

Surgical robot FAQs

Q. What is the robot?

A. The robot, called Versius and designed in Cambridge by CMR Surgical, includes a surgeon console and up to four independent robotic arms. These collaborate with the surgeon to provide exceptional precision, control, and visibility during surgery.

Q. Why do we need a robot?

A. Currently the Trust can only offer traditional laparoscopic (also known as keyhole) surgery. The charity wants to help bring this up to date by introducing the latest technology, improving outcomes, and ensuring our hospital keeps pace with modern surgical standards.

Q. Why have we purchased it already?

A. The charity has purchased the robot upfront to allow for installation and staff training to begin immediately. This means patients and clinical teams can benefit from the technology as soon as possible.

Q. Where will the surgeon be?

A. The robot is designed to collaborate with surgeons, not replace them. The surgical team remains fully in control throughout the procedure, with the robot enhancing accuracy, flexibility, and visibility but with every movement being guided by the surgeon.

Q. What is the benefit for the patient?

A. Patients typically experience smaller incisions, which can significantly reduce discomfort and scar tissue. Robotic surgery leads to faster recovery times, shorter hospital stays, and an earlier return home.

Q. What is the benefit for the surgeon?

A. Using the new robotic system will ensure the Trust remains at the forefront of surgical innovation. It also helps attract and retain the next generation of talented surgeons who want to train and work with advanced technology here at West Suffolk.

Q. What sort of surgery will the robot be used for?

A. The robot will be used for laparoscopic surgery. This will include procedures for cancer, colorectal, upper gastrointestinal, gynaecological, and urological specialities.

Q. Does every hospital have a surgical robot?

A. Not yet. Many hospitals are only now beginning to adopt robotic surgery, which is why charitable support is so important.

Q. Is this the future of surgery?

A. Yes. NHS England predicts that 9 in 10 keyhole surgeries will be robot-assisted within the next ten years making this technology an important investment for the future.

Q. How can I support the £1 million surgical robot appeal?

A. You can find out more and donate at www.mywishcharity.co.uk/appeals/robot