
UK NHS Hospital Trusts Embrace Self Service Check-in Technology



Following recent news of a trust-wide implementation of self-service kiosks at Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust; a further three trusts are announcing plans to embrace the interactive technology as a means of improving patient experience, streamlining efficiencies and reducing cost.

Working in partnership with Intouch with Health - a company specialising in harnessing interactive communication technology to support healthcare organisations in the delivery of key objectives - Mid-Essex Hospital Trust, Aintree University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will be rolling out kiosks, which notify personnel of patient arrivals and direct patients to appropriate waiting areas and consultation rooms.

Patient check-ins via self service kiosks are estimated to take as little as six seconds using a combination of barcode scanners and patient appointment letters, and a maximum of 30 seconds when patients register their arrival using personal information, such as address details or a date-of-birth. In other UK hospitals, similar technology has received a 95 per cent patient uptake rate - reducing the administration burden and associated cost of the traditional hospital check-in.

Avril Davies, Head of IT Services and Strategic IT Projects at Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust comments on why the implementation has been a success: "Tameside wanted to use the latest technology to improve services for patients. Most patients have already experienced this type of technology in their GP surgeries and as a result patients of all ages see the benefits and enjoy engaging with the kiosks."

Gordon Lorimer, Managing Director of Intouch with Health, adds: "Technology is playing a rapidly increasing role in our lives. Once upon a time implementing self service kiosks in a clinical environment would have risked alienating certain social groups, such as the elderly. But this is no longer the case. A vast majority of the British public is now familiar with such touch-screen, self service technology thanks to its successful uptake in supermarkets, rail stations and airports. And with this familiarity comes an appreciation of the benefits - people recognise that self service equals less waiting around and a less stressful overall experience, whether they're doing the mid-week shop or attending a hospital appointment. Therefore, Trusts that embrace self service are not only reducing their own overheads and ticking boxes relating to reduced waiting times, they're meeting public demand and exceeding patient expectations."

In addition to rapidly checking patients in and providing a wayfinding and patient calling facility, the self service kiosks can integrate with existing management systems to accurately update patient records via pre-assessment questionnaires. This in turn can significantly help to reduce DNA (did not attend) rates by ensuring patient data is up-to-date, provide healthcare workers with clearer visibility over a patient's journey, and reduce management cost.

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