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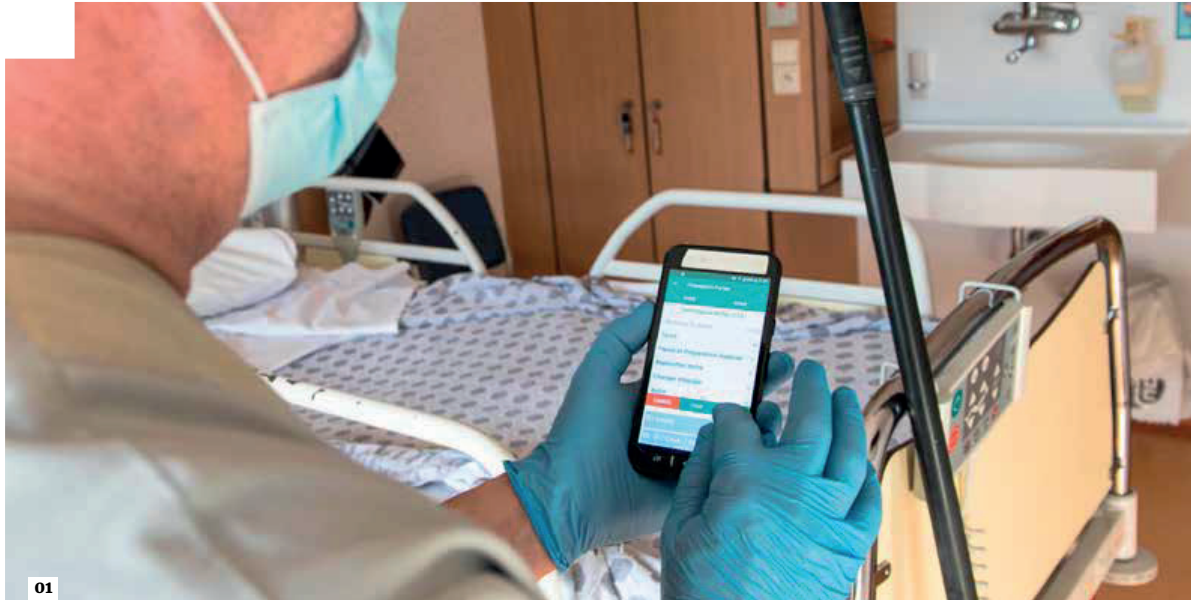
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01

Managing hospital cleaning 2.0

CUSL

The Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc (CUSL) have automated the management of all their cleaning activities. A first for Belgium! The project, launched in 2018, had two objectives: to rationalise the organisation of the work of the 300 cleaners and to optimise the provided service and make it more profitable. And this challenge has been accepted.

125,000 m², several buildings, 6000 rooms including 1000 hospital rooms, 26 operating theatres... These figures already give a good idea of the enormous challenge for the daily maintenance of the Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc in Woluwe-Saint-Lambert. Until three years ago, cleaning was still organised "the grandmotherly way". The nurses would inform the cleaning service by telephone that a room had become available and needed to be cleaned. The cleaning staff wrote down the request on a piece of paper and then sent one of the 300 cleaning staff from the service to "do" the room ... An outdated system that resulted in wasted time, inefficiency and often led to complaints from the requesting department that

could not always be verified. Today, an IT management tool has made the telephone and paper obsolete. Long live the planning and the overview of the workload, of the available resources and of all the needs of the mega-structure of this hospital that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Only advantages

"The big advantage is the real-time overview of operations. We have completely switched to modernity and efficiency. Now the nursing staff, the cleaning department and the cleaner in charge of an assignment all have a complete picture of each request and its follow-up," explains Gilles Destruel, Manager Cleaning at CUSL. "We are the first hospital in Belgium to manage ALL cleaning operations via computer: rooms, operating theatres, intensive care, emergency department, offices. Other hospitals also do it, but mainly for the rooms of discharged patients."

The main added value of the new automated process concerns the organisation of room cleaning. "The overall real-time overview of the rooms makes it possible to avoid the bottleneck of the past and to streamline the flow between outgoing and incoming patients and the availability of the rooms," notes

the Cleaning Manager. "In addition, we can follow up more efficiently what the cleaners have done and how they have used their time."

On the work floor, everyone has a smartphone. "That's a real advantage. Both for us and for them," explains Rudy Rimeau, CUSL Logistics Director. Before, everyone started their shift with, boom!, immediately 10 activities to be carried out. That was not motivating. Now, with the smartphone, each cleaner is informed of the activity job by job according to a proximity logic of jobs in the same zone. This ensures a greater flexibility in getting the job done. And via the smartphone, everyone is also kept informed of the details of each task. Whether you are cleaning a classic patient room, a covid room, an operating theatre or a consulting room, the protocols, techniques and products are of course always different.

The cleaners themselves say they experience less stress and the efficiency, quality of work and planning benefits from it. Just like the turn-over of patients in the rooms. It was well worth the investment: EUR 135,000. To date, the modernisation of the cleaning organisation has already saved the Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc 376,000 euros.



02



A unique watchtower

At the start, the automation of the entire cleaning sector required a huge amount of data entry. After all, it was necessary to enter all the characteristics of each of the 6,000 rooms, the procedures and types of cleaning, the protocols, the products to be used, the maintenance frequencies, and so on. **But once that was done, the software iTransport that the Dutch company dir/Active developed, proved to be much more than a simple tool for planning cleaning assignments. It is also a valuable reporting tool. "We collect data that gives statistics per day, week, month," describes the head of the Cleaning Department. "This allows us to continuously refine our system."**

His colleague Rudy Rimeau, Director of Logistics, gives an example: "We had about 30 cleaners working from 4pm to midnight. We wondered whether it was really useful for them to all be there at the same time. Would it be better to send them out in certain time slots according to their needs? Thanks to the system and the graphs, we found that there are actually no more patients leaving after 9pm. It is therefore sufficient to have only 6 cleaners working from that hour onwards.

It is more convenient to deploy cleaners at busier times. Our application gives us a very clear picture of outgoing flows, of quiet or busy periods, of outgoing peaks that require as many cleaners as possible. The system allows us to estimate the exact workload at any given time, depending on the assignments and locations. This meets the needs of the staff and of the hospital."

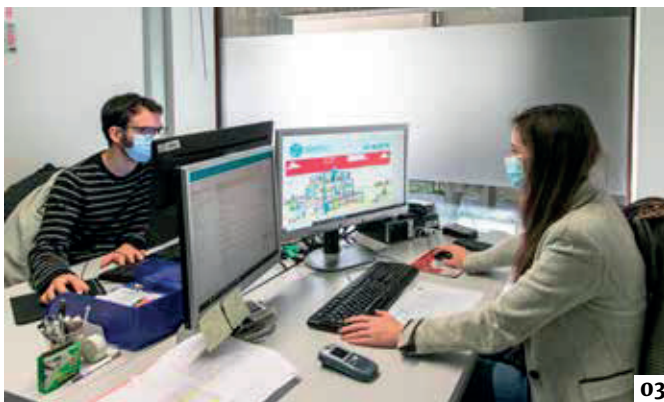
Indeed, automated management of cleaning via iTransport has a transversal benefit for everyone. The nursing or catering department and other logistics players also benefit from the information collected in real time.

"The other positive impact concerns our team leaders. In the old system, they were anarchically overworked and had much less time to devote to the quality aspect of the cleaning. This year, the goal is really to bring their tasks back to the essence. Thanks to their PCs and the laptops of the active teams, they can follow live where their employees are and how they are working. You don't have to run in all directions to check that everyone is where they should be and doing what they should be doing," says Rudy Rimeau, the Logistics boss. "Because

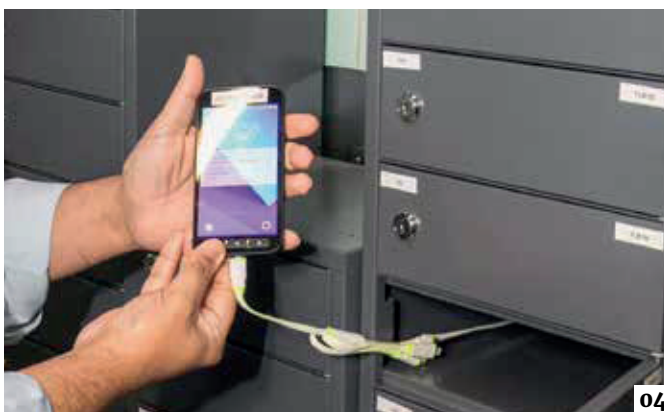
he saved time, we want each team leader to monitor quality and give feedback to and from his teams. A more targeted and finer quality control is now possible thanks to the data provided by the system (signals of too fast a cleaning, hiccups in handling, etc.). In any case, since the switch to computerised management, satisfaction has risen to 97% and complaints have fallen by 90%!"

By Fernand Letist

- 01. During the working day every employee is equipped with a smartphone. With three click the employee is informed about his work schedule and specific tasks. A real time and efficiency saver!
- 02. Logistics Director Rudy Rimeau and Manager Cleaning Gilles Destruel have jointly managed the complete conversion to the automated management of cleaning tasks in the hospital.
- 03. Apart from the hospital services, Typhaine and Gilles of the cleaning department are also responsible for updating and checking the system (iTransport). It is always possible to take over the system manually in order to modify data in the event of errors.
- 04. In order to support the daily cleaning staff in their work, the Saint-Luc Clinic has purchased 250 smartphones, each with its own charging station.
- 05. From one room to another, the cleaning protocol or assignment often differs. With this system every employee knows at any time and real time the progress of their tasks.



03



04



05

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