*Freedom of Information Request*

***Logistical Robots in Healthcare Environments***

*An extensive study conducted in the US, Canada, and Germany showcased that around 40% of nurses’ time is dedicated to ‘non-value adding’ and ‘non-nursing activities’, that include delivering food trays and housekeeping services (Fragapane et al., 2020). This is a significant amount of time and effort that could be re-allocated to human-centric tasks, such as patient care. Labour-intensive, monotonous, and repetitive tasks that carry high risk of human errors and potential threats to health and safety could be better assigned to automation technology.*

*In the UK, there are a limited number of hospitals employing these technologies; one of them boasted the UK’s first robotic transport system with 13 robots moving food, linen, and waste. This might raise a question, why are UK hospitals not progressively using logistical robots to alleviate the strain on workforce? To answer this question, we are undertaking a survey via Freedom of Information to better understand the current use of logistical robots in the UK hospitals, their impacts, the decisions behind the implementation (or non-implementation) of the robots, and any possible barriers from the hospital’s point of view in introducing these technologies. We would greatly appreciate if you could answer all the relevant questions to assist us with this study in the preferred format that has been given.*

1. **Does your organisation employ or utilise the use of logistical robots, or advanced equipment that can assist in operational tasks in a healthcare setting?**
* *Please select all box(es) that apply. If nothing applies, please proceed to Question 5.*
* *In the case the robot is multifunctional, please select one that best suits its primary purpose.*
* *In the case of multiple models and manufacturers under one application, please use the extra page given at the end of this form.*
* *For the purpose of this study, we are looking at logistical and supporting robots, with the exclusion of surgical and clinical robots (C-Arm, phlebotomy robots, exoskeleton/therapy robots, etc.). The term ‘robot’ used in this study refers to an advanced equipment or hardware that has an autonomous capability and can operate with minimal to no human intervention.*

[ ] **Delivery or transportation robots (delivering inpatient meals, empty food trays, medicines, samples/specimens, linen, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Main delivery item : Food / Medicine / Specimen / Linen / Other

If Other :

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Customer service/helper/care robot (greeting and assisting visitors in wayfinding and digital check-in, choosing inpatient meal options, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Waste management robot (transporting waste, sorting waste, recycling, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Cleaning or disinfecting robot (vacuuming, mopping, scrubbing, UV disinfecting, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Pharmacy robots (sorting, storing, dispensing, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Manual handling robots (goods reception, sorting, storing, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **CSSD robots (sterile instrument automatic storing, packaging, delivering, etc.)**

If yes, could you please give a general specification of the product/s:

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

Other functions? :

[ ] **Other logistical robots**

Application/purposes :

Manufacturer :

Model :

Year of installation :

Generation : First/ Second/ Third/ Others

NONE OF THE ABOVE.

1. **Was the installation of the robot(s) part of the hospital’s development (as a new build, refurbishment, department enhancement, renovation, etc.) or a dedicated retrofit? N/A**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Robot** | **Planned** | **Retrofit** |
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1. **When planning the use of robots, could you please tell us of any design decision(s) or adjustment(s) needed, if any, that was made to the hospital infrastructure and building design to enable their use?** (E.g. installation of automatic doors, dedicated FM routes, adjustment to lifts etc.) N/A
2. **What were the main intentions behind the decision to implement the robot(s)? What evidence-based factors supported the decision to implement the robot(s) i.e., savings projection? N/A**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Robot** | **Purpose of Use** |
|  | *Choose all that apply*[ ] Easing staff physical workload[ ] Increasing efficiency of task[ ] Repurposing staff time for patient-centric tasks[ ] Reducing human error[ ] Maximising working hours[ ] Others, please explain below\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  | *Choose all that apply*[ ] Easing staff physical workload[ ] Increasing efficiency of task[ ] Repurposing staff time for patient-centric tasks[ ] Reducing human error[ ] Maximising working hours[ ] Others, please explain below\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Have the robot(s) delivered the benefits envisaged when first considering using them? Please could you outline the positive and negative impacts of the robot(s) to the staff, patients, visitors, the hospital environment, and other stakeholders in the hospital:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Robot** | **Impacts** |
|  | *How does it serve its purpose? Are benefits realised in time and labour saving and operational efficiency?**Is the system reliable? Is there a high uptime and is maintenance manageable?* *How does it affect its surrounding?* *How do the staff and patient interact with it?**Are you considering the continuity or increased use of this type of robot?* |
|  |  |

1. Please only answer these questions if you are unable to answer Question 1-4
2. **Has the organisation considered implementing logistical robots?**

[ ] Yes

[x] No

1. **If yes, is the organisation going to implement logistical robots in the next 5 years?**

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

**If yes, what kind of logistical robot(s) and what is its intended purpose(s)?**

*Choose all that apply*

☐ Delivery or transportation robots

*(Delivering inpatient meals, empty food trays, medicines, specimens, linen, etc.)*

☐ Customer service/helper/care robot

*(Greeting and assisting visitors in wayfinding and digital check-in, choosing inpatient meal options, etc.)*

☐ Waste management robot *(transporting waste, sorting waste, recycling, etc.)*

☐ Cleaning or disinfecting robot *(vacuuming, mopping, scrubbing, UV disinfecting, etc.)*

☐ Pharmacy robots *(sorting, storing, dispensing, etc.)*

☐ Manual handling robots *(goods reception, sorting, storing, etc.)*

☐ CSSD robots *(sterile instrument automatic storing, packaging, delivering, etc.)*

☐ Other, please explain\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **If No, please share some of the reasons why you are not going to consider implementing logistical robots or decided not to proceed:**

*Choose all that apply*

[ ] Cost of the robot(s)

[ ] Limited funding / higher priorities towards other areas of improvement

[ ] Lack of evidence supporting the effectiveness and functionalities of the robot(s)

[ ] Lack of requirement due to ease of recruitment for human personnel/manpower

[ ] Complexity in implementation (lengthy business case, etc.)

[ ] Requirement for staff training

[ ] Existing infrastructure preventing the installation of enabling works (guide routes, automatic doors, wide corridors, sufficient vertical access, etc.)

[ ] Staff uncertainty/unease towards new technologies and possible replacement of staff

[x] Satisfactory solution already exists, i.e., pneumatic tube, cage tug, contracted out food/linen service

[ ] Others, please explain\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **Please could contact details be provided of anyone within the Trust who would be willing to take part in a more detailed discussion about automating logistical processes? - The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust does not disclose individual staff members contact details. You can email wcft.enquiries@nhs.net asking for your correspondence to be forwarded on.**

***Extra page for other information***