



## Demonstrating success in healthcare

# Inventory management at Taunton & Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

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## Background

Musgrove Park Hospital is part of Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust (TSFT). It is an Acute hospital in Somerset serving a population of over 340,000 as well as providing some specialist and tertiary services for the whole of Somerset with a catchment population of 544,000.

Debbie Frankpitt, Procurement Change Manager at TSFT is responsible for rolling out some of the changes outlined in the Department of Health's eProcurement strategy and also to implement the process and cultural changes required to drive long term efficiencies across the Trust.



## What was the problem?

TSFT needed to adopt the measures outlined in the eProcurement strategy, specifically to become GS1 compliant. Their requirements, however, went beyond simply needing to comply with the eProcurement strategy. Some of the challenges the Trust was facing on a daily bases were:

- A shortage of space - not helped by overstocking
- A shortage of nurses - a key factor in their patient safety programme with a need to release more time to care
- Data - inefficient data management meant that the Trust couldn't be confident of where stock was and how much was being used

GS1 Standards were a perfect match to the Trust's desire to rid itself of inefficient processes and to introduce better ways of working.

## How was the problem solved and how were GS1 standards used to help deliver the solution?

Using a structured project management approach, TSFT initially conducted thorough internal customer engagement and market research to develop a robust business case. This outlined an effective, long-term solution that was GS1 compliant and could meet the needs of the hospital across different points of use.

TSFT approached its suppliers and solution providers, working with them to change the way they work together. This ensured all the products they receive are uniquely identified – using GS1 barcodes – not just on the outer packaging, but right down to item-level. This in turn enabled them to have the systems in place to support the management of data at every stage of a product being received, stored and used.

Internal processes were piloted and staff trained, first concentrating in one area – head and neck theatres. All stock in this area is now ordered, stored and managed using GS1 standards.

## What's been achieved so far?

- Approval of the business case, including executive and clinical director sponsorship
- Getting staff support, at all levels and areas of the Trust
- Improving the procurement process
- Choosing a supplier to partner with
- Embedding the new inventory management system
- Accurate inventory data

## What are the benefits?

The Trust has seen immediate benefits in improving their processes and adopting GS1 standards:

- A £0.5m stock adjustment – this was proven in 2014/15, on track for 2015/16 and more savings are expected in 2016/17
- Accurate reporting of stock turn figures, owned inventory valuations and usage, consignment stock valuations and usage – at any point in time for all areas implemented so far
- Accurate stock visibility and availability – which means they not only know what is used, but which items aren't used. This removes over-ordering and has saved TSFT £20,000 in expired stock that would have previously been wasted
- Reduced stock in store rooms and theatres as orders are now made little and often – giving TSFT more space and less clutter in theatres, making it easier to keep organised, clean and tidy
- Automatic ordering and replenishment – as staff are scanned each product at the point of use
- A truly accurate view of product data and costing per procedure – making reporting and planning more reliable than ever
- Identification of the way surgeons work and the cost differences in the products they use – reducing overall costs of the products used across the theatre

## Next steps

Now TSFT has planned, piloted and fully embedded GS1 standards in just one area – and gained so much from it – they will continue the implementation across other areas, in two planned phases:

- Phase 2 – Cardiology, Day surgery, General and Ortho Theatres, Radiology, ITU and A&E
- Phase 3 – Oncology, Maternity, Wards and all other areas

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