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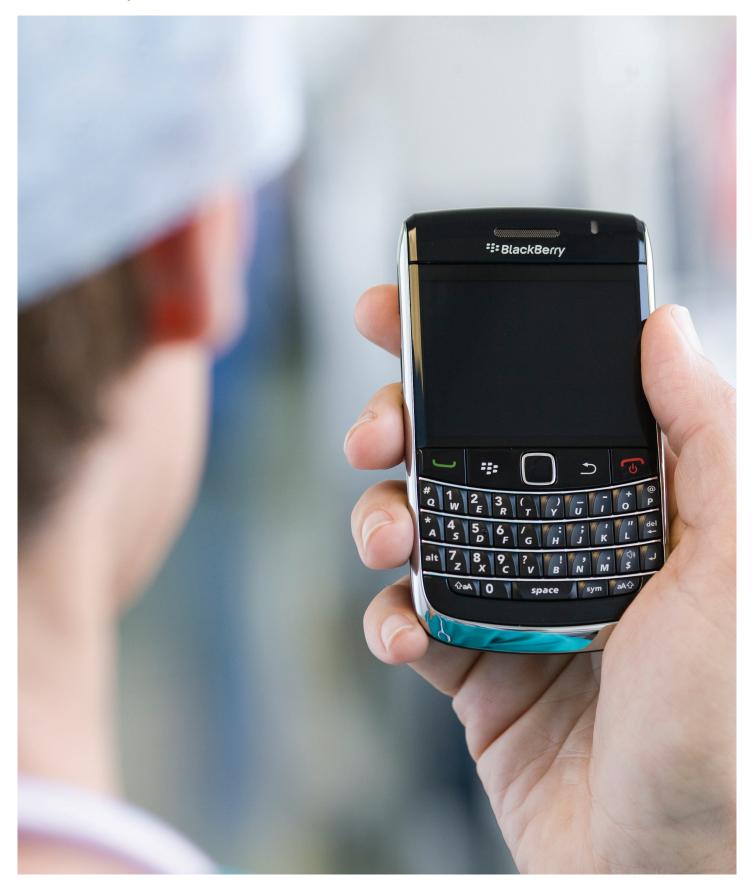
"We were convinced by Vodafone's capability, the quality of the solution and the realisation of a return on our investment. We understood the benefits that would flow from a successful implementation."

**Paul Duffy, Co-Director of IT and Telecoms, Belfast HSCT**

# Vodafone Managed Service solution
## supports Belfast Trust to improve service quality and reduce costs

**HSC** Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Belfast Trust is one of five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts which provide health and social services across Northern Ireland, and is one of the largest Trusts in the UK.

Established in 2007 and made up of six legacy trusts, Belfast HSCT employs approximately 20,000 people and operates with an annual budget of around £1.2 billion. It serves its immediate local population of 340,000 in Belfast and Castlereagh, and the wider population of Northern Ireland too via its regional services.

In recent years the Trust has been reorganising and modernising in order to improve the quality and speed with which health and social care services are delivered. A key aim for the Trust has been to move services into the local community, to make them more accessible and to promote more independent living for those with long term disabilities.

At the same time the Trust has had to make savings in excess of £100 million to meet tough budget and efficiency targets set by the Government and the NHS.

**Labour-intensive**
When Trust managers were identifying areas for service improvements and efficiencies, the longstanding system by which consultants' notes were processed following appointments with patients came firmly under the microscope.

Historically as many as 800 consultants either hand wrote their notes or used traditional tape-based dictation machines to record their consultations, to be transcribed and typed up later by hundreds of medical secretaries.

This labour-intensive, inflexible system was both costly and inefficient, with in-built potential for transcription and typing errors being introduced into patient records - and delays of several days when secretaries were sick or on holiday or at times of high demand. This was particularly significant problem for patients requiring urgent treatment or referral.

Paul Duffy is the Co-Director of IT and Telecoms at Belfast HSCT: "This was an area of work that technology could assist in driving benefits. We resolved right from the beginning to take a thorough, strategic look at the entire process to ensure that we could devise an holistic solution and then accurately measure its success over time.

"We were also aware that if we were thorough in our work, the potential solution to this issue could have a more widespread benefit throughout the Trust, beyond that of the original scope of the medical consultants."

Vodafone had been a longstanding mobile telecoms supplier to Belfast Trust, dating back before the amalgamation of the six legacy trusts in 2007.

Utilising an approved public sector procurement framework agreement, Paul Duffy and his team carried out a detailed review of potential partners including Vodafone, looking at cost, service quality and ongoing support criteria.

"Vodafone has worked with us to evolve the solution into one that I believe is robust, reliable and specifically shaped to our needs."

Paul Duffy, Co-Director of IT and Telecoms, Belfast HSCT

### Speed and accuracy

Belfast HSCT chose Vodafone's proposed managed service solution based around mobility technology as the standard means of recording, processing, managing and sharing information from consultations with patients.

The new system uses BlackBerry smartphone devices with an application developed by Vodafone and its specialist partner portfolio.

The technical solution was complemented by a full managed service from Vodafone with frontline support and ongoing assistance during a complex and lengthy roll out process.

"We were convinced by Vodafone's capability, the quality of the solution and the realisation of a return on our investment. We understood the benefits that would flow from a successful implementation – the speed and accuracy with which patient information would be processed and the impact that would have on patient and client outcomes," says Paul Duffy.

"This was a project that we knew required action. We resolved right from the beginning that we wanted to take a thorough, strategic look at the entire process to ensure that we could implement a holistic solution and then accurately measure its benefits over time.

"We believe that this potential solution could have widespread application within the Trust, beyond the initial scope of provision to our medical consultants."

### Accurate measurement

"There were challenges around the implementation that we have worked very hard to overcome. It was very important that, in order to measure accurately the return of investment in this solution, we needed to thoroughly understand how the existing processes worked and just what the information and workflow requirements of the consultants, patients and the Trust as a whole were. One size generally fits nobody.

"We evaluated the impact of the roll-out given that we have a wide variation within our consultant body with respect to age, familiarity with new technology and expectation of the system.

"Appropriate communication and investment of time with our consultants was important if this change was to be a success and the Trust's Medical Records Manager spent considerable time embedding the solution within the wider consultant body," explains Duffy.

"In all, full implementation has taken about 18 months and the benefits the solution has derived is now being reviewed. We are now going to assess the usage data to assist in further service improvements.

"This has been a process in which Vodafone has been closely involved; working with us to resolve some inevitable technical issues and evolve the solution into one that I believe is robust, reliable and specifically shaped to our needs."
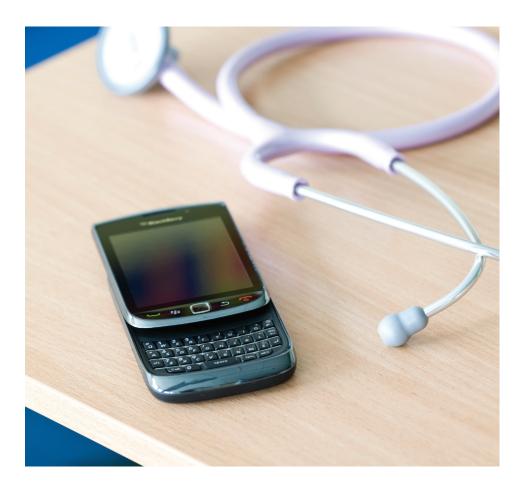
"We have valued Vodafone's technical expertise, support and commitment to what is a long term project and we look forward to working with them as we extend this application more broadly across the Trust."

**Paul Duffy, Co-Director of IT and Telecoms, Belfast HSCT**

### Visibility and control

Paul Duffy reports that while measurements of success will follow in the months to come once detailed data is analysed, many of the predicted benefits are already clear to see.

The cost of legacy tape recording equipment required to process the previous system has been almost eliminated. Consultants and Managers have much improved visibility and control over the speed and urgency with which the reports and documents are created.

"This solution fits perfectly with our service improvement agenda and contributes to our ability to reduce costs and innovate in delivering services. We can already see how we could expand the use of this technology, for example by widening the scope to junior doctors and other healthcare professionals, and to enable staff working remotely to share important information while on the move.

"We have valued Vodafone's technical expertise, support and commitment to what is a long term project and we look forward to working with them as we extend this application more broadly across the Trust."

### Significant benefits

- The mobile application and managed service solution from Vodafone has supported Belfast Trust's twin aims of improving service quality and reducing costs
- The solution ensures that patient records are more accurate and updated more quickly
- Follow up actions for patients after consultations are now swiftly triggered and disseminated
- Trust managers have more visibility and control over the management of patient records
- The solution, now proven after a carefully planned and executed roll out, is fully transferable into other activities and departments within the Trust

To find out more, please contact your Account Manager.
Or for new business, call us on **0845 084 0157**

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