

Q&A Coffee Sessions

with EDGE super users

Super User Q&A: March 2023

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– Mat Aspey, Data Manager and Information Analyst, University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust



USER PROFILE

Name: Mat Aspey
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EDGE user since: 2018

01

How and why did you move into your current role within clinical research?

I was working in a care home, paying my way through a master's degree in health psychology and I was really drawn towards the research side of things. When an opening came up, I took a Project Support Assistant role for 18 months, and then moved into the role of EDGE Administrator for 2 years, where I worked under the Data Manager and learned the ropes and became more involved in

our sponsored research. Then I moved up into the role of Data Manager/Information Analyst. I love being entrenched in the research and analysing data has always interested me.

02

What does your role as Data Manager and Information Analyst entail on a typical day at UHNM?

My role is split into two halves: Data Manager, in which I work on behalf of UHNM as a sponsor; I create case report forms and databases for our sponsored studies and prepare the data for the study statistician. The other half is Information Analyst, in which I work on behalf of UHNM as a site, producing reports for our department and for the wider trust to monitor our recruitment performance.

03

What does the patient and research landscape currently look like at UHNM?

UHNM is split into two sites: Royal

Stoke and County Hospital in Stafford. The majority of our research activity is conducted at Royal Stoke. We have around 120 studies currently open to recruitment and around 110 in follow up. Our trials vary from Oncology/Haematology, Neurology and Stroke to Paediatric studies. We have recruited around 1450 patients for this financial year, and we follow up on average around 230 patients a month.

04

How do you personally utilise EDGE?

All of the data I report on originates from EDGE. I have created a few “catch all” reports in EDGE, which feeds into each of my departmental reports. I have recently been developing a Power BI dashboard for our department heads to get daily updates on our recruitment activity and finances. This all comes from the fields that we have added to EDGE.

05

How has the use of EDGE

/continued...

made your job easier?

As my reports evolve, I find that more and more people are asking for extra bits of information or reports that can link them directly to the study. I find the function to create extra fields, particularly at site level, to be really useful. We can tailor the data that we add to EDGE to ensure that reporting needs are met.

06

How has your use of EDGE changed/evolved over the past 5 years?

When I started using EDGE, I was entering setup and amendment data with some very low-level reporting. Everything was already set up for me, and all I had to do was enter a few dates and click a few buttons. I didn't really have to engage with it. Then when I was EDGE admin, I was creating fields and entities, creating profiles for new studies, and creating my own data quality reports to ensure that our data was correct and up to date. Now I use my knowledge of EDGE to create bespoke reports based on fields that I have created, and that will better cater to our department's reporting needs.

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What is your favourite EDGE function and why?

The reporting functionality is my bread and butter, I use it multiple times a day for any number of tasks. I love finding ways to combine study data with patient data in an insightful way.

08

What advice would you offer to new Data Managers/Information Analysts commencing the use of EDGE?

My advice is to learn the basics as thoroughly as you can. Once you have them down, then play around and find how to utilise

EDGE's functions to best support your role. Personally, I can't wait to get a hold of EDGE 3 with our real data.

09

What are your/site's plans for developing EDGE over the next 12 months?

My plan is to push EDGE into a more central role. We don't use it for study documents at the minute, so my goal is to push for us to use EDGE as a more accessible way to share documents across our study teams.

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What do you find most fulfilling about your role?

I love being a part of research, and I love working with our consultants on our sponsored research and seeing their passion for making their patients' lives a little better. I also manage a team of two. I love sharing ideas and knowledge and learning from my team and hopefully being able to pass on some of my knowledge also. I'm all about leaving a place in a better position than you found it. I am a wellbeing champion and mental health first aider for my department, so I try and have wellbeing conversations when I can see people struggling. One thing I have been working on is a "random acts of kindness" initiative, where staff members can nominate someone to get a card to thank them or show appreciation and hopefully give them a boost.

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Describe one of your greatest team achievements:

We had a COVID-19 study looking at vaccine response in immunosuppressed haematology patients. We were a relatively new team, including a new Trial Manager, myself as a new Data Manager, a relatively new Quality Assurance Manager, and we had really tight deadlines to get the

study off the ground and up and running. For me, it was the first study I was Data Manager for, and the first I had seen through from start to finish. I am just immensely proud of how it all turned out.

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One clinical superpower you wish you possessed:

A research superpower that people I work with assume I have is an overall bird's eye view of every data entry we have that I can pull from the top of my head and explain where the data came from and why it looks the way it does, etc. I would like to actually have that superpower. Would save me so much time haha.

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The best thing about living in Stoke-on-Trent?

This is a tricky one as I don't actually live in Stoke-on-Trent, I live in Congleton, which is just over the Cheshire border. The best thing about working in Stoke-on-Trent is definitely the people I work with. We have a fantastic team here at UHNM – the lengths that some of the people I work with will go to in order to improve patient care is amazing to see.

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One thing that inspires you:

The main thing that inspires me is my partner, Anna. She inspires me to always strive to be better and improve on my skills. The last two years I have learnt so much and managed to rise up into the role I am now in and excel at it in a way that I never thought possible. I am currently enrolled on a Level 4 apprenticeship in data analysis to take my skills to the next level, so watch this space.

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