

Creating a New Standard for Ultrasound in Emergency Care



Point-of-care (POC) ultrasound is now a common sight in emergency departments throughout the UK. Professor Bob Jarman, Consultant in Emergency Medicine at the Great North Trauma and Emergency Centre, explained the potential benefits of more widespread ultrasound use: "There is a lot of interest in POC ultrasound within our department, above and beyond the FAST scans, basic echo, aortic aneurysm screening and venous access commonly performed in an emergency setting. We try to ensure that it is a routine part of our approach, helping us to assess a wide range of patients coming into the department."

"Thanks to the generous support of FUJIFILM SonoSite, we currently have eight POC ultrasound machines, and we have put a lot of thought into how we planned to use the systems, as well as where to locate them to maximise use. Increasing system availability has also been key to opening up ultrasound use to allied healthcare professionals, and many of our nurses are now trained in basic practices, such as vascular access. Although straightforward, these procedures have made a real difference to our productivity, as they are performed in huge numbers. For example, difficult venous access might previously have taken up to 45 minutes, which was upsetting for patients and extremely frustrating for already busy doctors. Now, we can cannulate in five to ten minutes for even the most complex cases. Patients love it because it improves the thoroughness of their care and avoids multiple needle-sticks, and staff love it because it makes their lives easier and helps to make the department more efficient. Ultrasound is really revolutionising the patient experience and the time it takes to deliver appropriate care, and it's only by having rapid, widespread access to systems that we can provide this level of service."

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