

The Changing Space of the NHS

A view on the wider importance of GLNs
by Ken Gordon Micad Systems (UK) Ltd.

By now everyone is familiar with the core concepts enshrined in the GS1 NHS trials of:

- People
- Product
- Place

There is also a generally widespread understanding of the importance of the **Scan4Safety** initiative in reducing unwarranted variation in the NHS meaning: increased efficiency, reduced costs and improved patient safety.

The role of GLNs (Global Location Numbers) in this context should not be underestimated. They form a foundation to building a National Registry and are a gateway beyond the initial 6 Demonstrator sites (4 of whom are Micad users). Furthermore the widespread use of GLNs has implications and benefits outside of the **Scan4Safety** Project.

Each GLN is a unique 13 digit number that includes a Country Code, Trust identifier (Prefix), an index and a check digit for authentic verification which can be encoded as a barcode. The Department of Health in adopting the GS1 standards has effectively mandated the application of a GLN for every physical space in a Trust. A new guidance document **Scan4Safety Place Management V1.1** provides useful insight into the application and ongoing management of GLNs since no Trust's estate remains the same shape for long.

The trick is to ensure:

- Existing space records are valid and accurate with no duplications or omissions
- Each space is assigned a unique GLN
- GLNs cannot be duplicated
- GLNs cannot be re-used (Under DoH guidelines)
- A local GLN master record is established

Their value to any Trust also means that they require management and governance. Forming of the national registry requires a form of credit control in place to manage their application and to ensure none are missed lost or reused. The purity of the GLN register for any Trust should be paramount.

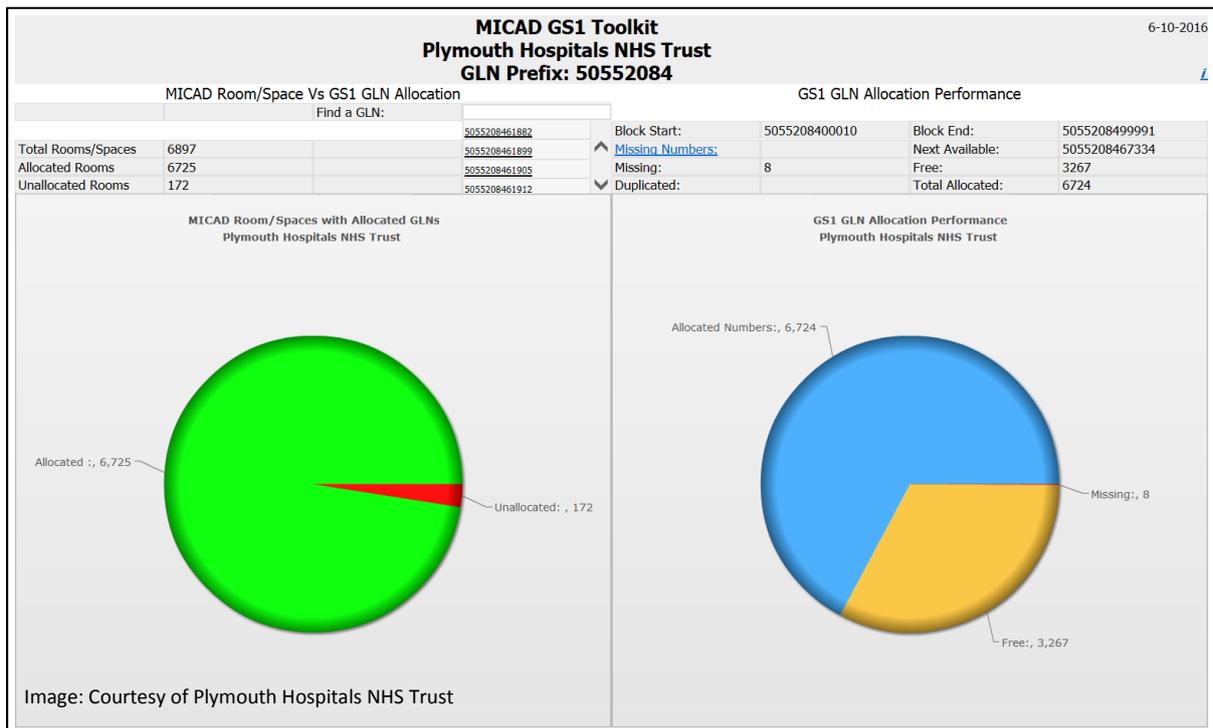
Micad users are familiar with this process as part of their day to day job acting as the 'credit controllers' of space numbering. Whilst Estates departments may see the application of GLNs as a familiar room numbering exercise, the bigger picture may often missed. However it is important to remember that applying barcode labels to walls is not an end in itself.

The beauty of the GLN is its simplicity and unadulterated nature. The unique and unambiguous identification of a barcoded GLN forms a primary index for so many systems and facilitates EDI within any organisation. As part of *Lord Carter's* review and the need to use technology to reduce costs in the NHS, the application of GLNs against spaces paves the way for the creation of a central repository in each Trust for subjects such as:

- Patient Administration Systems (PAS)

- Service Line Reporting (SLR) and departmental occupancy
- Accurate and verified Estates Return Information Collection (ERIC)
- Premises Assurance Model (PAM)
- Asbestos data
- Cleaning Functional Areas
- Maintenance and Asset Management (GIAs)
- Lease demises

With the appropriate consideration and a suitable container, the humble GLN becomes central to the work of clinical, procurement and operational staff. Furthermore they provide the foundation for national registries on a multitude of subject areas, and drive convergence of Trusts data irrespective of their room or space numbering systems.



The Micad GS1 Toolkit. Left, Spaces with GLNs. Right, GLN 'prefix' utilisation rate

Micad are Working with **Dakota IS** to supply a turn-key solution for existing and new Micad users. We have developed a GLN Barcode App to work with existing hardware commonly used in Trusts to allocate, validate and feedback on the status of GLN usage so that Trusts can manage their GLN allocation and their reserves through a governed process. The ability to visualise progress and consumption on live dashboards as well as CAD plans is an important part of the verification and cyclic management process. The output can then be presented in an open format to facilitate EDI (Electronic Data Interchange).

For more information on how Micad can help you manage your space and GLN register contact through one of the available channels below:

T: 0161 927 9573 | E: HollieC@micad.co.uk | W: www.micad.co.uk

Micad are pleased to be appearing at the EHI live event with Dakota systems and GHX. Visit us on the 1st -2nd November at the NEC Birmingham, stand 1G120.