

Information Sheet

Surgery Pod – Financial Justification



The spreadsheet below shows how quickly the SurgeryPod can earn a payback for a GP surgery. The conclusion is that for a medium sized surgery there is a clear payback of almost 6 times each year, which extends to nearer 10 for surgeries of 8000+ patients.

There are two variables of importance. The first is the number of times the Pod is used each day. Our customers' experience shows that the Pod is used between 2 and 8 times per day and the model has assumed an average of only 3 times a day (and twice per day for less frequent tests). The savings over an average week multiplies out to save 1,000 minutes (16 hours per week). This is based on a small sample of the available tests. Most surgeries make more use of the Pod to help them get the most QOF points they can. This means that they are assisted in achieving the targets set by the PCT.

No allowance has been made for those patients who are getting repeat prescriptions, for whom the GP practice is using the Pod to monitor that patient's stability before issuing the repeat prescription, rather than engaging a practice nurse or GP for the purpose.

The other variable is the cost per hour used to evaluate the time saved. We have used £20 per hour. In reality, this rate could be higher as a number of the savings are of GP time. It can also be compared with the rate in the Pharmacy LES for running the Cardio-Vascular Health Check in the pharmacies of £30 per hour, a rate that excludes the cost of all equipment and consumables.

The saving from the regular daily use of the Pod is 1,000 minutes a week. This equates to over £17,000 per year, compared to the annual cost of the SurgeryPod of £3,000 per year.

Added to that, we recommend that there is an enormous saving from using the Pod to pre-screen patients with QRisk2 for the Cardio-Vascular Health Checks. Ordinarily the PCT would have to pay around £30 per test to a pharmacy, just for the labour of doing the test. By performing the test in the surgery, it is easy to screen the known patients without needing a blood test at the first instance. As a result, the pre-screening can be done with minimal intervention from a qualified member of staff. This saving of labour and overall staff costs has also been included on the schedule overleaf.

In addition, 70% of those screened will not be at high risk, which means the blood test for the remaining patients per week can be saved. These tests cost £10 each, including the reagents and disposables, which could give an additional real saving in blood tests and consumables, compared to the cost of screening with a blood test in every case. Note as an aside that the result of the blood test has a relatively minor effect on the overall risk assessment, and the PCT could go for a conservative option of recalling those with a risk score set at a level below 20% to be sure that no at risk patient is missed.

Information Sheet

Surgery Pod – Financial Justification



This does not mean that testing in the community is overly wasteful, as it may be the best opportunity to reach those who are unknown to the PCT. It does mean that it is much cheaper to test those who are known to the PCT in a more effective way.

In summary, the Pod repays its cost of £3,000 per year by means of saved labour of approx £18,000 per year and many further thousands of pounds in saved blood tests and consumables.

In reality, the saved labour is more likely to be realised by improved productivity, treating more patients without the need to increase headcount, than by reducing a member of staff. However, the saving in blood tests is real and tangible.

Return on investment on the SurgeryPod from Telehealth Solutions Ltd

	Uses per day	Uses per week	Minutes saved per appointment	Total minutes saved per week
Blood Pressure	3	15	10	150
Weight	3	15	5	75
New Patient	3	15	20	300
PHQ9 and similar	2	10	20	200
Detailed Alcohol	3	15	5	75
Smoking	3	15	5	75
Weekly minutes saved on regular appointments				875
Use of Pod to screen for Cardio-Vascular risk	2	10	20	200
Total minutes saved per week				1075
Cost saving per year, at £20 per hour				£17,917
Cost of Pod per year				£3,000