

# Achieving workflow efficiencies by selecting the right partner

Excellent customer experience in Evangelisches Klinikum Bethel (Bielefeld, Germany)



The Evangelisches Klinikum Bethel (EvKB)—which is part of University Hospital OWL of Bielefeld University (UK OWL)—is a maximum care hospital and is one of the most important health facilities in the North Rhine-Westphalia area (Germany). Mara Hospital is a sister company of the EvKB. Together, they provide specialized treatment to 170,000 patients every year.

The Blood Donor Service Bethel at EvKB operates its own blood bank. They supply blood products for patient care, and they carry out autologous blood samples. In addition, EvKB supplies surrounding clinics and medical practices with blood products in case of shortages.

**The Evangelisches Klinikum Bethel (Bielefeld, Germany) has achieved a considerable reduction of technicians hands-on time, has improved turnaround time (TAT), and has maximized instrument uptime since they started working with Grifols in 2020.**

In 2020, EvKB signed a contract with Grifols for their blood bank’s automated and semiautomated blood typing solutions. The laboratory installed one Grifols Erytra Eflexis and the complete manual benchtop set, including DG Spin, DG Therm, and DG Reader Net. They were also using reagent red blood cells for reverse typing and antibody investigation, as well as a wide range of antisera for the double determination of extended phenotype and rare antigen typing. Nine months after the implementation, they requested a second Erytra Eflexis unit. Reducing hands-on time and improving TAT was critical for them, and Erytra Eflexis accomplished the goal.



Today, the blood bank operates their routine testing with two Grifols Erytra Eflexis and one Immucor Neo. With each system, they perform double determinations with different clones to report the test (ABO, extended phenotype, and rare antigen typing) in accordance with German transfusion guidelines.

**Annual testing volumes<sup>1</sup>:**

**Grifols Erytra Eflexis systems**

- 7100 blood group/year
- 12,350 crossmatch test/year
- 7350 antibody screening/year
- 1140 antibody identification/year

**Immucor Neo system**

- 11,350 blood group/year
- 10,600 crossmatch test/year
- 4600 antibody screening/year
- 4900 antibody screening/year (pool)

1. Data from 2021

## Critical factors affecting laboratory productivity

The most critical steps for the EvKB blood bank are the uptime of instruments and technician hands-on time when managing samples during pre- and post-analytical steps. It is essential not to interrupt the workflow of the laboratory to deliver all test results and blood components when required and to get the job done in a timely manner.

## Partnership drives laboratory operational efficiencies

Purchasing, installing, and validating a new analyzer is a large undertaking for laboratories. Selecting the right partner—beyond just reagents and automation—is also very important.

The good work of the Grifols technical support team helped EvKB to streamline training, installation, validation, and go-live. “The training received was very good—even during the pandemic. Train the trainer was excellent and very well delivered to all members of the laboratory,” states Dirk Sander, medical-technical laboratory assistant. “The system and the methodology used during the training adapted to us, not us to the system.”

EvKB values a good service and expert technical support team. The any-time availability, fast and resolute answers, and the possibility to work as a team are what they consider the most important values in a provider. “We value a true open conversation with the service personnel and work as one team. And this is what we have with Grifols since day one,” Dirk states.

**“Unexpected equipment downtime can be costly and have a negative effect on laboratory productivity. We cannot afford that. Since SRC is in place, the Grifols team provides fast and accurate solutions that maximize the uptime of our instruments.”**

— Dirk Sander  
Medical-technical laboratory assistant  
Blood bank of EvKB

## Good relationship to improve knowledge

The good relationship with the Grifols commercial and technical support teams makes the laboratory improve time after time. When incidents occur and the engineer or application specialist assists them, the technical staff in the blood bank are always willing to learn. Tips and tricks from Grifols personnel and the tech staff’s motivation to learn is essential to continual improvement.

## Remote assistance to reduce incident handling time

The Grifols Secure Remote Connectivity (SRC) tool was installed in 2021. Providing Grifols remote access to the instruments is highly beneficial for the customer, explains Simon Jordan, Grifols Technical Application Specialist. “Since we installed SRC, our commercial support team can take better care,” he says. “Most of the time, it is possible to operate remotely, and the instruments do not need to stop their testing routine. It is an efficient way of detecting, and most of the time solving\*, the causes without the need of being on site.” Since technicians can check everything in advance, they can preorder spare parts and make on-site visits faster and more efficient.

The main challenge for the installation stemmed from the high cybersecurity and data protection required by the IT department, which are ensured by the SRC tool. Today, Grifols technical support team utilizes SRC frequently for middleware assistance, user activation, software updates, problem solving, and general questions during tech execution.

## Conclusions

The partnership with Grifols allowed EvKB to see gains in efficiency and productivity by:

- Increasing uptime of instruments
- Reducing hands-on time
- Automating all testing processes
- Increasing efficiency in service interventions

Good instruments, well-trained personnel, good quality data, and an open and truthful relationship with Grifols are the key elements to succeed in EvKB’s daily work in the laboratory.

\*With Grifols Secure Remote Connectivity, up to 6 of 10 of your technical support calls can be resolved without ever waiting for a representative to arrive. Grifols own data (Iberia BTS mean remote resolution data; last 6 months 2021; ServiceMax).