



Powered patient transport to help protect staff on journey between theatres and ward

Compact, manoeuvrable, capable of gradients up to 10°... and most importantly, requiring only one person to operate

BACKGROUND

Located on the outskirts of Nuneaton, George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust provides a range of elective, non-elective, surgical, medical, women's, children's, diagnostic and therapeutic services to a population of more than 300,000 people across large footprint, including north Warwickshire, south west Leicestershire, and north Coventry. The hospital opened in 1948 (coinciding with the birth of the NHS itself in England).

The Hospital is one of many local buildings named after Nuneaton-born author [George Eliot](#), the pen name chosen by Mary Ann Evans because she didn't think a woman writer would be taken seriously in her time – the Victorian era. Proud of its connection with the area's famous daughter, several of the hospital's surgical and medical wards are named after characters in her novels including Felix Holt and Adam Bede.

However, hospital logistics are, of course, not just about names, and can often be complicated: service requirements inevitably change, and you can't knock the buildings down and start all over again every time that happens.

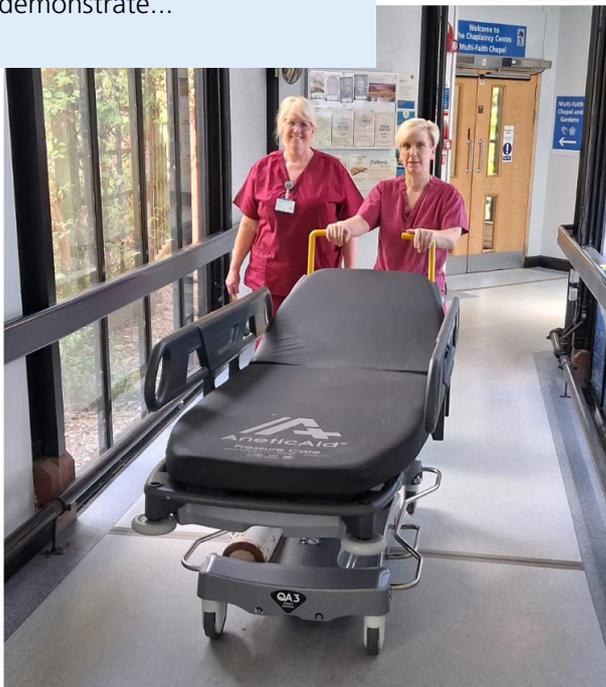


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A TRANSFER PROBLEM...

One recent issue at the George Eliot site involved the hospital's Day Procedures Unit (DPU) – a purpose-built extension to the hospital which opened in 2003.

The ward associated with the DPU had to be relocated to create space for a vital surgical assessment unit – and the only space available was in another part of the hospital. This led to a problem, as Theatre Manager Paula Quinn (left) and Senior Theatre Nurse Team Leader Sara Clark demonstrate...



...not only was it a considerable distance away, but the journey involved long corridors, some of which were on a slope, partly with an adverse camber and some sharp corners.



There was also a particularly tricky turn at the end of the journey at the entrance to the new ward.

APPROACH

The hospital's vision is 'To Excel at Patient Care', and it was with a view to finding ways to make transfers as easy as possible – for both patients and staff – that Senior Theatre Nurse Team Leader Sara Clark started talking to British designer and manufacturer of clinical stretchers, Anetic Aid.



Sales Director Andrew Curtin with a bust of George Eliot in the hospital foyer

Explained the company's Sales Director Andrew Curtin: 'Sara initially approached us about our QA4 Mobile Surgery Systems because they require no transfer of patients, and are ideal if theatres and the recovery ward are in a comparatively compact space.

'But it was a different issue at George Eliot and I could see that one of our other products would be really helpful to them. It is a stretcher designed for patient transport, but with its own inbuilt motorised drive.

'Touch-sensitive pushing handles initiate the motion, forward or back, but the moment the practitioner lets go, the stretcher stops, ensuring they are always in full control.

'With a capacity to cope with gradients up to 10° – the QA3 DRIVE was the obvious answer.'

Added Sara: 'Our big concern was protecting staff – particularly those with any back or shoulder issues. Having a powered patient trolley wasn't something we had even thought of – Anetic Aid provided us with a demonstration model so that staff could try it, and they loved it.'

OUTCOME

Following the NHS Procurement process, the Trust has now bought five QA3 DRIVE Stretchers.

Said Sara: 'Staff are now using them routinely. For us there were three key benefits.

- **Speedier transfer between theatre and ward**
- **Physically less demanding**
- **One person can operate them**



'The company has been very supportive – nothing was too much trouble. They offered training for our staff and we never had to wait if there was an issue or a query.

'Overall it is a really good product – and very practical for our unique circumstances.'

And Theatre Manager Paula Quinn added: 'At the George Eliot we are always interested into new developments – in techniques and equipment. This was a great example of how patient transport has evolved and can really help support our staff – and of course, that's good news for patients too.'

For more information on any of our products or service contracts, call:
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