The surprising solution to improving Radiology throughput

If someone asked you to have an 'ideas session' in which you need to put forward solutions for improving Radiology throughput, you would be excused if your first, or even second or third answer isn't 'efficient portering'.

It may not be a natural first thought to solving such a problem, but you'd be wrong to discount improvements to a portering teams ways of working as the answer to improved patient flow, as evidence shows. Northampton General Hospital have been using a digital portering management tool exclusively in their Radiology department and are reaping the benefits – and this wasn't a case of having to wait long-term before seeing any improvements, instead Northampton saw an increase in throughput with an immediate effect.

"You can't dispute the instant impact MyPorter has had on the Radiology department here at Northampton. 141 extra transfers in just 21 days"

said Kam Kaila, Head of Hotel Services at Northampton General Hospital.

You may be wondering just how a piece of software can improve porter efficiency and how that can impact on improving throughput in Radiology? Well, the software, better known as MyPorter, allows tasks as job tickets to be sent directly in real-time to porters, receiving them as a visual message to their two-way radios (or smart device if preferring a wifi based system). With the majority of portering task delays caused by incomplete information about what equipment is required and important information about the patient, MyPorter creates task prompts for all the relevant information, giving the opportunity to prepare for the task in hand to deliver a personalised patient experience. By receiving this job ticket directly to their device, it means they now have full task details to hand, meaning time spent on each job is shorter and nothing gets missed – all details are known before the job is started. Such information which is often overlooked and can be flagged on MyPorter includes any equipment needed for the transfer, things which result in a patient not being ready, like the need to be in a gown or to have a cannula fitted – problems the porter can now stop at ward level before they reach the Radiology department.

Other issues which can hold up patients from reaching Radiology on time include location and infection control. MyPorter allows the porter to know if additional PPE is needed along with where a patient is located, and when and where they need to be for their imaging appointment – this allows the patient to arrive on time, meaning the Radiology team aren't waiting around, throughput is improved and things run more smoothly. Not only does the system equip the portering service with the relevant information to complete the task efficiently it also gives the Radiology department sight of their tasks on a dashboard, meaning that if a task is paused by a porter the Radiology department will know in real-time and can potentially scan another patient (possibly from community or ED), this ensures that diagnostic table time is not wasted, and ensures that radiology staff are in control of their workload.

Having the MyPorter system gives the Radiology and Portering departments the tool they need to collaboratively increase throughput and ensure wasted scanner time is reduced to a minimum.
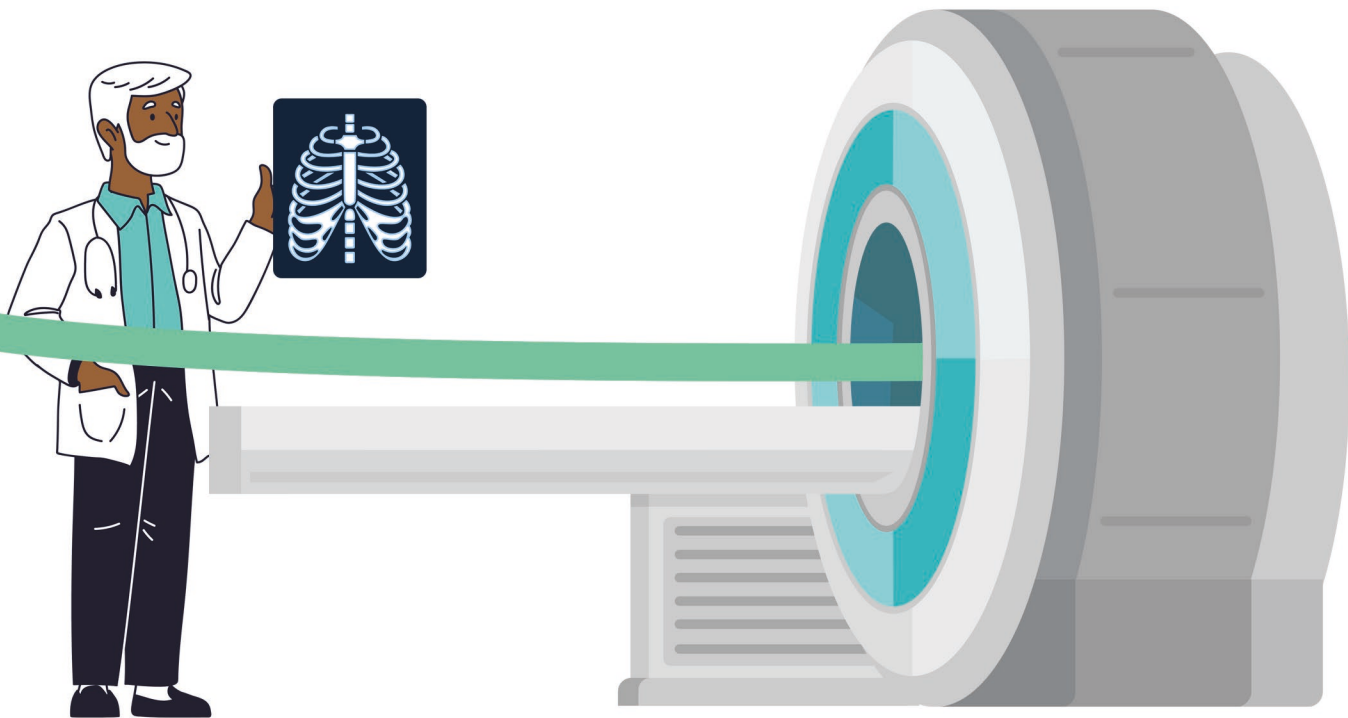
Liz Page, Radiographer at Northampton General Hospital said:

"All in all, it has been really successful, particularly for Radiology – X-Ray. On Thursday we did 25 more jobs than normal and on Friday again. This has excellent benefits for patient service and turnaround times for their imaging".

The MyPorter solution which Northampton General Hospital have been using in their Radiology department was developed with the input from over 100 different Trust's, ensuring it does the job needed of it by those who will be using it – The system is now installed in over 20 hospitals across the UK.

MyPorter was built by GV Healthcare who design and build adaptable and future-proofed systems for use in healthcare environments that meet your requirements in the simplest, most easy-to-use format imaginable – with over 25 years' experience in developing such solutions.
GV Healthcare look to build long-term partnerships – working together, listening to your needs and build expandable and future-proofed solutions, offering full training along with full support from its own UK-based support team.

To find out more about MyPorter – the porter task management software solution, please visit: www.myporterlogistics.com

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MyPorter