

BT Engage IT helps an NHS Trust work more productively and cost-effectively

“The hospital will have significant improvements in working practices. We want staff to be enabled by the power that good IT solutions can bring and not hampered by solutions that make their life harder. Our key message was simplicity – and this is what BT Engage IT helped bring to this project.”

Ann Becke,
Director,
DGOH NHS Trust

Overview

Business challenge

- NHS organisations are under pressure to work in the most modern and efficient ways in the face of tight budgets and strict guidelines.
- All staff across disparate sites need to communicate and share information in the most effective patient-focused ways.
- The Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust wanted to improve communications, collaboration and workflow in all areas – and took a strategic decision to replace its Intranet with a new Trust-wide platform.

Benefits

- Productivity improvements and significant cost savings.
- Staff can manage the platform themselves, sharing information effectively and communicating with specialists in real-time.
- Improved support for health practitioners and enhanced patient care.
- A flexible and scalable platform for further development and enhancement.

Solution

- BT Engage IT consultants ran stakeholder workshops and carried out gap analysis to examine the IT infrastructure and establish precise needs.
- BT Engage IT deployed a Unified Communications & Collaboration solution based on Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS), to be followed by Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS) – replacing an existing intranet then adding presence awareness, instant messaging and federation.



Case Study

Dudley Group of Hospitals (DGOH) is an acute general hospital with PFI arrangements. "Communicating with staff was a real challenge," explains John Uttley, Deputy Director of Information, DGOH. "We wanted to target staff with a KPI dashboard and improve information provisioning by targeting defined sites within a portal so, for example, Operating Theatre staff can see utilisation of theatre time in their own site without having to look elsewhere. Our success will be based on better engagement with staff and letting them provide content they want to see.

"We are an early adopter in the NHS of the Enterprise MOSS 2007 installation. What makes this unique is the depth of vision we have for the platform." The current deployment involves replacing an existing intranet, including document management capabilities and providing sub-sites for specific clinical areas and corporate functions. The unique aspect will follow, as OCS is deployed in phase two. "We will be the first Trust to implement this and integrate it so tightly into our overall strategic systems," says Uttley. "This will bring together our current voice system with our data system and allow use of voice over the national NHS backbone."

Presence awareness

One innovative aspect will involve delivering presence awareness in a busy healthcare setting. "Staff will be able to quickly see if individuals are free - this could be simply a call to Human Resources or a medical issue with junior doctors asking questions of consultants," Uttley says. A teaching hospital, DGOH has two rotations of junior doctors each year. Previously, training was lecture-based, with mixed attendance based on whether the doctor was on duty. With OCS these can be performed using LiveMeeting, with

sessions recorded and available to all junior doctors – who can also communicate using an easy and familiar approach: instant messaging.

With clinical practice requiring so many guidelines, the platform also provides a robust document management centre with built-in workflow. "We will be able to ensure workflow only allows authorised guidelines to be published, and they are easily retrievable and searchable," says Uttley. "Questions based on guidelines can be made easily by seeing if the author's available via presence awareness." DGOH will know that people have read guidelines and signed-off their agreement to abide by them. The system facilitates easy searching, highlights new documents, reminds authors of pending reviews and allows for auto destruction of documents that exceed retention periods.

Reduce travel, lower emissions

LiveMeeting and video conferencing will bring other advantages. "Consultants work closely with other hospitals," says Uttley. "Time spent driving is wasted clinical time; the same end can be achieved using LiveMeeting. The knock-on impact is a reduction in travel time and expenses, plus reduced carbon emissions." Travel is also reduced for managers and clinicians on-call: for instance, a radiologist on-call at home is seen as available via presence awareness then contacted using VoIP to make an urgent assessment of an MRI image. Indeed, staff can be very mobile within the workplace, and may need to log-on at computers in various wards. "The idea that each time they sign-on, they can be called on from that computer is exceptional," says Uttley. "The notion of an extension number could be a thing of the past. Our system will integrate with our Windows mobile devices via Wifi and allow features such as instant messaging."

Cost savings

He adds, "Our portal increases the flow of information and gives the power of content management to staff while removing it from IT: each area can improve the flow of information in their sections, with items specific to them such as team calendars, procedures, performance reports and KPI dashboards." Efficiency gains and cost reductions are expected to be substantial, including:

- 70% reduction in calling costs
- Reduced travel claims including car parking costs
- Reduction in non-productive time spent travelling between meetings
- Completely free calls with other NHS organisations that also implement OCS, plus extended presence awareness and instant messaging

Uttley adds, "National investment in the N3 spine means the Trust can take advantage of a 70% reduction in call costs by moving to VoIP. This solution is an important stepping-stone towards releasing this cost reduction.

"We ultimately anticipate efficiency gains, reduced travel and increased bedside presence."

Customer profile

Industry: Healthcare
Services: DGOH provides a full range of general and specialist inpatient, outpatient and therapy services, providing care and treatment for 400,000 people

Based around three purpose-built sites in Dudley and Stourbridge, DGOH is the main provider of acute hospital services for the area. The largest site, Russells Hall Hospital, has 700+ in-patient beds. The Trust achieved Teaching status from the University of Birmingham in 2001.

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