6 **reasons why** you should digitalise **task management**

Healthcare professionals share how they successfully **optimise patient flows** using a digital task management solution.

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Explore how your hospital can **optimise service planning** and **execution** by digitalising **task** management.

Across the globe, hospital providers face the complex challenge of improving efficiency without increasing costs or losing focus on patient care. Hospitals are experiencing greater patient numbers, coupled with the demand to reduce admission times, which results in more patients to be transported, more frequent cleaning, and more equipment to be delivered. This increases the workload and pressure on clinicians and service personnel to ensure patients move through the healthcare system in a timely, organised and efficient manner. Consequently, hospitals risk jeopardising patient care as they race against time to achieve a sustainable patient flow.

In many hospitals, service logistics are managed through analogue processes and one-way communication. Providing hospitals with the right tools to support workflows for service staff, clinicians, and coordinators across departments is essential for sustaining optimal processes. These tools enable staff to focus on what is most important: providing the best possible patient care.

Digitalising task management helps you:

1 **Work together** across departments to eliminate barriers

2 **Streamline patient flows** and real-time updates to enhance care

3 **Empower employees** to take control

4 Use data to make **the best decisions**

5 Reduce errors to improve **patient safety**

6 Add value with an **interoperable** platform

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66% decrease in communication errors when using a digital task management solution

1: Work together across departments to eliminate barriers

Busy staff who are short on time are widespread in hospitals. Staff experience hectic and stressful schedules, and they often lack an overview of the outstanding workload.

By digitalising the handling of service tasks, hospitals are provided with a more comprehensive and transparent overview of tasks. This ensures better planning and limits the number of disruptions, delays, and communication errors. A digital task management system with real-time updates provides clinicians and service staff with an overview of outstanding tasks and their status, as well as contact information of responsible personnel. For coordinators and management, digitalising hospital services offers insights into the current workload and performance, highlighting potential bottlenecks that can be addressed before they escalate into problem scenarios.

As a result, a digital task management system improves the coordination and communication between departments by enabling better information sharing and optimising workflows. The hospital staff know which tasks are outstanding, where tasks are taking place, and when they require cross-disciplinary collaboration.

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On the first day of using the system, all patients were X-rayed before 5 PM because patient transports arrived on time for the first time ever on the two-year-old hospital.

Aron Rauff, Implementation Consultant, Systematic

Efficient communication and collaboration among healthcare professionals is vital for providing high-quality patient-centered care, according to a literature review on communication and collaboration in healthcare.

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249% increase in how easy it is to see progress and status on tasks

2: Streamline patient flows and real-time updates to enhance care

To overcome increased workload demands, it is important to facilitate streamlined workflows that increase your hospital's efficiency.

A digitalised task management system optimises workflows by enabling a so-called 'pull-principle', whereby staff can self-allocate their tasks from a prioritised list. Consequently, tasks are selected based on an efficiency principle, where knowledge of the current workload and resource planning help maximise operational delivery. As a result, staff experience fewer disturbances due to a reduction in unplanned interruptions.

Digitalised systems enable staff to sort tasks by parameters such as proximity to their location, competencies, or team affiliation. This produces more cohesive scheduling, improved efficiency, and a reduction in unnecessary steps. It also provides a real-time overview for clinicians and service staff who can follow assigned tasks and share information about progress and status. This increases efficiency and time for patient care without raising costs or diminishing standards.

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*Our main ambition is to ensure that patients are getting **from A to B as quickly as possible**. Since we introduced the task management system, we have seen an **improvement in our patient flow.***

Jamie Coleman, Portering Services Manager, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Scotland

Research has shown that traceability and accountability in mobile task management are crucial for optimising patient safety.

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90% reduction in time spent on following up with porters

3: Empower employees to take control

Unfortunately, workplace stress is widely prevalent among hospital staff due to the high volume of task demands and the requirement for precise and timely communication between colleagues.

Digitalising the handling of operational tasks provides service staff with an interactive and accessible tool that only displays tasks relevant to their individual role. This enables them to select, coordinate and execute their own duties in a logical and time-efficient manner.

Empowering staff in this way helps to build a sense of control, trust and shared responsibility, and encourages cohesive team-working rather than a reliance on isolated resources.

Maintaining positive team dynamics leads to better coordination, cooperation, and communication around tasks, reducing stress and boosting morale and job satisfaction.

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This solution has made life easier, because I don't get interrupted by calls while I am transporting a patient. The tasks are pre-defined and ready to be picked on my phone, it really makes my job much easier.

Gert Andersen, Head Porter at the Radiology Clinic, National Hospital, Copenhagen, Denmark

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29% more staff find they can easily and quickly perform tasks

4: Use data to make the best decisions

Many hospitals rely on manual and analogue procedures for task planning, coordination, and communication. However, this limits the application of valuable insights because knowledge, experience and data are confined to individuals rather than being used more globally as the foundation for future decisions.

By digitalising these processes, the system can collect empirical information about tasks being undertaken. This empowers coordinators and senior management to make informed decisions about service improvement opportunities based, no longer on instinct, but, from evidence-based data and statistical trends in service delivery.

As such, digital task management systems provide a valuable and data-driven starting point for optimising workflows in and across departments by equipping teams with a means to analyse factors impacting current performance, service deviations, capacity challenges, and delays. This real-time data can be utilised, for example, when reorganising teams, reprioritising tasks or delegating tasks to specific personnel, enabling hospitals to provide efficient

and high-quality care for patients based on a robust understanding of the situational backdrop.

This use of data also has a significant impact on the way service staff and departments co-operate in day-to-day operations. Departmental leaders can use data from the task management system to analyse when and how problems arise and, in turn, implement improvement strategies. For instance, changing the opening hours of a department to reduce the workload burden during peak hours, or changing the shift times for porters in order to best match available resources with the requirements of the clinical staff and ward demands.

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Previously, we might have had an idea about where the challenges were, **but now we can actually document them with data**.

John Bjørn Olsen, Development Manager, Facility Management, North Zealand Hospital, Denmark

90% of the time, patients are transported on schedule

5: Reduce errors to improve patient safety

Digitalising hospital service systems enables staff to boost efficiency and reduce waiting times.

Today, many hospitals send service task requests to individual members of staff, and, as such, the task execution is reliant on that one person. Operating in this way can cause bottlenecks, negatively impact wait times, and create inefficiencies in workload distribution among staff. With a digital system, requested tasks reach the whole team instead of just one person, which decreases the risk of tasks not being accepted or carried out on time.

By ensuring that a task reaches more people, the workload is allocated evenly across the team and individual skills are used optimally. This results in a reduction in communication silos, improved collaboration and resource utilisation, and smoother workflows between wards and departments, ensuring minimal wait times and a reduction in knock-on delays to the schedules of allied teams (for example imaging or surgery).

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*The workflow is **more efficient** because porters can pick tasks on their phones. 90% of the time, tasks are done in a timely fashion, and patients are getting transported **a lot quicker**.*

Rona Thomson, Senior Charge Nurse,
The Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

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Porters experience a **23%** decrease in empty-handed steps

6: Add value with an interoperable app

Managing costs is a top priority for hospital providers. Cost reduction strategies must prioritise the health of patients while examining opportunities to cut costs.

By optimising patient flow through digital management of tasks, hospitals can retain dedicated personnel, reduce delays and wait times, and ensure the maximum occupancy for each bed.

Time and efficiency savings afforded through a digital task management solution can help unlock staff resources to attend training and development activities, which research has shown to be a key factor in promoting job satisfaction. This reduces staff turnover and contributes to to

long-term cost reduction through a diminished need to recruit and train new personnel.

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*In the old system, we needed four people to manage the computers. Now, we only need one. **So, it has freed up three supervisors to complete other tasks** they are meant to be doing, such as training.*

Rory McGregor, Facilities Duty Supervisor, The Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

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About **Columna Flow**

Columna Flow is the collective name for Systematic's solutions that support and optimise hospital workflows across disciplines and departments.

Task Management	Command Center	Clinical Tasking	Search & Find	Wayfinding

The product suite has been developed for varying hospital workflows and is accessible from different platforms depending on the situational requirements. The user-friendly interface makes it easy for clinicians and service staff to gain an overview, select, and complete tasks. The information is shared in real-time across platforms so that coordinators and managers can track progress and intervene before a potential challenge becomes a real problem. The suite consists of digital solutions for service and clinical task management, a command centre to provide a high-level hospital overview, search & find functionality to locate equipment and resources, as well as wayfinding around the hospital.

Columna Flow is built to facilitate dynamic workflows across hospital departments and enables situational awareness for all personnel including management.

Get in touch with us

Interested in learning more about our digital task management solution and how it can benefit your hospital? **Reach out to us:**

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