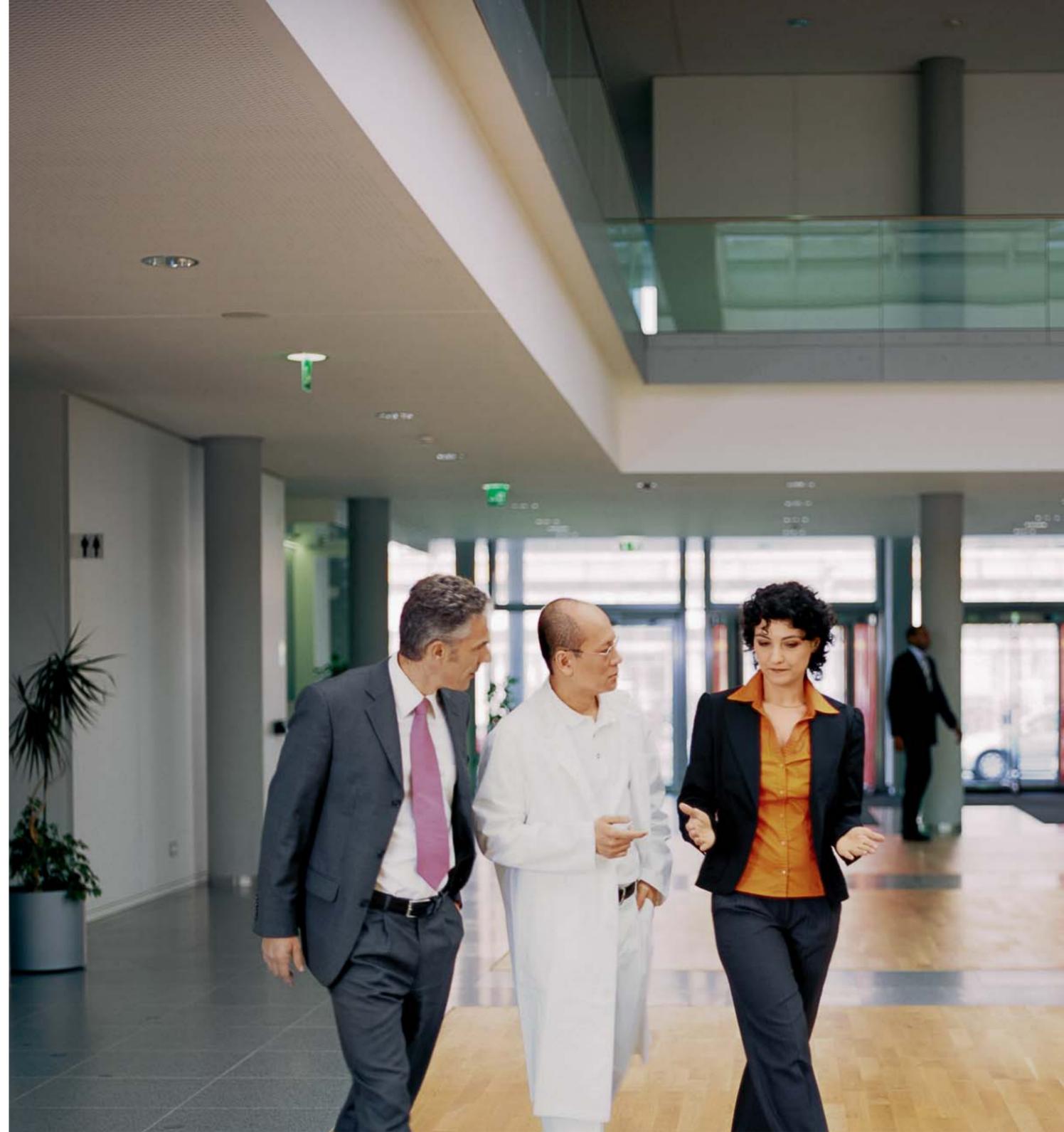


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Siemens team manages one of the largest MES deals in the NHS Worcestershire Royal Hospital

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"Organising the replacement and maintenance of equipment is not a core skill for us, so it makes sense to entrust it to a team for whom it is,"
*Dr Steve Graystone,
Worcestershire Royal
Hospital*



Siemens Team Manages one of the Largest MES Deals in the NHS

The Worcestershire Royal Hospital was built and equipped under a £95 million Private Finance Initiative. The consortium responsible, Catalyst Healthcare, appointed Siemens as managed equipment services provider in 1999.

The MES contract, which is a vendor independent agreement, runs until 2028 and is worth around £130 million to Siemens. It includes the supply, replacement and maintenance of all imaging equipment

Fact file

- The Siemens on-site team is responsible for the management of around 27,000 assets, making it the largest MES of its type in the NHS.
- The Siemens contract includes a Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS), the new digital system which is replacing film-based x-ray.
- The hospital opened in 2002 and has 550 beds.

Siemens Expertise

Understanding

Working with suppliers who appreciate the way the Health Service works is a top priority for Phil Sherratt, PFI manager at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. "Siemens understand the obstacles that you're likely to come up against when you work with the NHS," he says. "They don't get frustrated by them and they don't go contractual. And that's crucial, else everything grinds to a halt."

Commitment

Peter Sleightholme, Catalyst Healthcare general manager, notes the "common sense" attitude of the Siemens team. "If there is an issue, they'll think their way round it and they'll look for solutions that mean all parties win. That's just what we want."

Responsiveness

The Siemens on-site team were rated 'excellent' by Trust staff in a recent survey, a view backed by Phil Sherratt. "They're on top of their game," he says. "They're very responsive and you know if you've got a problem they will soon sort it."

Customer-focused

Peter Sleightholme is impressed by the training that Siemens engineers get. "You can supply the best kit in the world, but if you're no good at explaining to the users how to operate it then the Trust will never get the full benefits. Siemens invests in its people and that pays dividends. They're very customer-focused."

Technical knowledge

Dr Steve Graystone, associate medical director at Worcestershire Royal Hospital, believes the Trust can gain from Siemens' market intelligence: "They know what new technology is coming down the line and can share that with us."

Peter Sleightholme sees the benefit of tapping into the wider capabilities within Siemens, such as its partnership with Dräger. "Siemens also has a lot of expertise in managing work flow – how to design buildings and lay out rooms for optimum efficiency – and that's another area where they could add real value to the Trust."

A can-do attitude

In any team, says Peter Sleightholme, you want people with a 'can do' attitude. "We're always confident Siemens will take action. They're very approachable and very open. If there is bad news, they're not afraid to tell us and we need that honesty."

*"If there is an issue, the Siemens team will think their way round it and they'll look for solutions that mean all parties win. That's just what we want."
Peter Sleightholme, Catalyst Healthcare General Manager*

The Benefits of a Managed Equipment Service

Guaranteed investment

Phil Sherratt was a strong advocate of PFI at the earliest stages of the project and remains one several years into the implementation.

"The concept of a guaranteed investment plan and realistic targets for replacing equipment is brilliant and it means you're not fighting for money every year," he says. "There are also clear lines of accountability for equipment management and of course all equipment risk is transferred to Siemens."

Increased efficiency

Dr Steve Graystone believes the dividend from any MES investment should be smoother, more efficient processes. "That's the prime role of the Siemens team as far as I'm concerned. Organising the replacement and maintenance of equipment is not a core skill for us, so it makes sense to entrust it to a team for whom it is."

Commercial awareness

The commercial expertise within Siemens, believes Phil, is also benefiting the Trust. "Siemens is very good at making the Trust realise the cost of their decisions. In the past, we weren't aware of the real life-cycle costs. PFI has made visible the true economic impact of different choices."

A trusted partner

Winning the trust of clinicians is crucial in any MES contract. "Clinicians want to be sure they're getting a good deal and so in our MES agreement we can opt to get quotes from three suppliers when equipment needs replacing," says Phil Sherratt.

"As trust has grown, that's now rarely necessary. All that should matter to the Trust is the equipment specification and service levels, not the supplier. Procurement and replacement is working extremely smoothly."

Working as one

Siemens people put themselves in the shoes of the ward matron or the nurse with a broken piece of kit says Phil. "If someone from Siemens turns up on the ward people assume they work for the Trust, which says a lot about their attitude."

"Siemens carried out an internal survey recently in which people were asked what they thought their job was," adds Peter Sleightholme. "'Saving lives', said one of the Siemens service engineers. That sums up how Siemens works as one with the Trust."