

“GS1 standards help us achieve so much more.”

between the lines

At GS1 UK, we work hard to have a positive impact on every single one of our members, whoever they are and whatever the size of their business. That's why we've invited our members to tell us how working with us makes a difference to them.

Today, we're talking to Jackie Pomroy, Head of Supply Chain for the NHS South of England Procurement Services.



The Global Language of Business

Hi Jackie, can you tell us a bit more about what you do?

“I’m Head of Supply Chain for our NHS clients. I manage the strategic direction of the organisation from a supply chain perspective, implementing best practice supply chain and inventory management systems.”

What led you to work with GS1 UK?

“In 2014, the Department of Health mandated that every product procured by an NHS Trust has to be identified with GS1 standards. We’d been working with GS1 UK for some time before that, after discovering that some of our products shared the same barcode and product number – causing significant problems when managing inventory. It was obvious that one standard system for identifying products was needed.”

How have you applied GS1 standards within your hospitals?

“Since 2012, we’ve been asking each of our suppliers to adopt GS1 standards – using their unique numbers and barcodes for all products.”

What would you say are the key benefits of working with GS1 UK?

“Patient care is at the heart of everything we do in the NHS. That’s why being able to manage our inventory is so important. Thanks to GS1 standards, we can track and trace every medication and medical instrument, which saves us time and money, and improves patient safety.”

“Having a single, simple way of identifying things gives us complete visibility, across the whole Trust. Every person, in every location, can use the same language to describe our inventory. This means staff spend less time looking for stock and more time with patients, which is great.”

“We’ve also been able to reduce our surplus stock, through using those unique numbers and barcodes. That alone has given us cost savings of 20%, which is a significant amount of money that can go back into patient care.”

How do you see GS1 standards helping you in the future?

“We’re seeing a real increase in the number of our suppliers using GS1 numbers and barcodes. This means we’ll continue to save money, increase efficiency and improve patient care as a result. As GS1 standards are adopted across the entire NHS, we’ll see the same results replicated throughout the country, which will help save the NHS up to £1 billion per year.”

“We’ll also use GS1 standards to identify patients with barcoded wristbands. This will mean we can link the medicines, products and instruments we use, as well as the procedures we follow, to individual patients – then use this information to improve patient care.”

Overall, how would you say GS1 UK is helping you make a difference?

“GS1 standards let us achieve so much more. We’ve saved a huge amount of money and our efficiency has improved significantly, but most importantly we’re increasing patient safety. We’re really seeing the benefits – and we’ll continue to do so as the wider NHS adopts GS1 standards. They’ve made all the difference to me, our staff and our patients.”



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