



Case study

Plymouth's GLN implementation journey

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust



Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust is the largest hospital in the South West Peninsula. They have a secondary care catchment population of 450,000 with a wider peninsula population of almost 2,000,000 people who can access their specialist services.

The use of Global Location Numbers (GLNs) for location numbering is one of the core enablers of the Department of Health's (DH) eProcurement strategy. By introducing GLNs now, Plymouth are making sure they're on track with DH plans for compliance with GS1 standards.

What was the problem?

The Trust's property management system was supplied by Micad, a GS1 UK Industry Partner, and contained 6,715 locations. The room numbering conventions weren't consistent and, where the numbers themselves were attached to the doors rather than the location, this led to problems when doors or doorframes were removed or relocated.

This created extra work renumbering locations when doors were moved, and looking for locations that had no number label at all. The inconsistent numbering system also made it difficult to find locations without a floor plan.

Also, there was little or no consistency across different software systems, with the same location being referred to differently in each system. The replication of data also introduced the potential for information to be stored incorrectly for example, when a cost centre changed, this information wasn't cascaded to other systems.

How was the problem solved?

The Trust is introducing GLNs as a way of managing their locations in a cost-effective and consistent way. The GLN offers a unique number to every location, and this will eventually allow the Trust's property management system to route information to the other systems with no manual involvement.

“Our work implementing GS1 standards for locations is enabling us to ensure all our systems are talking the same language. As we have over a hundred systems in use within the Trust we are initially looking to use GLNs in our inventory systems. I'm looking forward to seeing the benefits of this interoperability as we continue to roll out GS1 standards throughout the Trust.”

Sandie Wills, Scan4Safety Project Manager,
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

	Code	Floor	Code	Room	Code	GLN
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Lobby	04/1	5055208405893
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Staff Room	04/10	5055208405909
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	WC - Staff	04/100	5055208405916
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	WC - Staff	04/101	5055208405923
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Office	04/102	5055208405930
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Office	04/103	5055208405947
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Office	04/104	5055208405954
Main Building	01	Level 04	04	Sluice	04/105	5055208405961

GLNs in the Micad property management system

The first stage was to get a single organisational GLN prefix and Trust GLN registry in place. The Micad property management system holds records of all locations in the Trust. A short piece of work was undertaken to ensure these records were 100% complete and accurate. As GLNs had not previously been allocated to locations, the Trust supplied Micad with their GLN allocation and Micad uploaded this information onto the system, matching a GLN to every space.

The Micad system also holds other relevant information for each space such as Department, Function, GLN, GLN creation date and GLN extension owner and budget code.

Plymouth worked with Dakota Integrated Solutions Ltd, also a GS1 UK Industry Partner, to develop a mobile printing solution to help them begin labelling immediately. The Dakota Android App uses a spreadsheet exported from Micad to enable the Trust to print and visually verify the GLN labels.

Dakota also recommended an Android tablet device which meant the Estates staff can print the labels while on-site – making sure the correct label was attached to each location.

Next steps

The initial roll out has focussed on physical locations in non-clinical areas. The next step is to engage with clinical staff to ensure the effective labelling of clinical areas. Following this, Plymouth will work with their inventory system suppliers to achieve system compliance.

The final stage will be to make sure that the high priority in-Trust systems are all using GLN identifiers (the Trust has around 240 systems in total). Once the national GLN registry is in place, Plymouth's data will help to populate this.

The Trust is also working with system suppliers and managers to ensure that their systems are GS1 compliant and are using Trust GLNs.



Example of a GLN barcode in location

Benefits

How did GS1 standards help?	What are the benefits?
Standardisation across systems	Inter-operability between systems using locations
Barcoded labels available in every location	Time saving - staff can scan the barcode instead of manually entering data
Using GLNs standardised the naming and labelling conventions for Plymouth physical locations	Removes time spent looking for incorrectly labelled rooms Less ambiguity around ownership and occupancy of locations
All areas now have a barcode associated to a physical location	Some locations could not be identified before
Up to date registry	The Trust has a complete record of its spaces with governance to ensure future compliance

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