

Developing a GS1 Adoption Plan

News Article



Earlier this year, the Department of Health (DH) published the eProcurement Strategy which mandated the use of GS1 standards throughout the NHS. GS1 standards enable globally-unique identification for items in the supply chain.

This mandate requires every item that enters a hospital to be identified with a GS1 code, creating a shared language for the exchange of information between trading partners.

But the benefits offered through introducing the standards are not limited to back-end processes in the supply chain – each item can be verified at every step of its hospital lifecycle through barcode scans – right up to a GS1 code on the patient's wristband.

All items such as surgical instruments, medicines and food can then be scanned at the point of being administered to a patient. This means that all activities can be referenced and verified against an electronic health record, ensuring that the right patient receives the right treatment at the right time. Furthermore, suppliers will be required to enter all their product data into a GS1-certified datapool and the NHS will receive all product data via the Global Data Synchronisation (GDS) network – an industry-wide platform for secure synchronisation of accurate

data between trading partners.

While this explains the 'what' of the new procurement requirements, trusts now need to develop a plan to support the 'how'.

Appointing a GS1 lead

Most hospitals already use GS1 standards to some extent – they may be present within a particular system or department for example, and one or two people may have knowledge of them and what their purpose is.

However, *the eProcurement Strategy* mandates the use of the standards throughout hospitals, which means that greater understanding of concepts such as unique identification and datapools are now necessary for appropriate members of staff across multiple departments.

In order to introduce and oversee this programme of change, *the eProcurement Strategy* sets out that all trusts need to appoint a GS1 lead to help develop a GS1 standards adoption plan by 2015.

It is important for this lead to generate a firm baseline knowledge of GS1 standards and the requirements of *the eProcurement Strategy*, so they can allocate the appropriate level of resource at each stage of development, and identify areas for prioritisation to suit the specific hospital's circumstances.

Furthermore the plan will need to be overseen by a senior management steering group, to ensure it receives the support it needs to be driven through to full adoption.

Support for adoption plans

Linea is well placed to provide the inventory and procurement expertise necessary to support the implementation of GS1. Please contact us to discuss consultancy and interim support options.

Source: www.gs1.uk.org