

UK health service trials time-saving drone flights

05 / 07 / 2022

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Source: Apian

The UK's National Health Service (NHS) is trialling the use of drones to transport chemotherapy drugs.

The drones will make their debut flights in the coming weeks transporting the life-saving drugs from the pharmacy at Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust to St Mary's Hospital on the Isle of Wight.

Drones will cut the usual delivery time from four hours to 30 minutes, saving fuel and money and making cancer care much more convenient for patients living on the Isle of Wight who often need to travel to the mainland for treatment at the moment.

Each drone delivery replaces at least two car journeys and one hovercraft or ferry journey per delivery.

Another trial will follow in Northumbria.

The drone network is operated by Apian, which is utilising autonomous electrical vertical takeoff and landing aircraft with a capacity of up to 20 kg.

Apian chief executive Alexander Trewby said: "This project marks a very important first step in the construction of a network of drone corridors connecting hospitals, pathology labs, GP surgeries, care homes and pharmacies up and down the country."