Mission Possible: The “Touchless Order” is Here to Stay

Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System (FMOLHS) Achieves Supply Chain Automation via GS1 Standards Implementation

FMOLHS is currently engaged in a two-year pilot to develop a high performance, streamlined and automated supply chain, in large part via the implementation of GS1 Standards. FMOLHS aims to eliminate human error and bad data while putting into place supply chain processes that are automated from end-to-end -- from the time an order is placed through its materials management information system (MMIS), to the delivery of the product, use of the product at the patient bedside and accurate recording of the product in the patient's electronic medical record. In 2014, FMOLHS achieved what was previously considered by the U.S. healthcare industry as mission impossible – it processed the Touchless Order with zero errors, and has since replicated the process with additional suppliers.

FMOLHS achieved the milestone on July 7, 2014 with its first supplier partner, Cook Medical, and did so ahead of schedule. The order was 100 percent touchless, meaning that FMOLHS was able to create a purchase order, submit it, receive the product at its central dock, scan it into their IT systems, send receipt acknowledgement, receive and pay the invoice, and have the product accurately delivered within the hospital, all without manual entry.

FMOLHS has also developed a repeatable process for use with additional supplier partners, including BD, Johnson & Johnson, Abbott Laboratories, Terumo Medical, Bard and Medtronic, to automate the order process from end-to-end and without human touch. FMOLHS expects to implement the Touchless Order for additional suppliers in the months ahead.

Working closely with Cook Medical, FMOLHS went through a few basic and repeatable steps to implement GS1 Standards, specifically the Global Location Number (GLN) to identify locations and the Global Trade Item Number® (GTIN®) to identify products.

1. FMOLHS established its hierarchies and registered the GLN for its facilities. The information was shared with Cook Medical, which now uses GLNs instead of customer numbers created in house. Cook also shared their GLNs with FMOLHS.
2. FMOLHS tested all of its transaction points using GLNs. This step involved working with data translator partners to ensure EDI transactions were being processed using GLN information.
3. FMOLHS coordinated efforts with its MMIS provider (Infor v. 9.1.03) to ensure that their software was able to accommodate GLN information. For now, this involved simply setting up a transaction table within the system. Future versions of the software will contain GLN and GTIN fields.
4. FMOLHS conducted round trip order processing tests (successfully), and then implemented the orders live.

Cook Medical has assigned a GTIN for each of its products, and is now requiring customers to transact using GTINs going forward. FMOLHS received the GTIN for the items used, and loaded that information into the MMIS. The FMOLHS team verified that all the product attributes were accurate, and that the information in the hospital information system matched with Cook's descriptions for consistency. Once all the records that contained GTINs were in the MMIS,
FMOLHS was able to submit orders using GTINs. For four weeks, the FMOLHS team monitored every electronic order closely, and every single automated order was processed accurately.

The GTIN piece is very important, because it is through these transactions that FMOLHS is supporting U.S. FDA Unique Device Identification (UDI) provisions. Capturing GTIN allowed FMOLHS to know where the product went once it was in the hospital, which improves patient safety, security in the supply chain (to prevent counterfeits, for example) and for potential product recalls.

In addition, FMOLHS has established benchmarks to assess metrics in the following areas:

- Accuracy in purchase order, invoicing and payment.
- Revenue reporting factors (charge accuracy, claims processing efficiencies, real-time product usage and consumption, automated replenishment, demand-driven supply chain, and point-of-use systems and processes).
- Inventory management (value of inventory on hand, reduction in inventory, re-labeling activities, recalls, expiration date management).

At FMOLHS, the transition to Touchless Order has been much smoother than the team at FMOLHS had originally expected. The journey to the Touchless Order has resulted in FMOLHS finally having a complete, accurate and up-to-date item file for its materials management processes. As FMOLHS embarks on this transition with other partners, it does so knowing that the long-time healthcare ideal of a fully automated supply chain is now within reach.

**FMOLHS GS1 Standards Implementation Project Phases**

- Completion of pilot and key decisions
- Document project activities and processes
- Identify and communicate with parallel projects (e.g. launch of FMOLHS’s new, centralized distribution center and alignment with ROI)
- Closure plan, including internal certification of system readiness certification
- Rollout (for Cook Medical, FMOLHS is entering monitoring phase. In this phase, will conduct analytics for financial and other benefits.)
- Transition to Operations (30-60 days post pilot)

**About FMOLHS**

Based in Baton Rouge, the Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System is the leading health care innovator in Louisiana. They bring together outstanding clinicians, the most advanced technology and leading research to ensure that patients receive the highest quality and safest care possible.

This commitment is grounded in a history that is more than 100 years old, but reflected today by its strategic vision of transforming healthcare through superior performance and excellent patient care.

For more information on GS1 Standards in healthcare and to access complimentary industry resources, please visit [www.gs1us.org/healthcare](http://www.gs1us.org/healthcare)