

Reference Number: FOI202425/026
From: Commercial
Date: 11 April 2024
Subject: Provision of Logistical robots in healthcare environments

Q1 Does your organisation employ or utilise the use of logistical robots, or advanced equipment that can assist in operational tasks in a healthcare setting?

A1 Yes- please see attached response FOI202425026.

Q2 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?

A2 Please see attached response FOI202425026.

Q3 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.?)

A3 Please see attached response FOI202425026.

Q4 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? 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:

A4 Please see attached response FOI202425026.

Please only answer these questions if unable to answer Q1-4.

- Q5
- a) Has the organisation considered implementing logistical robots?
 - b) If yes, is the organisation going to implement logistical robots in the next 5 years? If yes, what kind of logistical robot(s) and what is its intended purpose(s)?
 - c) If no, please share some of the reasons why you are not going to consider implementing logistical robots or decided not to proceed:

A5 a-c) Not applicable, as per A1-A4.

Q6 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?

A6 Please see attached response FOI202425026.

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: Dispensing robot with 2 picking heads and prolog loading system.

Manufacturer : BD

Model : Rowa VMax

Year of installation : 2017

Generation : Information not held- the Trust does not routinely collate or hold this information centrally as part of its management or performance data.

Other functions? : No

☐ **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

2. 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?

Type of Robot	Planned	Retrofit
Department enhancement	X	

3. 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.)

No adjustment needed.

4. 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?

Type of Robot	Purpose of Use
Pharmacy	<i>Choose all that apply</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Easing staff physical workload <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increasing efficiency of task <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repurposing staff time for patient-centric tasks <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reducing human error <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maximising working hours <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please explain below _____
	<i>Choose all that apply</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Easing staff physical workload <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing efficiency of task <input type="checkbox"/> Repurposing staff time for patient-centric tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Reducing human error <input type="checkbox"/> Maximising working hours <input type="checkbox"/> 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
Pharmacy	<i>The pharmacy robot services its purpose. Benefits are realised in time and labour saving and efficiency. The system is reliable and has a high uptime. Maintenance is manageable. No major impact on its surroundings. Trained staff interact with the robot in pharmacy, does not come into patient contact. We will continue to use the robot.</i>

5. Please only answer these questions if you are unable to answer Question 1-4

a. Has the organisation considered implementing logistical robots?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

b. 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 _____

c. 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

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

☐ Others, please explain _____

6. 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?

Leila Brown, Associate Director, Digital Transformation

Leila.brown@alderhey.nhs.uk