Gloucestershire Health Community fast-tracks transformation with technology blueprint from Computacenter

**OBJECTIVE**
To deliver the highest levels of clinical care, the three major NHS care delivery organisations that comprise the Gloucestershire Health Community need robust and well-designed IT systems. The organisations must also be able to cope with ongoing change within the NHS, which means its IT infrastructure must be extremely agile. IT investment in the past had been piecemeal, but to cope with change more effectively, the countywide IT department and its customer partners were keen to take a more strategic approach.

**SOLUTION**
Gloucestershire Health Community partnered with Computacenter to develop a technology blueprint and roadmap for the next three years. Following a series of interviews and workshops with executive, clinical and support staff, Computacenter produced a comprehensive report that outlined the current state, goal state and IT transformation recommendations for all three NHS organisations.

**OUTCOME**
With trusted impartial advice from Computacenter, the Gloucestershire Health Community can take a long-term approach to IT transformation that will reduce risk, maximise budget and align IT with NHS goals. Using the report to guide its decisions will help the Gloucestershire Health Community meet key strategic requirements, including agility, security and mobility.

**BUSINESS IMPACT**
- Access to vendor-independent advice
- Better IT decisions
- Strategic approach to IT transformation

**BUSINESS OUTCOME**
- Reduces risk
- Maximises budget
- Aligns IT strategy to NHS goals
OBJECTIVE

Improving IT agility to support organisational change

Every operation, every appointment and every patient record is touched by the organisation’s IT systems. The Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust alone treated 13,000 planned inpatient admissions and 64,000 emergency inpatient admissions during 2012/2013 – and IT has been fundamental to every one.

Zack Pandor, Countrywide IT Director for the Gloucestershire Health Community, explains: “Initiatives such as electronic patient records enable a more efficient approach to healthcare by improving access to information. Delivery of healthcare is becoming more and more reliant on IT applications and it is therefore essential that the IT infrastructure that supports this is highly available.”

A single countywide IT department is responsible for providing IT infrastructure and services across all three NHS organisations. As well as safeguarding the performance of existing technologies, the team is also responsible for driving infrastructure transformation.

Although the organisations have made significant investment in certain aspects of IT over the last few years, this had often been in response to immediate business needs. While this approach was adequate, it made it difficult to establish an agile and cost-effective IT infrastructure.

“Agility is imperative with the ongoing organisational changes within the NHS,” explains Zack. “Services are no longer automatically provided locally, and are often transferred between NHS and external organisations. This means we need to be able to provision and decommission services quickly, which our existing infrastructure was just not designed to do.”

Zack recognised that a more strategic long-term approach to IT would not only enable the Gloucestershire Health Community to adjust more easily to change but also help the IT department meet staff and patient needs more effectively and economically.

SOLUTION

Enabling more strategic IT investments

As part of its more strategic approach to IT, the organisation was keen to establish a technology blueprint and roadmap. “We decided to take a best-practice ‘architectural’ approach to transforming our existing infrastructure, in order to provide solid IT foundations while enabling greater flexibility,” reveals Zack. With limited skills and capacity to create the blueprint or roadmap internally, the IT department needed a partner with significant breadth and depth of expertise. The organisation conducted a rigorous procurement exercise in July 2012, following which it selected Computacenter.

“We were looking for a partner that had both public and private sector expertise, was able to navigate various vendor offerings and offered value for money,” explains Zack. “Computacenter ticked all these boxes and more.”

Computacenter started by analysing the current IT infrastructure and future needs, which involved a series of interviews and workshops with both technical leads and end users across all departments. “Computacenter’s approach was extremely thorough. In total, it sourced information about IT needs and challenges from a wide range of NHS staff, including ward nurses, community and mental health nurses, midwives, surgeons, physiotherapists and administrative staff,” affirms Zack.

We are in a much better position to provide staff with the technologies they need to do their jobs efficiently, which will in turn improve patient care.

Zack Pandor,
Countrywide IT Director
Gloucestershire Health Community
Based on the collated feedback, Computacenter’s experts produced a technology blueprint and roadmap report for the three Gloucestershire NHS organisations for the next three years. The report incorporated most aspects of the NHS IT infrastructure, including end points devices, identity management, networking (local, wide-area and wireless), backup, storage and datacenter technologies.

Julian Goodbarne, Solution Architect at Computacenter, explains: “For each technology area, we outlined the current status of the IT infrastructure, the target solution and a roadmap for transformation, including timescales, to achieve the business requirements. To help the Gloucestershire Health Community make informed decisions, we also included the impact of doing nothing and indicative costs of the suggested transformational initiatives.”

The report was completed in November 2012. The first two phases of the projects recommended in the report are currently underway and are due for completion summer 2014.

**OUTCOME**

**Empowering staff to deliver better healthcare services**

Working with Computacenter to create a technology blueprint and roadmap has enabled the Gloucestershire Health Community to take a more strategic approach to IT transformation.

“Computacenter provided vendor-independent advice and evidence to support our current and future IT investments,” says Zack.

Using the report to guide its IT decisions will help the Gloucestershire Health Community:

**Reduce risk:** The report identified outdated technologies, such as Microsoft Windows XP, and provided a timeline for upgrading users to a newer operating system to avoid the risks of running an unsupported platform.

**Maximise budget:** Several opportunities to reduce costs were highlighted in the report. For example, Computacenter identified that the organisation was paying more than necessary for Microsoft SQL licences and suggested a more cost-effective approach to licensing. The three Gloucestershire NHS organisations have also been able to improve value for money by pooling budgets and consolidating their needs – each transformational project is executed across all three organisations at the same time.

**Align IT strategy to NHS goals:** Every recommendation within the report is directly aligned to seven key business requirements, including agility, security, mobility, collaboration, patient/client access, integration and affordability. It demonstrates to NHS executives and the end user community how each of the business requirements will be achieved. By following the suggested technology roadmap, the Gloucestershire NHS Community will be able to achieve every one of these goals by the end of the three-year period.

“Now we have a comprehensive IT plan in place, we are in a much better position to provide staff with the technologies they need to do their jobs efficiently, which will in turn improve patient care,” concludes Zack.

**ABOUT GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH COMMUNITY NHS**

The Gloucestershire Health Community provides healthcare services for the county’s 600,000 residents. With 13,500 employees, it comprises three main NHS organisations that provide care; Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust, and 2gether Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. Although each organisation has its own vision and mission, they are all focused on delivering safe and effective patient-centric care.

**MORE INFORMATION**

To find out more about our advisory services and read more customer case studies, visit www.computacenter.com