

Digital Transformation at the Hospital

Procurement Reinvented -

The Think Tank Hospital Procurement 4.0

1. Introduction

Healthcare is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. The healthcare industry is complex and constantly changing. It is divided into many sectors and relies on all types of professionals to meet the health needs of individuals and communities. Healthcare professionals are looking for innovative and cost-effective ways to provide intelligent healthcare both inside and outside the hospital walls.

A think tank is an institute, company or group organized to examine a specific topic and provide information, ideas and advice. The label "Think Tank" is closely linked to the efforts to close very specific information and knowledge gaps for decision-making. With evolving policies, processes, technologies, capabilities, and ideas, and in light of the size and complexity of the healthcare sector, this combination of healthcare, procurement, and think tank makes sense, and is now the perfect time to this vision. The atmosphere we maintain in our Think Tank Hospital Procurement 4.0 provides the opportunity to bring together healthcare procurement professionals.

What began in March 2017 with a blog on the topic of hospital procurement, has until today been a community of "doers", called Future Hospital Procurement. The innovation driver and problem solver of the community is the think tank. The founder of the initiative and think tank, Stefan Krojer, has set himself the task of offering his buyers colleagues a unique service that enables them to expand their knowledge and their business through the power of smart networking. These connections and communication structures created in this way prove to be an extremely valuable concept. We are a small family of 18 experts who have come together to take our daily work and mindset to a new level. We are the Think Tank Hospital Procurement 4.0 of the Initiative Future Hospital Procurement.

2. Think Tank as innovation think-tank of the buyers

2.1 What is the Think Tank Future Hospital Procurement?

Our Think Tank is a "co-creative community". This exclusive community consists of 18 procurement managers from Germany, Switzerland, and Norway. The group is not a corporate think tank, but an informal, cross company think tank with the goal of creating creative minds in order to be able to think about new ideas in addition to the hectic routine of everyday life, all of them are in a chat group and can exchange ideas with each other at any time of day, thus making them valuable in the shortest possible time. The think tank is embedded in the Initiative Future Hospital Procurement, a think tank that exchanges information almost daily and advises each other on current problems or strategic issues questions. Ideas and suggestions that arise within this group of experts will be implemented at lightning speed, including the innovation accelerator.

The approach: Buyers strengthen their role as a value-adding partner in the hospital by creating their own innovation accelerator. The mission is to identify innovations for purchasing and supply chain management and get them to hospitals quickly, easily and affordably.

When people with expertise in different fields bring their ideas, something that can never come into being when an individual develops his own creativity arises. Outside of deadlines in your own company, the ideal conditions for Breakthrough Innovations should be created in a relaxed and collegial environment.

The expert panel includes innovators and digitization experts from hospital procurement, no matter which Group Purchasing Organization membership they belong to. The group of experts will present the present results and conclusions of the review and further develop [study "Future Hospital Purchasing 2025"](#) . In addition, innovative solutions, ideas and projects are to be tested in the context of feasibility studies. The proof of concept (PoC) refers to the evaluation of a small section of a major project and the preparation of a feasibility study. Finished solutions are subjected to a nationwide proof of value (PoV). This gives the hospital transparency about the value of the solution and can compare the costs. Another focus is co-creation and social collaboration. New approaches are introduced and tested in the Think tank.

The members of the Think Tank (as of June 2019):



- Sven Kleber (Strategic Purchaser / Department Manager) / Team Lead "eCategory Management"
- Gerd Mälzer (Head of Central Purchasing, ATOS Kliniken)
- Ralf Bannwarth (Head of Business and Supply, Alb Fils Kliniken) / Team Lead "Capital Goods & eInvoicing"
- Karsten Rohn (Division Manager Purchasing and Supply of Goods, Maria Hilf Klinik Mönchengladbach)
- Stefan Krojer (Head of Strategic Procurement, Johanniter Competence Center) / Team Lead "Value Based Procurement & Co-Creation"
- Tim Bauer (Department Head of Procurement Performance Process Optimization, Purchasing Controlling, Project Management and QM, Klinikum Region Hannover) / Team Lead "Scanner & Software"
- Herbert Egle (Process Manager / Deputy Head of Department, University Hospital Freiburg, GB3 - Services Department Materials Management)
- Patrick Müller (Head of Purchasing & Logistics, Cantonal Hospital Winterthur) / Team Lead "Source to Contract"
- Thomas Willms (Head of Purchasing and Central Care, Aschaffenburg-Alzenau Hospital)
- Kerstin Groß (Strategic Procurement Management, University of Cologne) / Team Lead "Webshop & Marketplaces Integration"
- Karsten Juchert (Head of Central Purchasing, Städtisches Klinikum Brandenburg)
- Annika Hüttner (Head of Materials Management, Clinics Heidenheim district)

- Silvio Schröder (Head of Materials Management and Pharmacy, Klinikum Frankfurt Oder) / Team Lead "Kanban, Konsilager"
- Nils Koch (Head of Central Purchasing, SRH Kliniken GmbH) / Team Lead "Process Management"
- Marcus Wernicke (Head of Material Supply, University Hospital Jena)
- Boris Cvetkovic (Head of Central Purchasing, Artemis Eye Clinics and MVZs)
- Thomas Bachmann (Head of Purchasing, University Hospital Basel)
- Bianca Cassens, Department Manager Data Management, Business Unit Materials Management, University Hospital Münster (UKM)
- Marco Oliver Deutsch, Procurement Manager, Volvat Medical Group (part of Capio | Ramsay Générale de Santé)

The think tank plays an important role in the digital professionalization of hospital procurement. In the future, he will focus on the effects of Industry 4.0 on purchasing. Relevant subject areas range from the digitization of own purchasing and logistics processes to the digitization and streamlining of services provided by external partners. The focus is on all support processes in the hospital. The goal is to increase the value contribution of clinic buyers beyond the pure cost consideration.

2.2 Innovation Accelerator

Above all, the think tank should promote innovation in hospital procurement. That's why the "innovation accelerator" is at the heart of the think tank. This works like this: within the think tank members selected potential delivery partners will get the chance to implement their products or solutions with one of our member properties. The status of the project and the success of the project are disclosed and shared transparently within the community at all times. An example:

The Topic: Process management

Solution: Cloud-based process Mining

Hospital: Clinic group from Southern Germany

Project phase: Proof of Value.

If the project progresses successfully, the provider will be able to win additional hospitals as customers via the Future Hospital Procurement platform. In addition, the provider is automatically nominated for the [Hospital Supplier Award](#) . The Hospital Supplier Award is

also an idea of the Think Tank and was implemented with the members as jury. This is how the most exciting innovations can be found beyond the group Media presence. The example of the innovation accelerator shows the creative power and implementation power that comes when all buyers together identify problems that affect everyone and then work together to come up with solutions. Common problems are identified and solutions are developed in a creative process of thought. In the community, tasks and projects will be distributed and report on the status and success or failure. This creates a culture of experimentation, but also of failure. Failed approaches can be optimized and re-tried by the community's constructive feedback culture. Free according to the concept "Build, Fair, Learn". This process is often not possible or desired in your own company environment. The Think Tank offers buyers a new platform that will bring each one, but also the collective further.

Figure: The overall approach of the Future Hospital Procurement initiative at a glance (in german):



2.3. What are the goals of the Think Tank?

How do I want to work as a hospital buyer in the future? Which role as a hospital buyer do I want to play in the future? How do I take the time to innovate and develop? How can I learn new things, protected in a familiar round of my peers? What problems exist in my clinic, my

departments, my own purchasing department or in my personal career? Do other buyers have the same problems? Which problems are the biggest? Why have not I addressed the problems so far? These are the questions that hospital buyers increasingly face in times of digital transformation. Every buyer struggles daily in his clinic for himself every day. Locked up in an environment of colleagues, contacts and procurement cooperations, the hospital procurement operates networked, but there is hardly time to think outside the box and their own ideas and potentials to unfold.

The think tank should give this space of openness and transparency and exceed existing limits. Chief Procurement Officers discuss carrier and purchasing community across the best possible digital processes and solutions. Practical experience will be exchanged and made available to the public at a later point in time for meaningfulness, so that others benefit as well. Where are already integrated systems without media breaks? What has already been implemented and which technologies and fields of application come when and how relevant for my hospital? What is the cost / benefit calculation? What partner opportunities are there? The task of the Think Tank is to give purchasing a corresponding impetus and let the profession mature in character so that it can fulfill its important strategic role in the future.

2.4 It all depends on the right mix - combination of online and offline worlds

Online groups chats between the members of the think tank take place almost daily via the Whats App. However, if a chat from a certain point of time is no longer interesting for all members because, for example, two members have found each other who can continue to help, the communication can be switched to a bidirectional connection at any time. In addition to the virtual chats, the members also interact offline. At five annual industry events of the hospital procurement, members have the opportunity to meet in person on site. Meetings in the offline world are especially important and support members' personal relationships. In a personal meeting, brainstorming workshops are held or strategic questions about the structure and development of the think tank are discussed and decided. An optimal mix of fast and straightforward online communication and regular offline meetings is the key success factor for our community of like-minded people.

3. Conclusion

The Think Tank Hospital Procurement 4.0 of the Future Hospital Procurement initiative is a new, unique community and platform by and for hospital procurement leaders of Europe. In the protected environment of their online and offline group, buyers can openly address current problems, discuss them quickly and easily and learn from each other. It solves both ad hoc problems in operational procurement, but also discusses and designs strategic topics. The Think Tank offers members the chance to think outside the usual structures and habits pattern new ideas and to get a quick feedback from colleagues. This creates completely new concepts, such as the innovation accelerator, which removes obstacles to the introduction of innovations in the hospital - be they hurdles of understanding or the budget - and thus makes an important contribution to the improvement of inpatient healthcare.

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