your NPE_x credentials.

Andy Harris, General Manager at X-Lab, commented “the forum is already showing its value when discussing more complex ideas and possible enhancements to NPE_x as it provides a history of evidence and thoughts in a structured manner. There is also a healthy number of lab to lab discussion and questions starting to form, this should enable users to further advance their use of LIMS capabilities.”

Join the conversation today at: <https://forum.xlab.this.nhs.uk/>

Recent sites subscribed to NPE_x

The NPE_x family is continuing to grow as two new sites are now officially live on the system:

- Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals
- Addenbrooke's Hospital - Cambridge University Hospitals

In addition, NPE_x has also had four new sites subscribe to the service and is currently in the deployment stages of implementation:

- The Walton Centre
- Severn Pathology (Including North Bristol, UH Bristol and Bristol PHE)
- Empath (Third LIMS between Leicester/Nottingham for Antenatal Blood Grouping)
- Isle of Wight