

CHRIS PRICE, COMPUTACENTER

In today's cost and efficiency focused world, achieving more for less is a common goal for every organisation – public and private. But for NHS organisations, meeting this objective is particularly challenging. While NHS budgets are shrinking, the UK population and demand for more flexible healthcare services are growing....

**Further Reading:**

1. <http://www.computacenter.com/services-new/source.asp>
2. [http://www.computacenter.com/case-study/100119\\_carestream.asp](http://www.computacenter.com/case-study/100119_carestream.asp)
3. [http://www.computacenter.com/services-new/fast\\_track/DesktopPowerManagementAudit.asp](http://www.computacenter.com/services-new/fast_track/DesktopPowerManagementAudit.asp)
4. [http://www.computacenter.com/government/optimised\\_support.aspx](http://www.computacenter.com/government/optimised_support.aspx)

....as a result, NHS organisations need to make their existing resources go further.

This means rethinking not only day-to-day processes, such as the sharing of X-ray films between medical staff, but also the long-term strategy for sourcing and managing core infrastructure elements, such as ICT.

With the quality of patient care and staff productivity increasingly linked to ICT, the need to optimise systems and services has become a key priority for NHS trusts. And, as more and more clinical and patient services become reliant on technology, ICT departments will have to meet increased demand for performance and availability.

To meet this demand - without incurring additional costs - NHS trusts need to bring greater control and consistency to their ICT systems and services. 1


Rationalisation and standardisation will be key to achieving this – and will also help realise immediate cost savings. Consolidation – whether it involves servers or suppliers – will enable NHS organisations to make fast track savings and establish the foundations needed for continuous improvement and financial sustainability.

**Free up resources, cut energy costs**

Many healthcare organisations currently use a range of different suppliers to source their ICT hardware and software. For example, Carestream Health 2, which provides medical imaging solutions to healthcare organisations around the world, used to procure its ICT from more than 20 different manufacturers. This was not only time-consuming but also prevented the organisation from taking advantage of vendor volume discounts.

By centralising its European ICT procurement with Computacenter, Carestream Health has been able to reduce costs and the procurement workload.





Thanks to the extent of Computacenter's vendor relationships, Carestream Health can now purchase more than 300 different ICT components from 50 manufacturers from a single source. With central visibility of all orders placed, Carestream Health has been able to achieve year-on-year cost savings of 10 per cent.

ICT procurement is just one area where NHS trusts can make quick wins in terms of removing cost from their business. For example, NHS Oldham was able to make financial savings after conducting a Computacenter Desktop Power Management Audit. 3

Following the analysis, Computacenter implemented the NightWatchman and Wakeup power management solutions, which will enforce the shutdown of 1000 desktop computers at NHS Oldham's new Integrated Care Centre. As a result, NHS Oldham will be able to reduce energy costs by £41,000 on an annual basis and decrease its carbon footprint.

Enforcing the shutdown of desktops is particularly beneficial for NHS organisations, where multiple users often share clinical PCs. A Desktop Power Management Audit enables organisations to identify simple cost-saving measures that will result in savings of up to £25 and 0.4 tonnes of carbon per PC per year. The new power management solutions will also enable NHS Oldham to enhance the distribution and administration of operating system patches.

### **Enabling proactivity**

Automating core but non-differentiating ICT activities, such as patch management, is essential if NHS trusts are to achieve more with less. NHS organisations need to optimise their ICT systems and services, so they can become less reactive and more proactive. This will enable them to spend more time focusing on strategic initiatives that improve patient care while also meeting exacting cost reduction targets.

The shift from a reactive to a proactive ICT organisation forms part of the NHS Infrastructure Maturity Model, which aims to guide trusts in their efforts to enhance control, standardisation, optimisation and innovation.

By helping NHS organisations make ICT more repeatable and predictable, NIMM is a key tool for decreasing costs and increasing service levels. The journey, however, can be a complex one, and will often require skills and resources that are not always available in-house.

For some NHS trusts, the path to standardisation and optimisation may involve out-tasking or outsourcing not only

ICT projects but also entire services.

NHS Oldham has taken the progressive approach of outsourcing the majority of its ICT to an external provider as part of a four-year managed services contract. Among other advantages, this provides greater certainty and control over both services and costs.

Under the contract, Computacenter will be responsible for providing first, second and third line support to NHS Oldham users from a shared service desk, which Computacenter has developed specifically to support NHS customers. 4

### **Balancing quality with cost**

The service desk is often the main face of ICT for many NHS organisations, and its response and performance greatly affects staff productivity as well as the perception of ICT.

The need for a responsive service desk, however, must be balanced with total cost of ownership – particularly as NHS trusts are called on to make their contribution to the government's NHS cost-cutting programme.

To achieve the right balance between cost and quality, it is important to look at prevention, automation and self-service as part of the ICT support framework. By understanding the root causes of potential problems and enabling users to fix some issues themselves, you will be able to speed up first line resolution rates. As a result, your service desk will be able to achieve more with the same resource.

As ICT becomes more standardised, automated and rationalised, you will be able to make similar efficiency gains across every area of ICT – from desktop support and datacentre management to network monitoring and procurement.

As a result, you will be able to dedicate more ICT resources and budget to projects that boost staff productivity, enhance patient care and continue to lower your organisation's operational expenditure. ■

*Computacenter is Europe's leading independent provider of IT infrastructure services. Formed in 1981, today it has over 10,000 employees across Europe and Group revenues of over £2.5 billion. Chris Price is the firm's Public Sector Director.*

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