

The new smart card makes the work processes in the clinic easier and provides greater transparency

From White Coats to Information Technology

Efficient and secure — thousands of nursing staff at Linz General Hospital are using smart cards and wireless networks based on a T-Systems platform.

■ Erich Gattner, director of Nursing at the General Hospital in Linz, is a happy man. Nursing staff at the 1,000-bed hospital where he works have been using smart cards since the end of 2004. Almost 900 people now have cards and the response so far has been very positive. The nursing staff use their smart cards to log on to the SAP-based hospital information system i. s. h. med, a medical software solution from T-Systems Austria. The smart cards are integrated into the hospital information system using the Server Based medical Solution (SBmedS) developed by T-Systems.

Gattner sees the benefits of the new system in areas such as access control. Thanks to SBmedS and smart cards, it is now possible to exercise strict control over who makes changes to patient data at Linz General Hospital. This was most definitely not the case before: "In the past, one person would log on and everyone else would then use this workstation," recalls Mr Gattner.

The documentation procedures for nursing services have also been simplified and the services are easier to analyze. The main advantage, however, is the fact that in the everyday nursing environment, the system saves time because the nursing documentation settings are saved individually. "When you insert your card into the reader, the monitor displays exactly the same applications that you last used, irrespective of your current location," says Mr Gattner.

Along with the smart cards, T-Systems in Linz also introduced a wireless network (wireless LAN). Nursing documentation is updated using mobile computers directly at the patient's bedside. SBmedS has been integrated seamlessly into the hospital information system, as T-Systems Austria project manager Reinhard Vigne explains: "SBmedS supports all of the most commonly used systems." Access control can also be adapted to meet specific customer requirements.

It is completely by chance that nursing was chosen to pioneer this new technology: Nursing staff are proud to be seen as trendsetters and are delighted that they get to spend more time at the patient's bedside. Patients in Austria now have their own smart cards as well. The "e-card" designed for administration processes by the Austrian social security authorities is currently being issued to all Austrians. In Germany, the electronic health card, which will be introduced from 2006, will give doctors access to medical patient data as well as administration data. By then at the latest, no hospital will be able to afford not adapting their hospital IT systems.



LINKS

You can find further information on e-health at:
www.t-systems.de/e-health/engl