



UZ Gent Hospital Adopts Zebra Mobile Computers to Help Enhance Patient Safety and Staff Efficiency



SUMMARY



Customer
UZ Gent



Partner
Telecom-IT Group

Industry
Healthcare

Challenge

UZ Gent needed a tech-powered solution that ensured nurses could complete their work and duties of providing patient care. Crucially, this solution needed to be able to escalate alarms and notifications to nurses on shift so they could allocate appropriate numbers and resources to alarms.

Benefits/Outcomes

- Increased visibility of patient condition and vitals for nurses on shift
- More prompt delivery of patient care thanks to a tiered alarm system
- Increased patient safety thanks to reduced alarm fatigue
- Reduced (physical) workload for hospital staff

Solution

- Zebra TC26-HC Mobile Computer

UZ Gent is the second largest of seven university hospitals in Belgium, delivering high quality, tailored, clinical and referral care to its patients.

It delivers this care in alignment with the university's mission: To provide full spectrum medical expertise with an emphasis on quality and patient-friendly care, while respecting the diverse beliefs and personal privacy of its patients and employees.

Home to 6,300 employees and 9,755 medical students, UZ Gent prides itself on professionalism, openness and integrity. Moreover, its close relationship with Ghent University bolsters its reputation as both a hospital and educational institution, in addition to its numerous training courses and fundamental scientific research in the field.

For UZ Gent, a progressive approach in a medical sense and by way of operational efficiency is paramount. It is because of this dual approach that the hospital has been able to pioneer its unique nurse call system, which is gradually being implemented in Belgium and Flanders – powered by Zebra.

Attract What You Put Out

When it comes to navigating the current talent crisis, UZ Gent faces a unique challenge: finding the right doctors and nurses while adhering to ongoing budget cuts. This means staff deployment is taken seriously and closely scrutinised.

Using a sophisticated alert system, the hospital is able to deploy staff much more efficiently by enabling them to achieve more with fewer resources. Given today's finite availability of suitable staff, the ability to elevate the hospital's profile with technology in this way – thus adding to its appeal as an employer – is invaluable to attracting talent. To do this, UZ Gent collaborates with Zebra to help enhance its appeal as a technologically advanced employer that prioritises the performance and well-being of its employees.

Small Comforts, Maximum Safety

For staff at UZ Gent, Zebra TC26-HC mobile computers help contribute to a manageable workload. “Nurses will often traverse the hospital responding to various alarms,” explains Lieven Vagenende, Electrical Department Manager at UZ Gent. “However, they don’t always know the severity of the alert in the first instance – whether it’s a request from a patient for a bottle of water, or something much more critical.” Now, with direct alarm notifications via the TC26-HC, nurses can assess the situation and immediately prioritise, allowing them to manage their time more efficiently.

“Alarm fatigue, caused by excessive alerts, can compromise patient safety – which can sometimes mean ignoring alerts without knowing the extent of the situation,” Vagenende adds. “The new system streamlines communication and provides relevant medical data for medical teams to respond appropriately no matter what the situation, giving them peace of mind regardless of how minor or urgent the call.” While Zebra’s mobile devices are used varyingly among the medical and technical teams, the benefits for both are nearly identical.

Historically, when a patient required any kind of assistance, they would press a button to call a nurse. The response would involve a light above a room door indicating that assistance was needed, or an alert sent to the nurse’s pager – but they weren’t able to determine the severity without checking in with the patient first. The Zebra mobile computers can receive calls while tending to patients in other rooms, as well as provide real-time information about the nature of the request.

Eliminating Missed Messages

The new system enables greater visibility of patient vitals and, in turn, provides more data. Aside from being able to transmit an alert to a nurse’s device – rather than triggering an alarm which would have previously been bothersome for other patients in proximity – nurses can receive data via their mobile computers and promptly analyse it, determining if it’s a false alarm, or a life-threatening situation.



SUCCESS STORY

UZ GENT

Nurses now benefit from larger displays than on the old DECT phones previously used by the hospital, allowing for more data to be collected. It also has a built-in fallback system, operating over both the hospital's Wi-Fi and 4G network. Vagenende recalls, "The previous system was akin to sending out a radio signal, hoping it would be received." This would often result in messages being missed completely.

However, with Zebra, staff have peace of mind knowing that even if a message isn't received initially, the system escalates the signal to alternative devices – be it DECT phones, landlines or other personnel – while also knowing that all calls are tracked so that feedback can be provided accordingly.

To learn more about UZ Gent visit:

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