



Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust

Early Insights Report

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
in partnership with Oxehealth

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Executive Summary

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust partnered with Oxehealth to improve the safety, quality, and efficiency of care on their inpatient wards.

This report was prepared by conducting surveys, interviews, and long-answer feedback forms with ward staff and patients.

The aim of the evaluation was to identify early insights after 6 months of use of the Oxehealth system on Elm, female acute and Cedar, mixed PICU, and 4 months of use on Rowan Lea, mixed older adult.

Improved safety on the wards

There is improved safety on the wards because staff can respond in time to incidents and better manage risky behaviour: 97% of staff members reported that the Oxehealth system improves patient safety on the ward¹ while 83% of patients reported feeling that the system keeps them safer². Specifically, staff feel that there are fewer self-harms, falls, altercations and assaults and better physical health monitoring.

Positive impact on risk management and least restrictive practice

Staff have found that the system has had a positive impact on how they manage safety risks in a least restrictive manner. Staff feel they can give patients a greater sense of autonomy and agency while still maintaining safety, particularly in avoiding escalation.

90% of staff members reported that the system enables them to better manage patient risk¹⁰.

Improved patient experience and care quality

Patients highlighted several improvements in their experience on the ward, including a greater sense of privacy and dignity, improved wellbeing, less disturbance at night and improved staff relationship.

Staff expressed gaining additional insight into patient trends/behaviours leading to improved care decision making. Staff felt that having the system as a supportive tool gave them a greater peace of mind and improved their therapeutic relationship with patients.

79% of staff members reported that the Oxehealth system enables them to provide better care for patients on the ward¹¹. 92% of patients surveyed stated that they felt staff can care for them better when using the system as a supportive tool¹² and 89% feel that the system has improved their wellbeing on the ward¹³.

Early signs the system is delivering operational value

Positive risk taking in stepping down observations and faster observation rounds are saving time for staff to redeploy into other therapeutic areas.

76% of staff members reported that observation levels for some patients can be lowered because patient risk can be better managed using the Oxehealth system as a supportive tool²².

63% of staff members reported that their observations rounds are faster when they use the Oxehealth system to help them confirm patient safety at night²³.

Finding 1: Improved safety on the wards

Staff have found that introducing the Oxehealth system has had a positive impact on patient safety on the ward resulting in reducing harm to patients and staff, fewer falls, fewer altercations and assaults and better physical health monitoring.

97% of staff members reported that the Oxehealth system improves patient safety on the ward¹ while 83% of patients reported feeling that the system keeps them safer².

Staff can respond in time to prevent or reduce severity of self-harm

The Oxehealth system has enabled staff to respond more quickly to incidents allowing them to proactively intervene to prevent patients from causing serious harm or injury to themselves and others.

90% of staff members reported that the system has enabled them to prevent potential incidents³, and 84% reported that it enabled them to prevent incidents of self-harm including ligatures⁴. 88% of patients felt that staff respond to them more quickly when they need them because they have the system there to support⁵.

The following case examples from staff interviews are representative of the ways in which the system has been used as a supportive tool to reduce self-harm risk and minimise patient harm:

“There was a recent incident on Cedar ward where a patient made a significant suicide attempt. A staff member used the Oxehealth system to check in to a patient between observation rounds and saw that there was concern. The staff member then attended the patient’s bedroom and emergency medical procedures were commenced which ultimately led to the patient surviving with no long-term damage.

Although it was the nursing interventions that saved the life, it was felt by the whole nursing team that it was the Oxehealth system that gave the nurses a head start in saving this patient’s life by alerting us to the concern.”

[I/S] *Ward Manager*

“We had one patient, that’s quite high risk of self-harm, and the system alerted us that she had been in the bathroom for quite a while. We checked the Oxehealth system and we couldn’t see her, so we went down to her room and saw that she was attempting to self-harm. In this situation, the system helped us particularly to see what was going on and helped resolve the situation. The patient ended up being okay in the end, which is a relief.”

[I/S] *Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator*

“I have used the Oxehealth system a lot when it’s notified me of patients spending too much time in the bathroom. It’s been very helpful with that type of situation, it helped detect a few ladies that had been self-harming when they’ve been too long in the bathroom.

For example, we have one lady that repeatedly self-harms in the bathroom, so every time she would go into the bathroom for extended time, the system would alert. This meant that if she started to self-harm we would be alerted before it escalated and got more severe. We went straight to her room and checked on her, and the only thing she had managed to do was superficial scratches on her arm. The system is very helpful in that sense, we act more effectively and get there quicker.”

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

“We have had several incidents where patients have been harming themselves in the bedrooms and we’ve been able to nip those in the bud thanks to the Oxehealth system. In one case, it would have been a worse outcome for the patient if the system had not been used. This patient was attempting to tie a ligature around their neck, and this was happening between observations so we wouldn’t have known. Thankfully, the Oxehealth system alerted us and we proactively got involved and stopped the incident from escalating further.”

[I/S] *Associate Practitioner*

“The Oxehealth system has definitely helped us in preventing incidents. We had one lady that was in her room between observations and when we checked on the system, we saw that she had something around her neck. We went straight to her room and the harm would have been worse without the head start.”

[I/S] *HCA*

When asked how a patient felt the system impacted their safety, they expressed the following:

“I think the way the system has impacted my safety is by making me feel safer and better, it’s one of the things I like most about it.”

Patient

Staff can proactively prevent falls

Staff have been able to identify risk of falls earlier and prevent them; 93% of staff members reported that the system helps them to identify falls which they may have not known about⁶. In addition, staff have taken learnings from reviewing unwitnessed falls to prevent further falls.

The following case example and quotes from staff interviews are representative of the ways in which the system has been used as a supportive tool to prevent falls:

“We have had patients who may be at risk of falls, to which the Oxehealth system has been very helpful in alerting us to.”

[I/S] *Ward Manager*

“The Oxehealth system has helped to provide evidence in situations where there has been an unwitnessed fall in a patient's bedroom giving us more insight into what happened.”

[I/S] *Student Nurse*

“We’ve had a few falls where Oxehealth has been instrumental in providing us insights into how and why patients have fallen. On these occasions, where the patient falls without being seen by a member of staff, we’ve contacted Oxehealth, and they have provided us with a detailed report describing the event. These reports have been very helpful in helping us investigate how and why the patient has fallen. We have even used these reports in our frailty meetings to help identify triggers for when patient’s may be having a difficult time and have been able to change our practice or identify measures to put in place to prevent future falls.

One example is a patient we had where we realised that she was always falling at the same time in the mornings. This drew attention to why she was falling at that time. Using the activity report from the system and the description of the fall provided by Oxehealth we realised it would happen as soon as she got up in the morning. After further investigation, it was determined that the patient was having a significant blood pressure problem at that time in the morning. These insights have also been instrumental in supporting adjustment of blood pressure medication.”

[I/S] *Ward Manager*

Staff can better manage aggressive behaviour and maintain their own safety

Staff have been able to prevent assaults and manage aggressive behaviour by using the system to help them plan how to engage and de-escalate incidents of aggression in bedroom areas.

58% of staff members reported that the Oxehealth system has enabled them to prevent assaults and aggression on the ward⁷ and 52% of staff members reported that they can better manage their own safety with the Oxehealth system⁸.

“We have used the Oxehealth system before where there has been an incident with a patient being violent and aggressive just to check their location in the bedroom before we entered. This patient had already seriously assaulted a member of staff prior to that. The Oxehealth system helped me plan our response better to avoid it happening again.

It was used to see where she was in the bedroom because you can't actually see that through the window, so it was helpful to know how many people should enter the room with and where she was so we could be more prepared."

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

"There are certain patients that are coming off drugs, and they can get quite aggressive especially when going through withdrawal. The system has been quite useful for avoiding aggressive situations with them where it's been safer for staff to check in on the patient through the system, instead of going in and risk setting a patient off when they're aggressive."

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

"The system has helped us better prepare our response when addressing incidents. Before, it was common for me to hear of an incident from the hallway, without seeing anything, and I would enter the room, potentially putting myself at risk. Now, if I check with Oxehealth and see that a patient has odd vital signs or is smashing the room up and self-harming, I can make sure I've got a team of people supporting me. If a patient is expressing aggressive behaviour or trying to make a weapon, we can go in with a team to make sure that the patient and the staff are safe."

[I/S] *Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator*

Staff can better monitor the physical health of patients

Staff have been using the Oxehealth system to improve their ability to monitor physical health of patients: 86% of staff reported that the system made it easier to monitor the physical health of patients⁹.

The system has been particularly useful for monitoring the physical health of patients with specific co-morbidities or risk factors. Staff members also noted that the system has allowed them to monitor physical health while also promoting sleep hygiene and necessary rest.

"My favourite thing about the Oxehealth system is how easy it is to use to check vital signs. It's not just about taking respiration rates, because you can take those, but the patient may still be physically unwell or have something around their neck if they're trying to self-harm. But Oxehealth allows you to take the patient's resting respiration and pulse rate in a way that allows you to compare it to the patient's specific baseline. For example, I have a patient whose resting respiration rate is of 26 and in anybody else that would trigger a real concern, but because we have access to the patient's baseline we can monitor this effectively.

One of our patients is a gentleman with sleep apnea which can cause him to go for long periods without breathing properly. He is also a patient that can be a risk to others in certain situations. Instead of entering his room every hour and waking him up at night, we have been checking his physical health using the

system. It's been great for keeping an eye on him and what his breathing pattern is like throughout the night."

[I/S] *Clinical Lead*

"We had a lady who had breathing problems, and even had to go to general hospital because her oxygen saturation levels were low. When she came back, the system was very helpful to pick up her respiration rates throughout the night to make sure she was okay. It's helpful in that way because it allows us to check on her while also allowing her to rest and sleep."

[I/S]

"The Oxehealth system has been helpful in monitoring the physical health of specific patients. For example, we had a patient with sleep apnea who could not wear a mask, so it was important for us to monitor her physical health. We often couldn't see her through the window so we would use the system to check her respiration rates. The system is quite helpful for situations like that where you can't see into the room or there isn't great light. It was great for monitoring her health while also promoting sleep hygiene as well."

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

"We have had ladies with certain physical health problems, such as diabetes, where they can tend to get pale. We make sure to take their physical observations often, in person, but in between it's been very helpful to also check their physical health on the Oxehealth system."

[I/S] *Nurse*

Improved management of physical health in seclusion

Staff shared examples of how the system has helped to monitor physical health, and detect physical health deterioration, particularly for patients who have received medication whilst in seclusion.

The following quotations from staff interviews are representative:

"In seclusion, we can safely monitor our patients' vital signs now that we have the Oxehealth system installed. Previously we have been unable to do this as it has been too risky to enter seclusion which unfortunately meant that we were only able to monitor patients' respiration rates. Now when the patient is in seclusion, we can monitor their vital signs frequently without putting staff at risk by entering the seclusion. This does not replace any engagements we have with the patients, however it has been useful for us as we can monitor their physical health more effectively when they are nursed in there.

The same applies for patients who have had rapid tranquilisation medication – Our patients on Cedar are often acutely unwell and experience psychotic symptoms or violent/aggressive behaviour which require

rapid tranquilisation medication or Acuphase medication – both of which it is important to monitor physical observations following. Often patients refuse to have their observations taken, and the Oxehealth system allows us to take their vital signs such as respiration and pulse rates even when they refuse.”

[I/S] *Ward Manager*

“I think the use of Oxehealth for patients in seclusion is brilliant, because it means we can check and accurately record vital signs when the patient is awake or asleep. We’re not just guessing and writing what they’re observations are for a period of a few minutes like we used to. It’s especially helpful for people who have had medication, whether that’s an injection or tablet, and especially if they have got an additional physical health problem. It’s allowing us to check that they are safe and okay when they’re asleep without disturbing them or when they’re in their room resting.”

[I/S] *Clinical Lead*

Finding 2: Positive impact on risk management and least restrictive practice

Staff have found that the system has had a positive impact on how they manage safety risks in a least restrictive manner.

Staff are able to better manage patient risk by having full ward awareness

Staff are more aware of patient locations and movements which has helped them to better manage risks on the ward.

90% of staff members reported that the system enables them to better manage patient risk¹¹.

“The Oxehealth system especially helps with our riskier patients. Seeing if they’re spending too much time in the bathroom or seeing if they’re standing too long by the door.”

[I/S] Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator

“The Oxehealth system has helped with patient safety but also with prompting us to look at patients, their whereabouts and health when needed. There is the opportunity to check on the patients and how they are, and if they need attention or not.”

[I/S] Healthcare Assistant

“When we have had a particularly aggressive or violent patient, the system has been able to tell us where they are. We have been using this to avoid situations of assault or aggressive behaviour. So if I see that a patient I’m concerned about has left their room to go to the communal area, and they have previously been violent or aggressive, then I can make sure that either I or another staff member can go into the communal area to make sure that all other patients and the patient in question are safe.”

[I/S] Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator

Staff have reduced altercations between patients by intervening when patients are wandering into other bedrooms. The following example illustrates how one staff member has used the system to manage a patient with a history of wandering around the ward at night:

“Sometimes we get people who are in a confused state of mind. We had a lady who was often confused and would wander out of her room at night. She wouldn’t know which one was her room, so she would wander over to other people’s rooms and wake them up by standing over them. Obviously, it’s quite disconcerting for other patients to wake up like that, so the Oxehealth system has helped us with that situation where we can see where the patient is during the night and avoid altercations between patients.”

[I/S] Staff Nurse

Patients have a greater sense of agency through less restrictive care

Staff feel they can give patients a greater sense of autonomy and agency while still maintaining safety. Staff members have been using the system to avoid aggravating patients who may feel overwhelmed by the constant presence of staff, giving them a greater sense of autonomy while also making sure they are safe.

“Using the Oxehealth system means we can keep patients safe while giving them some autonomy. I still go down in person to see how they’re doing, but not having to do it constantly as much and allowing them some time on their own to cool down and not get irritated by us has been beneficial. In the grand scheme of things, it avoids a potential situation where things can escalate and the patient can get aggressive.

If I’m concerned about a patient that doesn’t want to be out in the communal areas, the Oxehealth system really helps to make sure that they’re safe while we’re not in the room with them. The best thing is we can do this without having to harass them especially if they are unsettled. There’s a key balance between not wanting to disturb them too much and giving them a sense of autonomy but still being able to make sure that they are safe and doing well.”

[I/S] *Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator*

“The Oxehealth system has given patients a certain level of autonomy. Since we’re not necessarily checking the rooms all of the time patients don’t feel as disturbed, so if they are resting, they’re getting a better rest than they would if we were checking on the room every half hour and it gives them more autonomy to come and ask for help when they need it.

We’re always present in the communal areas and we’re always checking on patients in their bedroom regularly using the system. But because we’re not necessarily having to go to the door all the time, they don’t feel as restricted or almost babysat and start to feel a bit more independent.”

[I/S] *Clinical Lead*

One patient, however, felt that deployment of the Oxehealth system infringed on their privacy due to a lack of patient awareness on how the system was being used:

“All patients should be informed of its full features including the use of cameras. They should be made aware that these are used and precisely when staff are able to access them.

I can appreciate and understand the benefits and protection that the Oxehealth system provides but its implementation leaves a lot to be desired.”

Patient

Finding 3: Improved patient experience

Patients experience greater privacy, dignity, sleep and wellbeing

Patients highlighted several improvements in their experience on the ward, including a greater sense of privacy and dignity, improved wellbeing, less disturbance at night and an improved relationship with staff.

92% of patients surveyed stated that they felt staff can care for them better when using the system¹² and 89% felt that the system has improved their well-being on the ward¹³.

Overwhelming feedback from patients surveyed revealed that 100% of patients feel that the system reduced their disturbance at night-time¹⁴ and 80% felt the system helps them get better sleep¹⁵.

85% of staff reported disturbing patient's sleep less at night when using the system¹⁶:

"There are no issues with the system, and I sleep through the night."

Patient

83% and 90% of patients felt that the system gave them a greater sense of privacy and dignity respectively^{17,18}.

In addition, 54% of staff members reported that the system gives patients a greater sense of privacy and dignity at night¹⁹.

The following patient and staff quotations from interviews are representative:

"The Oxehealth system is like having another pair of eyes on the patients without us feeling like we're invading their privacy."

[I/S] *Clinical Lead*

"The impact of the Oxehealth system has been positive, especially with not disturbing patients, and especially when doing welfare checks. From a professional point of view, it makes our job easier as well."

[I/S] *Associate Practitioner*

"With the Oxehealth system, noise levels at night on the ward have generally improved and there's less of a need for bedroom sensors. At night, the system helps staff to be able to check patients are safe without disturbing them if they are sleeping. It's very useful to monitor sleep and activity during the night while patients rest."

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

"The system allows for less obtrusive observations at night with respiration and pulse readings without the need to disturb the patients or shine torches."

[I/S] *Student Nurse*

There is an improvement in patient-staff relationships

Due to the flexibility the system provides, staff can tailor their interactions with specific patients, supporting them in improving patient-staff relationship.

88% of patients surveyed reported feeling like the system has improved their relationship with staff²⁰.

“We had one patient who had suicidal tendencies. He had a self-harm incident which resulted in us needing to check on him every 15 minutes. The Oxehealth system helped a lot here, where instead of going to check on him myself and risk agitating him more, we ended up stepping down his observations and checking on him through the Oxehealth system to make sure he was safe. It definitely helped him calm down faster and even improved my relationship with the patient.”

[I/S] Student Nurse

Finding 4: Improved care quality

Staff have reported an improvement in how they make clinical and care decisions as a result of having more objective data on patient activity, which has led them to feel more reassured in the care they provide and provided them with a greater peace of mind that patients are being cared for safely.

79% of staff members reported that the Oxehealth system enables them to provide better care for patients on the ward²¹.

Staff make more informed clinical and care decisions by using objective data

As a result of introducing the Oxehealth system, staff now have additional objective information to support clinical and care decisions. 72% of staff members reported that the system provides them with more information to help them make better care or clinical decisions²².

“One feature we have found useful is viewing the activity reports to gain insight into patients’ sleeping patterns. The Oxehealth system can be used to monitor our patients’ sleep/wake cycle when they are in bed, which has been useful for us to know how much sleep they’ve gotten. This is particularly helpful for patients who may be presenting as manic with a poor sleep pattern – we can see whether our medication regime is working to a therapeutic level.”

[I/S] Ward Manager

“We have been using the activity reports for promoting sleep hygiene. Some patients will come to us claiming that they aren’t getting enough sleep and asking for medication. By using the Activity Reports, staff have been able to identify how much sleep opportunity patients are getting to accurately assess their need for medication.”

[I/S] Ward Manager

Staff feel greater peace of mind when taking care of patients

When asked about how the system has been affecting staff’s care for patient, staff expressed feeling more reassured and having a greater peace of mind.

“On night shifts, staff feel safer and a greater piece of mind when using the Oxehealth system because it means we don’t have to wake patients up to check they’re okay and can take their observation levels on the system.

I had one patient that was on 15-minute observation rounds. I was concerned, and a bit suspicious and paranoid myself about keeping her safe since I didn't have eyes on the room. For my peace of mind, I checked on her more frequently. She ended up irritated with me and it damaged the staff-patient relationship.

We now use the Oxehealth system to check on them more frequently between observations. Using this system allows the patient to feel a little bit more independent but we've got the confidence and peace of mind of knowing that they're safe."

[I/S] *Clinical Lead*

"I find it brings me a lot of peace of mind to be able to check that the patients' vital signs are okay without having to bother them every few minutes, especially when dealing with patients that we are more worried about in terms of self-harm.

It also gives me more peace of mind when patients are between observations. I do think there needs to be more information given to patients about the system, but it has definitely helped lower anxiety around patient safety."

[I/S] *Healthcare Assistant and Activity Coordinator*

"It gives me a greater piece of mind and even makes me feel closer to the patient in the sense that we'll still go to check on them in person, but if I get the itch to do it right then and now I can also check on them remotely."

Charlotte⁹

Finding 5: Early signs the system is delivering operational value

Staff can increase positive risk taking in stepping down observations

76% of staff members reported that observation levels for some patients can be lowered because patient risk can be better managed using the Oxehealth system²³.

“At times, the Oxehealth system stops us from increasing observation levels. For example, there was a lady who had a lot of aggression and instead of going into her room and agitating her we opted for stepping down her observation levels and checked on her with Oxehealth until she would calm down.”

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

Faster observation rounds

63% of staff members reported that their observations rounds are faster when they use the Oxehealth system to confirm patient safety at night²⁴.

“The way it’s helped me save time is by making our observations faster; I can now walk around the ward with the tablet while checking patients and making notes.”

[I/S] *Trainee Nursing Associate Apprenticeship*

“We’ve been able to conduct faster night-time physical observations and faster care round checks at night.”

[I/S] *Student Nurse*

“The system has helped us save time by enabling us to check all patients in less time.”

[I/S] *Staff Nurse*

Additionally, staff may conduct patient checks in between observation rounds, one staff member illustrated how the system has helped her conduct these checks quicker:

“The Oxehealth system has helped save time in the sense that it is easier to check patients that need that a bit more attention in between checks. We are able to focus on the room and see what they are doing and to make sure that they are safe. We are still taking observations from the care round every hour but I can use Oxehealth in between checks to know that the patients are safe.”

[I/S] *Healthcare Assistant*

Limitations and Considerations

This report has potential limitations and considerations that should be noted. While the results of this report are positive, findings were mostly determined from staff feedback and their perception of the impact of the Oxehealth system on patients. The limited amount of patient feedback is due to the lack of patient capacity on the wards evaluated during the project.

Therefore, to increase the amount of insight from patients on their perceptions of the Oxehealth system more feedback should be gathered further down the line alongside a quantitative analysis of data from the wards.

It is important to consider that findings in this report also demonstrated the desire, from both staff and patients, to revisit the information given to patients to ensure their full comprehension of the system.

Methodology

An evaluation of the Oxehealth system (Oxevision) early insights was conducted after 4 to 6 months of use on the following wards:

- Cedar, a 10-bedroom mixed sex PICU ward with 1 seclusion room, where collection of data was conducted 6 months post-go live.
- Elm, a 20-bedroom adult female acute ward, where collection of data was conducted 6 months post-go live.
- Rowan Lea, a 20-bedroom mixed sex older adult ward, where collection of data was conducted 4 months post-go live.

To identify early insights, staff and patient surveys, one-to-one staff interviews, and long-answer staff feedback forms were conducted to evaluate impact of using the Oxehealth system:

- 29 18-question staff questionnaires; 7 from Elm, 7 from Rowan Lea, and 16 from Cedar.
- 14 10-question patient questionnaires; 9 from Elm and 5 from Cedar
- 13 one-to-one staff interviews across Elm, Cedar, and Rowan Lea
- 6 long-answer staff feedback forms from Rowan Lea
- 2 pieces of written feedback from ward managers at Cedar and Elm:
 - Becky Duffy, Ward Manager, Cedar
 - Sue Cowans, Ward Manager, Elm

Topics covered in staff questionnaires, interviews, and feedback forms were on patient safety, patient care, staff experience and day-to-day staff ways of working with the Oxehealth system.

The questionnaire required staff to answer on a scale of 1 to 6. 1, 2 and 3 were strongly disagree, disagree and slightly disagree, respectively. 4, 5 and 6 were slightly agree, agree and strongly agree, respectively.

Topics covered in patient questionnaires were patient sense of wellbeing, engagement, safety, privacy and dignity.

Questionnaires required patients to answer on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 and 2 were strongly disagree and disagree, respectively. 3 was no opinion. 4 and 5 were agree and strongly agree. The number of survey responses analysed may be lower than stated in the methodology section as survey results were indexed to exclude 'no opinion' responses.

Endnotes

¹ N = 29

² N = 12

³ N=29

⁴ N = 25

⁵ N = 8

⁶ N = 28

⁷ N=24

⁸ N = 27

⁹ N = 29

¹⁰ Last name and role of the staff member were not collected.

¹¹ N = 29

¹² N = 12

¹³ N = 9

¹⁴ N = 12

¹⁵ N = 10

¹⁶ N = 26

¹⁷ N = 12

¹⁸ N = 10

¹⁹ N = 28

²⁰ N = 8

²¹ N =29

²² N = 29

²³ N = 29

²⁴ N = 24