
Press Release

Tube Delivery System a Thing of the Past *Aethon's TUG Offers High-Tech Solution*

December 2006 — PITTSBURGH, PA — Aethon, Inc., a leader in affordable, practical robotics that are transforming healthcare, is quickly becoming the new standard for medication delivery in hospital pharmacies. Aethon offers pharmacies a secure, reliable, and efficient way to deliver medication.

“TUG is changing the model of medication delivery in hospital pharmacies,” said Aldo Zini, Chief Executive Officer, Aethon. “It has always been easier to install TUG into an existing building rather than retrofitting a tube system. Now, architects and equipment planners are designing them into facilities from the start because they’re recognizing TUG’s design advantages and flexibility. TUGs extend the efficiency and convenience of tube systems that hospitals have enjoyed for years for small items to practically everything that needs to move in the hospital – all with a single and easy-to-install system.”

Aethon’s system frees healthcare professionals to focus on patient care and the more rewarding aspects of their job. Ultimately, TUG ensures that medication is available on demand and improves patient care because there are more delivery options.

Typically, TUG is used as a mechanism for both immediate needs and scheduled deliveries in a pharmacy context. TUG is especially useful in the evenings when staffing is usually lower.

There are more than 115 TUGs in over 50 hospitals across the US. Hospital pharmacies looking to TUG include: Armstrong County Memorial Hospital (Kittanning, PA), Cleveland Clinic (Cleveland, OH), Johns Hopkins Hospital (Baltimore, MD), Providence Hospital (Washington, DC), and University of Maryland Medical Center (Baltimore, MD). With the trend towards hospital expansion, more architects are designing facilities with TUG in mind.

Slightly bigger than the base of a household vacuum cleaner, TUG is designed to work in conjunction with a wide variety of hospital carts. It replaces the need to have professional staff pushing carts to pick up and deliver medication, supplies, and meals. TUGs automate and monitor the delivery of goods, pulling the carts to programmed destinations throughout the hospital when needed.

Staff can dispatch TUG by an easy-to-use graphical interface on either a touch screen or a hospital PC. During deliveries, the screen displays a map of the TUG’s location. A series of sensors or “light whiskers” detect obstacles (such as beds, doors, water fountains, or people) in TUG’s path and keep it a set distance from corridor walls. When TUG senses an object, it navigates around the person or thing. When it is finished making a delivery, TUG returns to its docking station.

TUG features a simple two-button operation. It recharges automatically and can operate up to 10 hours continuously. TUG offers hauling power up to 500 pounds.

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About Aethon: Based in Pittsburgh, PA, Aethon is a leader in providing practical, dependable, and affordable robotics for hospitals. Aethon's first commercialized product, TUG, is an automated courier system for the delivery and tracking of hospital goods and supplies. TUG saves hospitals thousands of dollars, is simple to install, and can be applied across a variety of applications. For more information, visit <http://www.aethon.com>.