Supply Chain
Coordination Limited

[redacted]

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Dear [redacted]

RE: SCCL-FOI-2021-089

Thank you for your FOI request received by the FOI office, requesting information on NHS Supply Chain utilisation of automation in managing supply chain Inventory. The definition of automation includes robotics and artificial intelligence. Inventory may be defined as the stock of items stored by an organisation for the meeting of customer's needs.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and we are able to provide a reply to your request. Supply Chain Coordination Limited (SCCL) confirms it does hold the information on utilisation of automation in managing supply chain Inventory.

SCCLs responses to your questions are below.

Q1. Is artificial intelligence or robotics used anywhere within the organisation's supply chain?
No. At present AI or robotics is not being used to manage supply chain inventory within NHS Supply Chain.

Q2. If you answered 'Yes' to question 1, what inventory management / automation system is deployed? please provide the name of the developer or software.
Not Applicable

Q3. Where is inventory stored?
NHS Supply Chain operates out of seven distribution centres across the UK. For further information visit https://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/about-us/

Q4. How is unwanted inventory disposed of?
The disposal and how to dispose of any unwanted inventory is approved at the time by SCCL and/or the Department of Health and Social Care, dependent on the type of product.

Q5. Were any lessons learnt on improving inventory management because of the Covid-19 pandemic or Brexit?
NHS Supply Chain has a continuous improvement programme that encompasses inventory management and part of this programme includes the review of stockholding and stock management policy, to ensure the best support to the NHS can be provided.

Q6. Please provide links to where data on NHS Trust usage of inventory can be found?
There are no links available which contain NHS trust inventory usage.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the postal or e-mail addresses above, quoting the reference number above. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

As part of any internal review the handling of your information request will be reassessed by a member of SCCL staff who was not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you will have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

If you require any further information do not hesitate to contact the FOI team

If you have any queries about this request or would like to amend your request, please do not hesitate to contact the team.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Team

Supply Chain Coordination Limited
Management Function of NHS Supply Chain