Transforming Materials Management at Cambridge University Hospitals

Delivering e-commerce and inventory management control at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Addenbrookes).

VITAL STATISTICS

- Phase One: 25% of wards now using GHX PowerGate inventory management.
- 1,400 purchase orders sent through GHX Exchange (monthly average).
- Up to 50% reduction in ward level stock.
- Up to 75% reduction in time spent on top-up orders.
- Significant time savings allow re-focus of clinical staff time back to patient care.

CHALLENGE

Addenbrookes identified two problems with the processes in use at the Trust:

Purchase orders lacked visibility and traceability the instant they were sent.

There was no way of knowing, or proving, if or when an order was received by a supplier, or having knowledge of when to expect goods to arrive. The financial system in use did not have the functionality required in order to enable track and trace of orders. With faxed orders there was no way of confirming that the fax had been received by the supplier. Emailing orders was an option but a data file had to be extracted each time anyone wanted to check the status of an emailed order.

Inventory management was time-consuming and frequently inaccurate due to three main problems with the system in use:

- ineffective logistics – while the ward top-up system worked in principle, in practice it relied on deliveries coming from suppliers, so a large volume of stores actually had to be held at ward level in order to cover for a system failure, supplier stock issues, or late ordering;

- time consuming top-up process – all stock had to be physically counted, and any missing quantity ordered. Depending on the size of the ward, this could take anywhere between 30 minutes and two hours;

- negative clinical impact – the task of putting away orders fell to clinical staff in all areas of the hospital. This was taking time away from patient care.

SOLUTION

1. GHX Exchange – a simple e-commerce solution connecting healthcare providers with suppliers

The GHX Exchange interfaces with existing ERP and financial systems connecting healthcare providers with suppliers. It was selected by the Trust’s procurement department to solve the problem of order traceability. Exchange achieved this by:

- automatically sending update emails to nominated leads every time an order was received by a supplier;

- allowing users to log on to Exchange to view full order details, such as date sent, by whom and to which supplier;

- creating printable PDFs of orders received by the supplier to enable supplier follow up when deliveries were not made.

2. GHX PowerGate - dual bin inventory management

GHX PowerGate overcame the issues around ward-level materials management. PowerGate delivered the ability to set up and manage stores, create top-up locations and process top-up demand all in one system. The dual bin system adopted across Addenbrookes, with PowerGate as the technology platform, allowed:

- lower stock levels to be held, as bulk stock was held in stores not on the wards;

- quicker demand creation times through the use of handheld barcode scanners;

- no delays in getting stock to wards;

- the GHX PowerGate management team to take responsibility for the system, giving back clinicians’ time to the wards and to patient care.
Discover how GHX can help you...

To find out more about how GHX can help you solve your company’s materials management issues, send your contact details to this address and one of our experts will be in touch:

info-uk@ghxeurope.com

RESULT

Greater efficiency savings:
The adoption of GHX PowerGate and GHX Exchange transformed the way in which materials management was conducted across the wards at Addenbrookes Hospital. In the first phase, PowerGate has been rolled out across approximately 25% of the wards at the Trust, allowing procurement processes to be streamlined and enhanced.

The efficiency and front line savings realised include:
- No clinician’s time was spent on stores management or ward top-up.
- Ward level stocks were reduced by up to 50%.
- Time taken to complete a ward top-up order was reduced by up to 75%.
- The amount of time spent checking the status of orders was cut dramatically.

THE LAST WORD...

Kevin Macey, Head of Procurement at Addenbrookes Hospital, said:

**GHX PowerGate**

“PowerGate enabled us to manage three central stores, resulting in sizeable cost savings for the Trust, by allowing us to spot ordering trends and reduce wastage. It even made independent suggestions on areas for improvement. By running PowerGate as a full materials management solution and dedicating a team to stores and top-up functions, we have been able to remove all clinical time previously spent on top-up, meaning more time can be spent on patient care.”

**GHX Exchange**

“The GHX Exchange has removed the doubt we previously had as to whether our orders were reaching suppliers. Additionally, Exchange has provided us with details on the cleanliness of our data, streamlining the transition of orders from our system to suppliers.”

WHY GHX?

- The vast functionality available in GHX PowerGate is superior to any competitor and scalable which makes it a long-term solution for the Trust.
- The ability to interface with existing systems currently in use at the Trust.
- GHX PowerGate allows personalised queries to be run at no extra cost, providing accurate data for analysis.

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