

# Northumbria Healthcare Chooses Hornbill for Helpdesk Support System

Northumbria Healthcare   
NHS Trust

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust is one of the largest geographical trusts in the country providing healthcare to over half a million people. Voted one of the top 40 trusts in a recent healthcare survey, Northumbria Healthcare prides itself on achieving high levels of performance and patient care in its hospitals.

The Trust employs over 7000 staff, with 5000 of these staff requiring IT support. They have recently invested in Supportworks service management software from Hornbill Systems to assist their IT Help Desk support end users. Since implementing Supportworks, the Trust's IT Help Desk has been able to significantly improve its internal customer service.

## Driving Change Through the NHS

Following its success, the Help Desk unit has been awarded the role of North of Tyne Help Desk, supporting a further eleven organisations north of the River Tyne. The drive to have a central support unit has been fuelled by the National Programme for IT within the NHS.

The National Programme aims to ensure that every individual's medical history is accessible at any of the NHS organisations throughout the UK. With such an initiative, having the right IT infrastructure to deliver the information and support the end users is vital. It was critical that the solution chosen was able to 'interface' seamlessly with the systems being used by Northumbria Healthcare Trust's allocated local service provider (LSP) in order to comply with the requirements of the National Programme.

David Jamieson, Help Desk Manager at Northumbria Healthcare said, "With the new Programme for IT in the NHS, our ultimate aim is to provide a single point of contact across the organisation for all National Programme applications."

## Supportworks Tops the Bill for the Help Desk

The central Help Desk has nineteen members of staff that use Supportworks on a daily basis. Other Supportwork users include senior management and implementation staff, for progress checks and new system support respectively. Most of the clinical staff in the Trust report to senior consultants and so requests for IT support and equipment are routed through senior management in their professional disciplines.

The Help Desk uses Supportworks to log all internal customer calls, handling approximately 75 calls per day. These may vary from password queries, procurement and software installation to data and PC failure.

The Help Desk is the first point of contact for resolution, whilst the second level is desktop support and the third level is problem management and network support, including server and communications.



## Business Benefits:

- Recognition within new Programme for IT in the NHS
- Seamless interfaces to Local Service Provider
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Single point of contact for procurement requests
- Reporting helps to manage emerging trends
- Fast implementation routines

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David Jamieson,  
Help Desk Manager  
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust

According to Jamieson, “The hardest part was not implementing the Supportworks software, but the culture change that was needed as we changed our processes. Engineers cannot now close calls - they must resolve them and refer back to the Help Desk before closure. This process has been excellent from a customer satisfaction point of view, because calls are never closed until every aspect of the problem, including advice, has been dealt with.”

### Improved Customer Satisfaction

With the improved systems in place, Jamieson claims there is now a greater element of customer relationship management than ever before. End users know what to expect when they log a call, unlike with the previous system, and this also helps to improve customer satisfaction.

Since implementing the system the Help Desk has been able to identify trends from the management reports. One of the main reasons that end users were calling was that their mailbox was full. Having identified this as a common problem, the Help Desk team has been able to manage the problem.

“We have been proactive in our response by telling people how to use their mailbox to prevent it getting too full. We have remedies in place so that people can have larger mailboxes and are also looking at a practical solution where emails are automatically archived. By moving to an infrastructure where we can dictate from a central point, we can identify trends and go about addressing them proactively” said Jamieson.

In the past a procurement request was placed on a spreadsheet and dealt with by the Help Desk team. Now with a single point of contact and one system, the request can be placed, tracked and resolved more easily. The status of the procurement can be logged on the system so that the user can be informed of progress at any time. Again this has greatly improved communication and the service that the team can provide.

### Swift Implementation

Once the decision had been made to select Supportworks, the implementation was swift. Hornbill was able to migrate the Trust’s email users across - importing around 4,500 staff in total. Jamieson was delighted with the service and consultancy that Hornbill provided, “We had quite a few customisations that we required and the Hornbill team were very friendly and had the expertise to help us achieve what we wanted. We asked for the database of every single call that we had to be exported, so that if a call was still active, we could still have an update,” Jamieson said.

Hornbill has also developed a web-based status update page. If there is problem with a mail server for example, this can be publicised on the web page, which users can click onto via an email link.

### Future Plans

Future plans include the introduction of Hornbill’s Assetworks to enable the team to track IT equipment and software licenses. The success of Supportworks has brought additional business benefits to the Trust. Following its success with taking on the North of Tyne Help Desk, the team is looking to increase its support services further.

Jamieson concludes, “By extending our services wider throughout the NHS, we are providing a much more efficient service. Thanks to Supportworks we have an excellent reporting capability now. Using this we can even foresee that the Help Desk might be a revenue generating operation, whereby we can cross charge for our services as we take on a greater support role across the NHS organisation.”



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