



NEW TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN BDGH.

With a budget of £88 million, 610 beds and 3000 staff, the Barnsley District General Hospital (BDGH) delivers a range of high quality acute hospital services to a population of more than 220,000 in Barnsley and the surrounding area.

As a dynamic and forward-thinking organisation with three-star status, it continually strives to deliver the very best in healthcare in a modern environment, with the most up-to-date technology and equipment.

Challenge.

Clinical systems are the lifeblood of any medical institution – providing access to a wide variety of information about patients and services. Previously, staff at BDGH could only access its clinical systems through legacy 'green screen' visual display units (VDUs) located within certain areas of the hospital. This meant that ward staff had to make time to find an accessible VDU and also that information was difficult to access due to the number of green screen menus staff had to negotiate through.

Barnsley District 
General Hospital
NHS Trust

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Janet Platt, Clinical Lead For Electronic Records, BDGH

Overview.

Name:

Barnsley District General Hospital

Area of operation:

Medical

Headquarters: Barnsley

Number of employees: 3,000

Key technology:

Smart cards, patient record system

Categories:

ITC Solutions
Support Services

Key benefits:

- Secure access to data
- Flexible and scalable solution
- Easier access to information
- Access to email and the Internet

The NHS National Programme for IT stipulates that NHS services should utilise the latest technology to improve the patient experience. Alongside this, BDGH also wanted to ensure that its staff have access to basic communication tools such as email and the Internet. In addition, BDGH's VDU technology was reaching the end of its natural life, so a strategic decision was made to embark on a project to reach National Programme status early.

BDGH decided to replace its legacy VDUs with technology situated on the wards themselves, to make the systems more accessible to clinical and ward staff. “Our aging technology would not enable us to meet the National Programme requirements and it was also no longer fulfilling our needs,” says Janet Platt, clinical lead for electronic records development at BDGH.

Solution.

Following the public sector tendering process, BDGH distributed an invitation to tender before entering the shortlisting stage. After a competitive bid process, BDGH chose a solution from Azzurri, incorporating leading edge ‘smart card’ technology and flat screen terminals using a Microsoft Windows operating environment. The new solution incorporates 300 terminals situated on the hospital wards.

BDGH has now gone live with a new patient record access system, as part of a five year managed service deal worth £1m. This new system enables clinical staff at BDGH to have easier access to a wider range of information from terminals located within the hospital wards. The new IT solution provides easier navigation through a more user-friendly interface based on a Windows operating system - a vast improvement on the legacy green screen technology.

For the first time in a hospital, smart card technology is being used to ensure that user sessions remain tightly secure, allowing clinical staff to log on to the system through inserting their card - with the user session automatically ending when the card is removed.

“Previously we had to rely on users logging out at the end of their session when they left the VDU to keep the system secure. With our new system, our staff cannot access any records without a smart-card being inserted, therefore the moment they leave the terminal, the smart card goes with them and automatically logs off the user session. This is invaluable when staff are called away in an emergency,” continues Mrs Platt.

The system enables staff to view and edit patient records, order prescriptions, book x-rays and laboratory tests from the ward, instead of forcing staff to write paper requests or gain access through a different system located elsewhere.

Around 3,000 clinical staff now have access to email and the Internet, which they were previously unable to use. “We have already seen a vast improvement in communication around the hospital,” says Mrs Platt.

As part of Azzurri's maintenance service, a piece of monitoring software has been installed which sends alerts back to the Azzurri helpdesk should any of the critical services fail. This, combined with full remote access to the servers ensures that issues can be quickly resolved and maintains the service level agreement.

“We chose Azzurri because the team demonstrated commitment to us and our project from the outset,” continues Mrs Platt. “The solution they offered gave us the most confidence that it would fulfil our immediate needs and is flexible and scalable enough to satisfy any future requirements.”



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