

# Poor Signage and Administrative Burdens Holding Back the NHS

Submitted by: Proud PR

Monday, 25 February 2013

---

59% of hospital staff claim patients do not read signs

1/3 of clinics sit idle

Upcoming study from Qmatic (<http://www.qmatic.com/uk>) investigates the administrative and patient management challenges facing the world's largest public healthcare organisation

Milton Keynes, UK – 25 February 2013 - High administrative overheads, patients frequently getting lost, and systematic under-utilisation of resources have been highlighted as the primary structural challenges facing the NHS today. This is according to findings from an upcoming research report "Waiting and Queuing in the NHS (<http://qmaticmail.com/t/14IT-1ALZC-5KOD9Y-IIZ6M-0/c.aspx>)" from Qmatic.

The report is the result of interviews with 100 senior IT decision makers and department heads within the NHS conducted by the independent market research agency Vanson Bourne between December 2012 and January 2013. It was commissioned by Qmatic to highlight the structural and systematic causes of delays and bottlenecks within the NHS, which waste the precious time of trained medical staff, taxpayers' money, and repeatedly let patients down. The report, which will be available in late February 2013 looks at three fundamental issues faced by the NHS today:

1. Improving the patient's journey between departments
2. Improving the management of patient queuing and waiting within departments
3. Making better use of patient journey information to improve the overall patient experience.

By better understanding the underlying causes of these issues, Qmatic seeks to improve the way the NHS handles the flow of patients throughout the organisation so that bottlenecks can be reduced and the delivery of care can be improved. Initial findings from the report include:

## Navigational challenges

- 59% of hospital staff claim that patients do not read signs (and 44% have received complaints from patients about getting lost), resulting in missed or delayed appointments, frustrated patients and additional strain on departmental reception desks
- In contrast to those patients getting lost, 38% of respondents said that patients often arrive very early for their appointments, clogging up the limited seating available. This is especially problematic during peak times when capacity is at a premium.

## The burden of administration

- On average, 18% of nurses' time is spent arranging follow-up appointments, while 14% is spent explaining to patients about waiting times and 10% is spent helping lost patients
- An average total of 42% of nurses' time is therefore spent on activities other than nursing.

## Under-utilisation of resources

- The average percentage utilisation of NHS clinics is cited at 66%, meaning just over 1/3 of NHS clinics sit unused during the day
- More than three in five respondents (63%) believe they do not have adequate seating in all their

departments throughout the day.

David Anahory, UK CEO at Qmatic explains, "Healthcare facilities are under enormous pressure to provide an improved quality of care to more and more patients, all the while coping with a limited set of resources. As the largest healthcare organisation in the world with an annual budget of over £100 billion, these challenges are amplified considerably at the NHS. The sheer scale and complexity of the NHS means that even the smallest of inefficiencies can be very costly indeed."

"We commissioned this research because we wanted to understand how structural issues within the NHS were causing bottlenecks and affecting the delivery of patient care. The results have proven to be enlightening, reinforcing existing views as well as offering new insights. For example, while the continuing burden of administration on clinical staff is a concern that is relatively well documented (and reinforced by our study), the under-utilisation of physical resources such as rooms and seating, or the inefficient way in which patients are transferred from one department to another, are issues that are much less well investigated. Our research however shows that these issues are of no less importance to the delivery of patient care, so finding solutions to these problems should be a priority for NHS managers across the country."

If you would like to receive copy of the report on the day of publication, please register your interest here (<http://qmaticmail.com/t/14IT-1ALZC-5KOD9Y-IIZ6M-0/c.aspx>).

#### About Qmatic

Qmatic is world leader in queuing, waiting and patient flow solutions that increase productivity, efficiency and patient satisfaction while reducing costs for the NHS. Its software, hardware and consultancy helps hospitals such as Birmingham Children's, The Christie and St Thomas' to value time within the physical patient experience and derive real-time business intelligence (BI). This BI drives room and resource utilisation as well as patient routing to improve appointment keeping and burdens on clinical staff. It also determines department layout and design, employee training, job satisfaction as well as patient behaviour and satisfaction. Reporting against targets, real-time problem resolution, efficiency and cost control factor too. According to a new survey, poor signage and administrative burdens hold back the world's largest public health organisation significantly.

Headquartered in Sweden, Qmatic operates out of 120 international locations. Its solutions have been successfully deployed in 51,000 sites across 122 countries. It is estimated that more than two billion users; a quarter of the world's population, pass through Qmatic's systems every year. See [www.qmatic.com/uk](http://www.qmatic.com/uk).

Qmatic UK is based at Derwent House, University Way, Cranfield Technology Park, Bedford, MK43 0AZ. Phone: 01234 757 110. Twitter Qmatic\_UK.

Press contacts:

Natalie Sutton/Kimberley Gray  
Proud PR (<http://www.proudpr.com>)  
+44 (0)1276 679570

