



“Vodafone and Flexility develop strategy to help NHS Trust free up 10,500 extra staff hours a week”

Janet King, Associate Director of Informatics, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP)

power to you



Executive Summary

With its mission to be a leader in everything it does, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CWP) is an organisation with high standards. So when it decided to review how its communications strategy was supporting community-based care, the Trust turned to Vodafone and its partner Flexility to ensure that the process was structured and relevant. Working together, they have produced a three-year mobility strategy designed to make better use of office space, while reducing administration time. The plan has also identified how thousands of extra hours can be created for staff to spend with service users – and work on initiatives to improve operational efficiency.

Customer Profile:

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health and other specialist care services to a local population of around one million people.

Challenge:

As part of its drive for continuous improvement, the Trust wanted to review how mobile technology could generate greater efficiencies and empower its people to deliver a better level of service.

Solution:

Vodafone and its partner Flexility developed a transformation strategy that will enable the Trust to provide outstanding service to patients by using resources more efficiently, and ensuring staff really engage with the communication services needed to support them.

Benefits:

- Plan to improve service delivery defined
- Potential for better use of space identified
- User needs researched and confirmed
- Long-term strategy established

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Challenge

Across the National Health Service (NHS), a fundamental change is taking place. Departments of all kinds are adapting the way they work by bringing services closer to the community – driven on by the overall desire to reduce hospital admissions, make better use of resources and give service users more opportunity to be treated at home.

“We’ve changed our culture in some ways, but as a whole we’re still very tied to our locations,” says Janet. “And when you’ve got more than 2,700 people spread across 75 sites, there are lots of issues to address. One example is our clinical staff – they told us that the process for collecting data in the community is inefficient, and then they spend too much time travelling back to the office to input it.”

Against this background, the Trust decided to review how mobile technology could help to increase the amount of time its carers spend with service users. At the same time, it saw an opportunity to free people from the need to work from one fixed location – and so make more effective use of its property estate.

Solution

Vodafone is a long-standing partner to CWP, providing it with mobile voice, email on BlackBerry devices and mobile broadband on laptops. Adding further value, Vodafone’s Professional Services team is always on hand to provide consultation on the latest innovative solutions and advice on future strategy.

“When we discussed the review we were planning, Vodafone came up with an approach for making the exercise as structured and meaningful as possible,” says Janet.

Vodafone and its professional services partner Flexility devised a comprehensive communications review to determine the Trust’s requirements for the next three years. Flexility used its online tool to survey staff to very quickly provide insight into how people work today, their unmet communication needs, the benefits from enablers they have in place, and readiness for change. This insight was used to determine the vision for how people should work in the future and investments needed in people, processes and technology to achieve the Trust’s objectives.

“The process was highly professional,” says Janet. “We do a lot of surveys, but this one had an excellent response rate. Employees could really see how they would benefit. We’ve done this the right way and that gives us a very reliable base from which to move forward.”

Following the research, Flexility and Vodafone developed a three-year mobility strategy based on priority needs. The report identifies four different types of worker – from home based to those that are in the office full time – and an overlay of the technology and applications required to help those people be more collaborative and effective. Crucially, the strategy also includes what the trust will need in terms of set-up, training and support – as well as a proposal for managing the change to its working culture.

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Benefits

Vodafone and Flexility have produced a comprehensive three-year mobility strategy that supports the need for more effective and productive community-based care and dovetails with the Trust's overall objectives. The benefits, if fully realised, could have a significant positive impact on the Trust's performance.

Plan to improve service delivery defined

Vodafone and Flexility's analysis has highlighted the Trust's potential to regain 200 working years annually – time that could be spent directly with people in the community. “That's a real return on investment for us – increasing face-to-face time with service users, and cutting the administrative burden,” says Janet.

Potential for better use of space identified

The strategy proposes enabling the trust to update back-end systems from remote locations in the community through a secure connection. The team has calculated that this approach, along with the other flexible working measures it has proposed, could provide the trust with an opportunity to put a significant proportion of its office estate to more productive use.

User needs researched and confirmed

The Trust has a detailed view of how its workforce spends its time and is able to match different categories of workers to the services needed to support them. “With any roll out there is always a risk, if you are not prepared, that the new technology will not be accepted and used as you would like,” Janet says. “The user research gives us the opportunity to do things in a very structured way, to get it right first time, and make sure our staff really engage with the services we provide. It also gives us great confidence to see how Vodafone has successfully handled similar end user implementations in other organisations – including with its own workforce.”

Long-term strategy established

Vodafone and Flexility have developed a roadmap for change that doesn't just look at technology in isolation but takes the Trust's overall business objectives into consideration. This is also contributing to other strategic initiatives, such as the Productive Wards Programme, which evaluates ways of making processes more efficient. Janet says: “I think it's important to recognise that the strategy we've developed with Vodafone and Flexility demonstrates that mobile technology is not a side issue. It's central to how we want to work in the future and can help us achieve many of our goals.”



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