

[CASE STORY]

Location: United Kingdom
 Customer: University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay
 NHS Foundation Trust
 Area: Healthcare

EFFICIENT AND STANDARD SOLUTION TO COMMUNICATING ACROSS MULTIPLE SITES

LOCATION: VARIOUS

BEDS: 806

EMPLOYEES: 6000+

ASCOM SOLUTION: SITE-WIDE MOBILE COMMUNICATION CONNECTING MULTIPLE SITES WITH ONE SOLUTION



University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust

- Comprising three hospitals
 - Royal Lancaster Infirmary
 - Furness General Hospital
 - Westmorland General Hospital
- Furthest 2 hospitals located 45 miles apart
- 6000 staff spread across all three sites

Ascertaining where a clinician is within a hospital can be a task in itself; paging, calling and tannoys all add up to time, noise and overall inefficiency of staff time.

Now add in the fact that they could be anywhere in one of the many different hospitals within a Trust - what do you do then? What is the most efficient way to communicate?

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust was in such a situation. Comprising three hospitals; Royal Lancaster Infirmary, Furness General Hospital and Westmorland General Hospital with the furthest 2 hospitals being 45 miles apart.

With 6000 staff spread across all three sites and 806 beds the Trust wanted to streamline their communication process; first they had some issues they wished to have addressed.

Issues needed addressing

1. The Trust wanted one secure common communication platform between and across all three of their hospitals.

“We needed to draw together standard operational procedures and safe systems of work when dealing with clinical and emergency call response teams and standard paging,” explains Barry Rigg, Head of Hotel Services, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay.

2. The plan was to centralise their switchboard services into one main call centre from where alerts could be sent to key mobile phones and pagers in the event of major incidents; the solution needed to integrate with their existing system.

3. There was a need to provide roaming clinicians with multi-site working responsi-

CASE STORY – UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF MORECAMBE BAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

bilities the ability to go from site-to-site with one standard communication device which was easy to use.

4. Develop an auditable paging system and change cultures into standardising call groups, eliminating the human element.

Their situation

In their current situation the Trust utilised three different providers for their paging and voice-over-air equipment which needed to be streamlined; they went out to tender.

“... custom built a communication platform fit for current NHS business activity with the scope to develop.”

“Ascom were part of the NHS tender process and were successful; they offered pre-tender site survey support and custom built a communication platform fit for current NHS business activity with the scope to develop further in the future,” says Barry Rigg.

Ascom helped the Trust streamline their communication equipment from a three system paging, two radio systems and WiFi voice system to one custom built Ascom communication platform.

“It is all about flexibility and we set out with the aim of providing various ways in which staff could communicate their need for help,” explains Kirsty Duncan, Healthcare Account Manager for Ascom.

“The Trust wanted a solution capable of one-way broadcast speech and data send. We worked with them to understand their needs better and found that this would not

have met their auditing requirements and a more advanced solution was put forward.”

The solution to their issues

1. Ascom provided the Trust with a single web-based communication platform, NetPage, which could be used at ward and department level across all three sites. This enabled staff to send messages to colleagues themselves; a task previously undertaken by the switchboard, now alleviating the call load.

2. The Switchboard was provided with reassurance that all of their paging communications were being logged as evidence of paging requests undertaken in very critical situations. Previously the switchboard sent out one-way broadcast speech and data send with no way of knowing the message was being responded to or even received. Their switchboard runs 24/7 and can now receive calls and send critical messages immediately with the peace of mind knowing their messages have been acknowledged via Ascom’s DURAsuite solution.

3. With the Ascom solution they were able to provide Junior Doctors that roamed between sites and Doctors from receiving sites, safety and consistency in ease of operation by standardising the communication equipment to Ascom a71 alarms.

4. Ascom’s solution provided a key feature

which is critical in healthcare establishments – logging and tracking for auditing; this allows the Trust to record their Service Level Agreements, monitor KPIs and help in service investigations. This addressed a critical issue which is prevalent in all hospitals, logging and tracking of alarms and pages from the start to finish of an incident – key for litigation purposes.

The benefits

The solution has streamlined the way in which the Trust works, alleviating call loads from their switchboard and empowering staff to communicate directly with colleagues wherever they may be.

“We the whole Trust view Ascom and the Ascom equipment as a communication platform which has been and will continue to be an integrated part of how we maintain our full range of staff to be in the right place at the right time, every time,” says Barry Rigg.

This technology is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to streamlining processes within the NHS; it’s all about improving patient flow, increasing patient safety, furthering patient experience and enhancing staff satisfaction and efficiency. ■

ABOUT ASCOM
 Ascom Wireless Solutions is a leading provider of on-site wireless communications. More than 75,000 systems are installed at major companies all over the world. The company offers a broad range of voice and professional messaging solutions, creating value for customers by supporting and optimising their mission-critical processes.
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