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SPIRIT PRESCRIBES MOTOROLA IMAGERS FOR CARDIFF TOXICOLOGY LABORATORIES

Healthcare is one of the many sectors that has benefited from advances in mobile data capture technology, which is used in a host of different applications. One organisation that has recently upgraded to one of the latest cordless imagers is the Cardiff Toxicology Laboratories. The laboratories are using the Motorola DS6878-HC, sourced by Spirit Data Capture Limited. This has already led to improvements in efficiency by streamlining the processing of analytical requests.

The Cardiff Toxicology Laboratories are based at University Hospital Llandough, which is part of the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, one of the largest NHS organisations in the UK. The laboratories are accredited according to CPA (Clinical Pathology Accreditation) standards and deliver analytical toxicology services to healthcare providers, research institutions and industry.

Every analytical request that passes through the laboratories is allocated a unique seven-digit number that acts as the primary identifier in all subsequent operations. Originally, the department used to enter these numbers manually, but this proved to be an inefficient and labour-intensive procedure that was prone to error. The laboratories therefore decided to explore the use of barcodes and

electronic readers, with the aim of removing data entry errors and increasing throughput.

Initially, the department bought some barcode readers that were physically connected to a PC via a USB cable. However, it recently decided to upgrade these to a more versatile system.

Cable-free data capture

Dr Alun Hutchings, Consultant Analytical Toxicologist with the Cardiff Toxicology Laboratories, explains: “We needed devices that were robust and reliable, that were programmable and were cable-free. I explained our requirements to Spirit Data Capture and they recommended the Motorola DS6878-HC. They loaned a device to us and I was very impressed with it.”

The Motorola DS6878-HC is a cordless imager developed specifically for the healthcare sector. It has been designed to enable hospitals to automate data capture, improve data accuracy, increase productivity and streamline everyday processes in patient rooms, laboratories and the pharmacy. It uses Bluetooth technology and can capture any 1D or 2D barcodes as well as signatures, documents, still photographs and videos.

The imager’s high performance scanning capabilities (which include rapid and accurate scanning even on poor quality barcodes) is complemented by the

device's excellent levels of reliability. It has a lightweight, ergonomic design but is extremely rugged.

The laboratories have now installed the Motorola imagers and are using them to read the primary identifier (the seven-digit number) on every request. The devices are used for request registration on the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), with subsequent data entry and results authorisation.

The Motorola DS6878-HC imagers are also used in conjunction with the department's GCMS (Gas Chromatography – Mass Spectrometry) system, for the creation of work lists prior to analysis. These lists can include well over 100 numbers, so the scanner is programmed to read in the data followed by a down-arrow command.

Dr Hutchings comments: "The Motorola units enable us to create the work lists in an error-free way and in significantly less time than it would take to perform the task manually."

Increased efficiency

He adds: "So far, the Motorola imagers have been performing perfectly. They have boosted the efficiency of our analytical request operations whilst also reducing the risk of any errors. Their programmability also makes them very

flexible. At the same time, the users are very pleased with them because they make their data entry tasks easier to accomplish.

“Since loaning us the first device, Spirit have offered us assistance in setting up the units we have purchased and programming them. They have provided us with an excellent service throughout and I would definitely use them again in the future.”

ENDS (610 words)

Notes for Editors: Spirit Data Capture is based in Preston Brook, Cheshire. The company is an independent mobile computing and data capture house, with an in-depth knowledge of the latest wireless and mobile computing technologies which boost productivity and profitability.

Spirit’s capabilities include software application development, mobile computing technology (e.g. rugged mobile computers), wireless network implementations, maintenance and other services. Its extensive client base includes a diverse array of organisations in the utilities, field service, transport and logistics, healthcare, government and manufacturing sectors.

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