

What's next



Healthcare

The role of Allied Health Professionals in documenting the patient story

Allied health professionals (AHPs) span a diverse range of occupations and their care is carried out in many different clinical settings - often in the community. As for all healthcare professionals there are patient record keeping requirements but the range and scope of AHP activities presents some unique challenges. In a recent tweet chat with AHPs and a forthcoming roundtable we explore the nature of these challenges and how technology has a role to play.

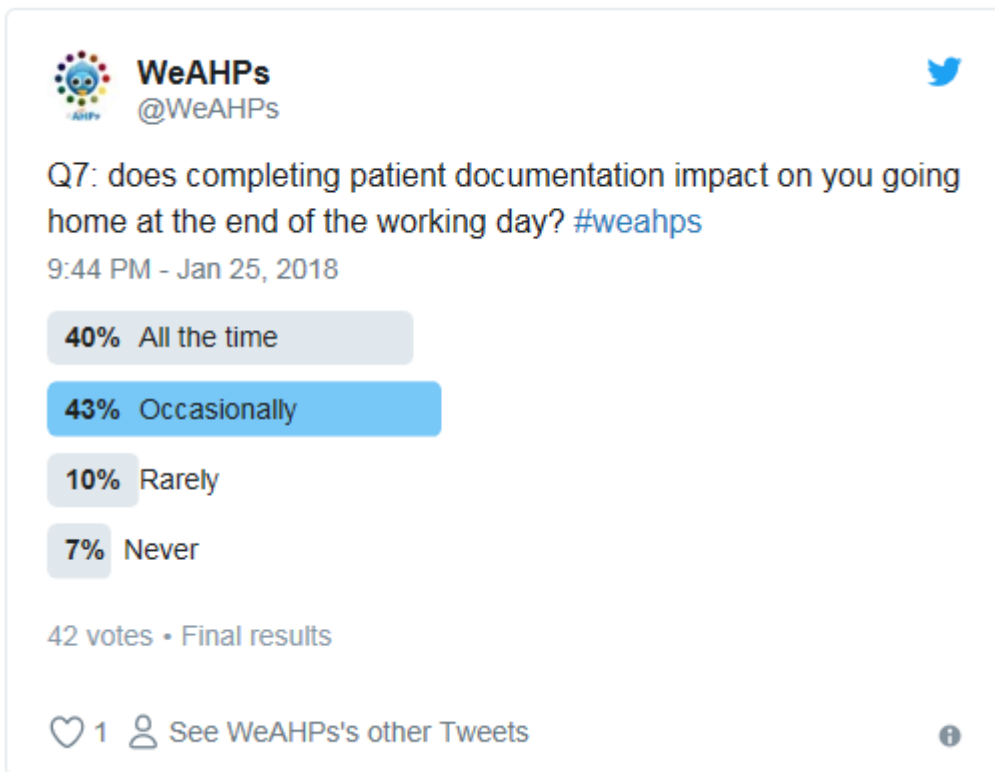
Sarah Fisher

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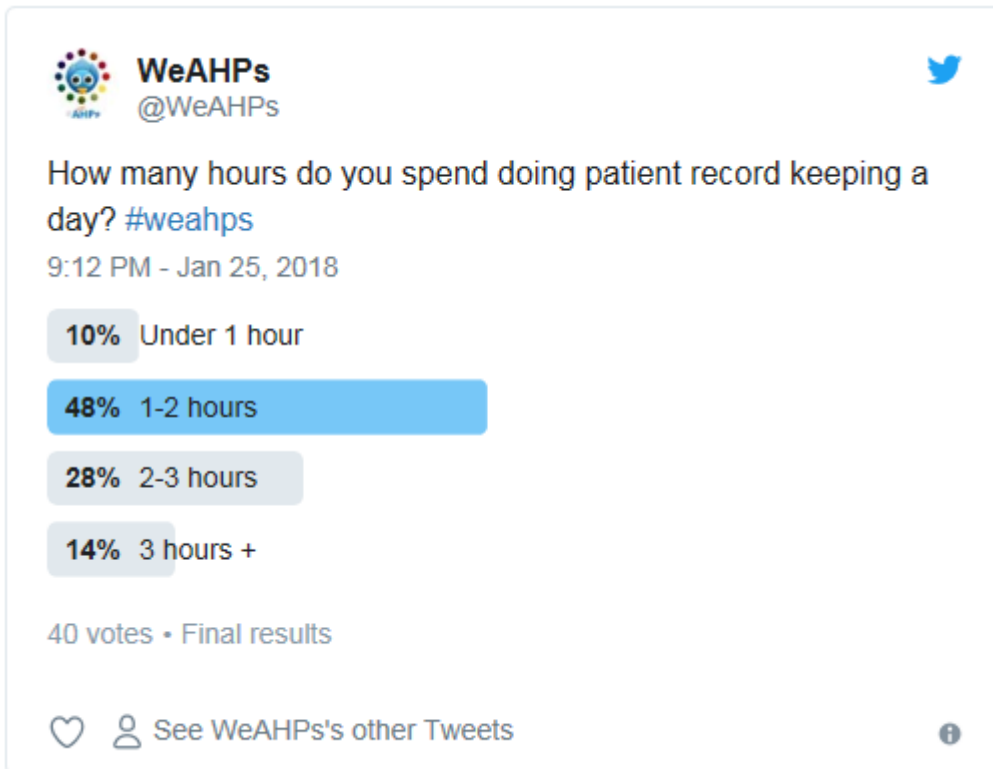
90% of AHPs spend 1-3 hours a day on documentation

Inspired by the experience and learning points from our interview with Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust's [DynamicHealth](#) we recently co-hosted an [@WeAHP tweet chat](#) which drilled further down into some of the challenges AHPs face in creating, reviewing, updating, managing and sharing clinical documentation. We wanted to see how their documentation experience compared that of the nursing community which we explored last year in a roundtable discussion and follow-up [report](#).



The discussion was interesting for a number of reasons. We discovered that AHPs' work is more varied and happens in a wide variety of settings. This is not surprising when one considers that there are at least 14 different professional groups under the AHP umbrella ranging from art and drama therapists to occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

In common with nurses there is a requirement to record treatment plans. This means AHPs spend a significant part of their day writing reports with, according to a poll carried out during the tweet chat, almost 50% of respondents spending one to two hours a day on documentation.



Differences appeared to be that there are fewer templates and standardised care plan tools than are used in nursing and that reports are often written in front of patients. This [poses a challenge](#) in terms of maintaining connection and eye-contact with the patient.

I want to be engaged with the patient sitting in front of me, but at the same time I need to make note of what they're saying. I try to be mindful not to look at my screen too much while we talk!

Influence the conversation!

We will be exploring more of these challenges in our [forthcoming roundtable taking place in April](#). Amongst the questions we will be asking are where support in managing clinical documentation might come from and whether technology (such as [speech recognition software](#)) could help. It has certainly been shown to [make a difference in a variety of different settings](#).


Our aim is to

- share the experiences of common challenges amongst the 14 professional groups
- support AHPs learn from others, finding ways they can have greater confidence in the systems and processes around clinical documentation.
- explore whether there are opportunities for AHPs to influence the design and choice of electronic patient record systems (EPRs).

If you are working as an AHP and would like to contribute to the discussion or take part in the roundtable discussion on 18th April at Horizons in Leeds, please [contact me](#) for further details.

Tags: [allied healthcare professionals](#), [clinical documentation](#), [digital nhs](#), [electronic patient records](#), [healthcare](#), [paperless NHS](#)

More Information

	<p>Join the conversation - Have your say in AHPs leading improvement</p> <p>Join our discussion of the important and exciting changes, led by AHPs, to whole system improvements across the NHS and how access to better technology can help. Contact us at sarah.fisher@nuance.com to have your say.</p> <p>Engage us</p>
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About Sarah Fisher

Sarah Fisher is regional marketing manager at Nuance healthcare division covering UK, Ireland and APAC. Sarah has 25 years in marketing and sales at companies including Xerox, Siemens and Cisco. A spell at Novartis leading a team to deliver 'more-than-medicines' solutions in UK healthcare combined her degree and a first job in Pharmacology research with a passion for the potential of healthcare IT to overcome the many challenges faced by all healthcare systems. In her spare time Sarah leaps fences and tackles tricky trails pursuing her hobbies of horse trials and mountain biking.

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