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Request for Information Reference: 11.21.19

FOI Direct line: 01325 743700  
Email: [cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net](mailto:cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net)

Email only

6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in relation to County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). Your request has been processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I am now able to provide you with a response.

Your request was in relation to Inventory Management in the NHS and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

Inventory Management in the NHS

**1. Is artificial intelligence or robotics used anywhere within the hospital, if so where?**

The Trust's Pharmacy has a robot system.

**2. Inventory Management: Is artificial intelligence/ automation used within the hospital's inventory management system?**

- Yes
- No
- N/A
- Other (please specify)

No

**3. If you answered 'Yes' to question 2, what inventory management / automation system is deployed? please provide the name of the developer or software.**

**(Please jump to question 6 if you did not answer 'Yes 'to question 2)**

**4. To what extent did automation help during the early stages of the Covid 19 pandemic (Jan 2020- Dec 2020)**

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not so useful
- Not at all useful
- Not applicable

Please provide more detail here:

**5. To what extent did automation help during the Brexit transition period**

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not so useful
- Not at all useful
- Not applicable

Please provide more detail here

Questions 3-5 are N/A

**6. Were any lessons learnt on improving inventory management as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic or Brexit?**

Not on day to day consumables, however there was learning in respect of personal protective equipment (PPE) stock control, central storage and distribution as the Trust had never operated bulk storage solutions prior to Covid.

**7. Where is hospital inventory stored?**

PPE is stored centrally initially on each hospital site. Ward consumables are stored on wards and replenished via a weekly top up service using NHS Supply chains logistics on line e-Dc system. e-Dc Gold is also being implemented across our Theatre sites for some products.

**8. How is unwanted inventory disposed of?**

PPE is returned to central NHS distribution centre. Consumable inventory is rarely unwanted, but any disposals are recorded and processed appropriately.

**9. May we contact you to learn more about your inventory management system? If yes, please provide an email address and a contact name.**

Yes, Dave Hindson. Head of Information and Operation (d.hindson@nhs.net)

**10. Name of Trust**

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log on the Trust's website. However please be assured that we anonymise all responses prior to adding them to the disclosure log.

I hope that this response has provided you with the information you had requested. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or in writing. If however, you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled and would like an internal review, you will need to contact me in writing at the above address or via [cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs](mailto:cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs).

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following an internal review you have the right to appeal to The Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. More information is available on their website; [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

**Corporate Records and Freedom of Information Facilitator**