

March 2018

## **Materials Handling and Logistics in the Pressured World of Healthcare**

Pressures within the UK health and social care system extend beyond hospitals and community care homes. Behind the scenes is an immense and complex manufacturing and service infrastructure that supplies and supports an unceasing demand for medical supplies, equipment and technology. And to make sure that supplies get to the right place there is a large and sophisticated logistics infrastructure that stretches from suppliers and manufacturers to the hospital ward.

Every organisation involved in supplying health services knows what is expected of them. That reliability, quality and adaptability is not optional, its full-on commitment to service and care.

Of course, that means the structures and processes in place designed to meet such a demanding operating environment must be top notch too. Systems and equipment must be designed to supply and support with zero tolerance to delay or inefficiency.

Engineering dependability is just as important as smart, intelligent systems. They are all part of the same interdependent system and are crucial to making the UK's health and care sector function efficiently.

Malcolm Mitchell, managing director of Amvar Handling Solutions has been working with the health sector for over a decade and believes strongly that logistics, including handling and storage are integral to the whole supply chain.

Amvar have been working in both supplying equipment in hospitals and with manufacturers of hospital and personal care equipment. It's not just about trust and reliability. Capability and capacity are key, especially in piecing together projects to design and install storage and distribution facilities to accommodate significant movements of materials, spares and finished goods.

Its largely been about improving capacity and productivity, according to Malcolm. Businesses need to maximise space and material flow to create an efficient process. Amvar is probably the only company in the Midlands that offers a full integrated materials handling solution. It effectively means that they design and install warehouse systems ensuring that the full cubic space is put to maximum use. That may include high racking and narrow aisles. Equipment such as forklifts, reach trucks, order pickers and any other necessary equipment are all included in the package and supplied, serviced and supported by Amvar.

This integrated solution was exactly what Joerns Healthcare were looking for when they decided to inboard their logistics and create additional capacity within a smaller footprint. Having a single provider to think through the whole project and design, install and provide aftersales support was exactly what was required. Being an independent supplier of materials handling also allows Amvar to select the right products for the application without compromise.

Health product manufacturers need to meet tight deadlines which means materials and finished products must align with both the manufacturing process and efficient customer order fulfilment.

Sunrise Medical, another Midlands-based medical care equipment specialist also worked with Amvar to ensure their warehouse equipment was effective, reliable and safe. Using new technology,

applied for the first time in forklifts, the truck's safety and operation are monitored using a mobile app that reports any issues prior to each shift. It provides another level of assurance and reliability in a business environment that needs to avoid failures or downtime.

At the top of everyone's agenda when it comes to materials handling equipment is service support and response. It's an area that Amvar has focused on, and provides a same-day or sooner service response for urgent service calls. It means that customers are never left with a problem that Amvar cannot quickly solve.

Helping to take the pressure is part of being in the intensive world of supporting healthcare businesses.

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