

Labwest's thrombosis service is always on time thanks to PTV Smartour

"Today: poke, analyse and dose" is the motto of the Dutch thrombosis service provider LabWest. To stay true to their words, it is necessary to efficiently plan the hundreds of visits made by their field staff. Thanks to the implementation of PTV Smartour, this has been a success.

"Without the daily support of Smartour, it would not have been possible to plan the approximately 30 routes, that contain somewhere between 1,100 and 1,200 blood test appointments", says Steef Besteman and Petra Mol who, with Joke van Lith, are responsible for the planning of LabWest's field staff. The implementation of the routing optimization system has saved significant time for their field staff. "Smartour helps us in putting together the optimal routes, and it gives us an overview of the overall planning, so that we can give everyone a practical route", say Besteman and Mol. "Because of this routing optimization system, all our employees are able to be back in the office around lunch".

Overview of capacity

The thrombosis service is ensuring that the blood coagulation values of almost 15,000 thrombosis patients is monitored. "The blood may not coagulate too quickly, because of the risk of a blood clot. The blood should also not coagulate too slowly, due to the risk of a hemorrhage", explains Mol. "This is why blood samples are regularly taken, so that the blood coagulation values are carefully monitored. The medication can then be adjusted based on the test result".

"PTV Smartour gives us insight to what the necessary capacity is. We are now able to add more staff on time, if necessary."

- Petra Mol, LabWest planning department

The blood samples, which are taken at the patient's home, their analyses and the adjustment of their medication, all take place in one day. After being referred by their general practitioner or specialist, the appointment with the patient is then put into the administrative system, Trodis, used by LabWest. Next, the patients have their blood samples taken in their homes. "Requests coming from the hospitals are processed in a separate administration system".

From Trodis, and the administrative system of the hospital, the next three days of appointments are loaded into PTV Smartour. The planners are mostly busy with the planning of the following day. "It is also possible, that a new same-day appointment comes in. In Smartour, all appointment locations and routes are displayed on a map. It is really easy for us to quickly determine, who will be able to carry out the additional assignment", says Mol.



The appointments of the two days after the next working day are already processed into a global planning. That provides insight into the required capacity. "This is how we are able to put in extra staff, if it is necessary", says Mol.

Three-step planning

LabWest's planning process consists of three steps: verifying the addresses, making a preliminary planning, and planning the routes. As the assignments come in, Smartour can check the address data. "Often it happens that the postal code and house number are incorrect, or that the street name is misspelled. Smartour can fix this and we can easily select the right address, so that our staff is being sent to the right place", says Mol.

The next step is to make the preliminary planning. "Smartour combines all assignments into one collective group, for instance in a nursing home or polyclinic. A polyclinic is also automatically split up, if there is more than one patient. In such cases, it is necessary that not one, but two members of our staff is available. Smartour will then divide the assignments over our staff", says Mol. She said that this function frees up time for the planners, since about 100 routes are run every week.

Specific requirements

After the pre-planning has been checked, Smartour will calculate the routes for the field staff. The software considers the specific requirements executed by LabWest.

the mind of movement

For example, the blood samples at the hospitals must be taken at a certain time, related to the medication taken. Every day each postal code is also linked to a neighborhood and employee. "We are grouping the postal codes every day per neighborhood. From this, preferred days arise for the appointments in any given neighborhood. And because most employees do not work every day, the postal codes are allocated per working day to someone available on that day," explains Besteman. This information is entered by the planners into an Excel file, that is then imported into PTV Smartour. In addition, conditions such as the permitted working hours of the employees and the duration of a visit are defined. PTV Smartour takes all of this into account when compiling the most efficient route for each member of the field staff.

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Connect with ipads

Patient-specific details that are not possible to consider for the route calculation, are placed in a separate comment field by Smartour for each appointment. "We read all comments and adjust the conditions of the orders so that Smartour can plan them correctly", says Besteman.

Once the planning has become final, the routes are printed and made ready for the field staff to bring with them. "We will soon connect Smartour to the iPads that our field service personnel are using, then we can forward the routes digitally to them" says Besteman.

High quality planning

Because PTV Smartour is calculating the routes, our planners can focus on planning improvements. "This gives good quality planning, and avoids overtime", said Besteman and Mol.

Soon they will start implementing the multi-user function of the routing optimization system. "This will allow us to better accommodate staff scheduling, which will increase the quality of the routes".

