



## FLAGSTAFF MEDICAL CENTER

**Modern upgrades improve  
infection control processes,  
communication and security.**

Northern Arizona Healthcare's Flagstaff Medical Center, a 267-bed tertiary care medical center, is one of two hospitals that anchor Northern Arizona Healthcare, an integrated delivery network serving more than 700,000 people in Northern Arizona. As the only Level 1 trauma center north of Phoenix, Flagstaff Medical's multiple emergency rooms remain busy. The medical facility also boasts extensive cardiovascular and surgical services, behavioral health, dialysis units, and a cancer center.

For 30 years, Flagstaff Medical Center has partnered with TransLogic™, recognizing the pneumatic tube system as a critical delivery artery for sending documents, drugs, and specimens to and from 24 stations. Additionally, the hospital's pharmacy uses the Swisslog Healthcare BoxPicker® for medication storage, dispensing, and inventory control.



**“The pneumatic tube system is one of the most critical systems in the hospital, as far as utilities are concerned. The fact that TransLogic has been so reliable with their service, software and response time, choosing their system for the upgrade was the only choice which made sense.**

**You want to know that in the middle of the night, the person on the other end of the line is going to be there and give you support.”**

**— Chris Miles, Chief Engineer, Flagstaff Medical Center**

## The Challenge

In 2015, Flagstaff Medical Center’s plant operations leaders saw the need to upgrade the hospital’s outdated technology. After supporting Flagstaff Medical Center for 12 years on Matrix software, TransLogic would soon stop servicing it. Also, some system elements needed modernization. Nurses were concerned about cross-contamination between containers that held lab specimens, pharmaceuticals, and paperwork. Leaders wanted a system that could track transport of, and access to, controlled substances. Finally, all users reported that the existing communication system, relying on serial communication through RS-422 signals, suffered from interruptions and slow speed.

## The Solution

Due to the strong record of short response times, reliable service, and software support from TransLogic, Flagstaff Medical Center did not shop around for alternative vendors. Instead, the hospital elected to install Nexus™ Technology, including touchscreen panels and software. The software includes new functionality such as WhoTube® card access system to manage secure transactions, Alert Messaging, and the system utilizes radio frequency identification devices (RFID), which enables carrier identification and monitors end-to-end transport, and modern Ethernet communication.

Because the tube system is so essential to hospital operations, TransLogic and Flagstaff Medical Center worked closely to ensure implementation would not disrupt patient care. Over 12 months, through multiple coordination meetings, the client and vendor worked through any obstacles, including making sure the hospital's backbone could handle the upgraded software and RFID functionality.

The week before implementation, Flagstaff Medical Center completed all the Ethernet connections and TransLogic loaded the server and set up the remote client. Tests were run to work out bugs.

During the week of go-live, the Nexus panels were installed over the course of four days. The following week, staff were trained on the new system. Nurses, lab technicians and pharmacy staff commented during training, TransLogic surpassed their expectations in professionalism and knowledge of the system. A pharmacist with 26 years' experience said that the transition was the smoothest she had ever experienced.



**When Flagstaff Medical Center chose to upgrade their pneumatic tube system, the hospital shopped only with TransLogic due to a 30-year history of trust and high performance. Today, hospital leaders are confident—knowing their drugs, documents, and lab specimens are trackable and transported securely.**



## Conclusion

The TransLogic chain-of-custody solutions installed at the hospital include RFID technology, which permits carrier tracking, monitoring and inventory management, ID badge verification and messaging alerts. Connected via Ethernet, the system's communications are reliable and customizable, as well.

Badge access technology and Alert Messaging have improved Flagstaff Medical Center's chain-of-custody function and tracking, allowing supervisors to track the progress of specimens, pharmaceuticals, and controlled substances through the system.

If a drug was ever misplaced, it is now possible to identify the last person to remove a product from a carrier. Alert Messaging allows nurses to send emails to pharmacists when they have received a controlled substance. Alert Messaging also allows managers to receive critical notifications to ensure that issues are flagged immediately for faster response.

TransLogic RFID-embedded carriers also have improved infection control practices at Flagstaff Medical Center. RFID technology makes it possible for the TransLogic® tube system to segregate carriers destined for the pharmacy from those arriving from the lab.

Carriers are also color-coded by destination, eliminating any visual confusion. Additionally, the system is programmed to allow carriers from certain stations, such as lab and pharmacy, to get higher priority within the system, so they arrive more quickly.

**“TransLogic listened to their customers when they didn't like the way carriers were used throughout the system. Now, TransLogic RFID technology, allows stations to identify carriers in the system by attributes.**

**The GUI panels, with their touch screen interface, are a lot more intuitive; the graphics help our people understand how everything is piped in the system.”**

— Chris Miles, Chief Engineer, Flagstaff Medical Center

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