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Customer

Bergmannsheil University Hospital

Zebra Solution

HC100™ printer with Z-Band Ultrasoft wristbands

Benefits

- Three-fold safety procedure
- Smooth patient registration process
- Increased patient and staff satisfaction

Bergmannsheil University Hospital enhances patient safety with Zebra wristbands and printers

The Bergmannsheil University Hospital in Bochum (in the heart of the Ruhr region in Germany) provides 622 beds. It treats around 20,000 inpatients and 63,000 outpatient cases every year, with these figures increasing annually. This is the first A&E hospital in the world which is also a university hospital, with a reputation extending far beyond its geographical location. Faced with increasing patient numbers, the Bergmannsheil University Hospital is adopting new approaches to ensure a smooth process operates at all times and guarantees the highest level of safety. “Our patients’ safety is always the number one priority,” says Dr Beatrice Palausch, who is in charge of patient management and medical administration. “Nowadays the length of a hospital stay is much shorter than it used to be. Our staff come into contact with significantly more patients every day, and in order to cope with these numbers, we started early on to adapt our safety procedures to the growing challenges.” Personalised patient wristbands have been a part of this advanced system since 2010, and are created using Zebra HC100™ printers to improve patient identification.

Holistic approach to patient identification

The safety measures applied at the hospital focus on a holistic approach. This means that individual safety checks are constantly being carried out while patients are on their way to different wards, for the investigations and operations they require. Identifying patients correctly is an integral part of this process, which is precisely where the Zebra wristband comes in.

The wristband is created when a patient arrives at the hospital, whether they are coming in for an elective procedure via central admissions, being taken to the hospital in an emergency, or are in the intensive or intermediate care unit. At this point, a brief explanation is provided of the purpose of the wristband and patients can decide themselves whether they wish to wear one or not. If they decide to wear the wristband, it will accompany them throughout their stay in hospital and will provide an additional check for both the patient and the staff prior to an operation, for example. “Before any procedure in the operating theatre, we specifically ask a patient their name and current treatment, and compare this with the records and the name on their wristband. We also scan the barcode on the wristband, which links to the patient’s online record where we compare the details again. This means that we have a threefold safety procedure,” explains Detlef Fleer, operating theatre coordinator.





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Quick & simple processes

It is not only the scanning of the wristband which is quick and simple, but creating the wristband hardly requires any additional time either. "We record all the important details when patient is admitted. With just one more click, we can print the wristband," explains Lisa Blankenburg who works in the Bergmannsheil University Hospital's central admissions department. "Not to mention that the HC100 printer is easy to use, and if the printer cartridge needs to be changed this is done quickly and easily."

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This is just one of the reasons why the hospital opted for the HC100 wristband printer from Zebra Technologies. It is easy to use, makes very little noise and has such a compact design that it can be easily accommodated in different areas in the patient admissions department. Another benefit is that the printers were easily integrated into the hospital's existing IT environment; it took just a few working days to get the equipment up and running.

Patient and staff satisfaction

It is not only the Bergmannsheil University Hospital which has been impressed by the benefits of using the HC100-printed wristbands. There has also been extremely positive feedback from patients. "The patient wristband is still something new to many patients, which is why they are sometimes hesitant right at the start," says Lisa Blankenburg. "But the benefits are so obvious that many choose to wear one."

It is rare for a patient to remove their wristband during their hospital stay. It is now an even rarer occurrence as the Bergmannsheil University Hospital has switched, on the advice of Zebra partner Diagramm Halbach, to the Z-Band Ultrasoft wristbands. They are just as robust but even more comfortable to wear.



Looking ahead to the future

Correct patient identification is just one area where wristbands can be used in this hospital. "Hospitals are facing growing challenges as a result of increasing mobility, the demands for transparency and personal responsibility among patients. But the technical options available have also increased. This is why we are currently revamping our entire hospital information system to make it futureproof," says Dr Palausch. This means that patient wristbands could be used not only for identifying patients, but also for providing details of their medication, dietary requirements, or even of the entertainment programme a patient has requested. "There are so many different areas of application. This provides the basis in our hospital for continuing to have satisfied patients in the future. And definitely also for ensuring their safety."



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