

CASE STUDY

NHS City and Hackney takes benefits to the community with Tracline and Fujitsu Technology Solutions

“We are pushing ahead with some of the most innovative uses of technology in the NHS. Tracline and Fujitsu are a key part of that.”

Tim Wilson, Head of ICT, NHS City & Hackney



The challenge

Formed on 1st April 2001, NHS City and Hackney delivers a diverse range of healthcare to over a 250,000 Londoners. Securing the systems behind these services became critical when analysis showed the impact of possible failure at the St Leonards Hospital data centre. With this in mind, a project to overhaul disaster recovery (DR) and business continuity capabilities began with Tracline and Fujitsu Technology Solutions

The Solution

Existing server infrastructure was consolidated by installing a Fujitsu PRIMERGY solution using quad-core blade servers, running VMWare virtualisation software.

This was replicated at the local BT Interexion data centre, providing the Trust with a complete DR capability. Three, 1Gb links between the sites were installed and both data centres are linked into the NHS N3 network.

Moving out into the community, the Trust has deployed a Community of Interested Networks (COIN). This links the GP surgeries, dentists, opticians and PCT staff throughout the Trust, before feeding back to the datacentre.

NHS City and Hackney was formed on 1st April 2001. With 60 premises throughout London, it serves over 250,000 residents of Hackney and a further 7,500 in the City of London.

Solution components

- Fujitsu PRIMERGY BF400 with eleven, quad-core blade servers
- NetApp Storage Solution
- 3x 1Gb network links
- VMWare Enterprise Edition

Customer benefits

- Two-thirds reduction in server estate as well as reduction in storage facilities needed
- Faster new service deployment and better service delivery
- Completed disaster recovery capability
- Lower management costs, quicker server deployment, less paper storage
- Increased server utilisation

The project

With such a significant investment in the continuity and efficiency of operations, NHS City & Hackney has relied on professional services supplied by Fujitsu Technology Solutions and its partners to make the project a success. This has included over 250 days worth of consultancy, project management, implementation, migration and training.

As part of the Trust's drive to become "paper-light" by 2010, NHS City and Hackney is also deploying Electronic Document Management (EDM), scanning and electronically storing documents from x-rays to paper records, and delivering them as needed.

With the dawn of polyclinics and ever-increasing patient numbers, supporting the ability to deliver improved services is critical to the new implementation of technology throughout the Trust.

However, none of these improvements must be at the expense of front line service delivery. Because IT and back office areas consume facilities that could be used for patient-facing services, all of the above must be achieved without new buildings or site development.

Project partner



over 20 years | making IT work

A record of success

Virtualisation has reduced approximately 65% of the server estate. This has made the deployment of new services far quicker and easier. Upgrades to Checkpoint and ClearSwift software have been successfully completed in a matter of days compared to previous timetables of weeks.

The old servers and network bandwidth made services such as email slow. As Tim Wilson, head of ICT, explains there was a real impact on patient care: "The average X-ray is approximately 8Mb. Sent over small network links from an ageing server that causes a real delay to the doctor in a surgery. This is no longer an issue."

"Business continuity is often a case of bringing a surgery back online after theft or damage from vandalism. This makes the rapid re-deployment of virtual resources very compelling."

Wilson concludes: "We will continue to make a large investment to improve service delivery. We see clear benefits – improved data security and faster capabilities for on site diagnosis. Technology underpins all of this."

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