

08.07.09; Birmingham Mail; Wireless technology boost for Edgbaston hospital's liver transplant unit
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A BIRMINGHAM hospital is the first to pilot a new hi-tech BlackBerry device to try and help more dying patients on the waiting list get the lifesaving operation they need.

The specialist medics in the liver transplant department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, in Edgbaston, are using encrypted wireless technology to access vital patient information more quickly, when time is of the essence.

On-call liver surgeons at University Hospital Birmingham Trust, which runs the hospital, carry the BlackBerry so that if an organ becomes available, they can immediately determine a suitable patient from the transplant waiting list.

Peter Ashcroft, liver recipient transplant coordinator, said: "The transplant co-ordinators and consultant surgeons need to carry a copy of the liver transplant waiting list with them at all times so they can respond immediately when an offer of a donor liver is made and select a suitable recipient from the waiting list.

"Traditionally, this has been in the form of a paper copy, but there are two main benefits of this new system. First, there is the enhanced patient confidentiality and second, once the system is fully developed, the consultants will have access to extra and more up-to-date information about patients.

"This will help them when selecting patients for transplant and matching the most appropriate recipient for each donor."
Mobile solutions firm Airpoint Ltd is working with the Trust's IT department to customise its Blackberry application for the two month trial.

The Trust's IT project manager, Rachel Brazier, has been working closely with Airpoint to develop a system which enables the co-ordinators to input patient details onto the computerised transplant waiting list, which is held on a secure website.

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