



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Polycom[®], Microsoft Lync and BT Join Forces to Unify Video, Voice, and Data Communications for 17,000 Staff at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Enhancing Healthcare Services for 340,000 People in Northern Ireland

Industry
Healthcare

Daily Use

- Multidisciplinary healthcare team meetings.
- End-to-end device meetings

Solution

Interoperable unified communications solutions at the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have made it easier for staff to communicate and share information freely through the use of voice, video, instant messaging and presence technology.

Results and Benefits

- Increased productivity.
- Increased Mobile workforce through a wireless telephony solution.
- Reduced operational costs.



Overview

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust deliver integrated health and social care to over 340,000 citizens in Belfast, part of the Borough of Castlereagh and also the wider region of Northern Ireland. Operating over a network of six organizations: the Trust headquarters, Belfast City Hospital, The Royal Hospitals, Mater Hospital, Forster Green Hospital and Musgrave Hospital and over 100 physical locations with an annual budget of approximately £1bn (spending about £3m each day) and a staff of over 20,000 makes it one of the largest Trusts in the United Kingdom.

Challenges

With a user base of over 17,000, the Trust has an overall goal to improve the communication flow, consolidate and reduce costs whilst improving services for their staff, patients and clients. The trust already used video conferencing, but the large number of legacy equipment and solutions needed to be harmonised to enable better use of the video conferencing facilities. Communication is very important to the Trust and they recently developed a strategic partnership involving BT, Microsoft[®] and Polycom[®] to deliver truly unified innovative communications technology to ensure a consistent quality of service across all locations. The Trust selected BT to consolidate and develop next generation voice and data communications services by delivering IP telephony and upgrading to a wireless infrastructure allowing access to an integrated communications platform regardless of where users are.

Solutions and Implementation

One of the main aims of the project was to use technology in new ways to improve the workflow and communication between and within their services to allow doctors and nurses to be out on the wards to deliver higher levels of care. The business challenge was to deliver a replacement wireless telephony solution in 100+ locations that would allow the Trust to remove legacy small PBX's supporting local wireless solutions with a centrally deployed, managed and integrated to Microsoft Lync solution. The relationship with Polycom really began when they started to investigate Microsoft Lync as an alternative unified communications platform across the Trust, mainly within social services offices and moving into acute hospitals. The Trust looked to reduce operational costs on the support of the defunct PBX's and offer a superior user

“With BT, Polycom and Microsoft Lync we were able to transform communications across the Trust and use video collaboration to speed up our decision making.”

Paul Duffy, Co-Director IT and Telecommunications at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

experience to the users. Polycom’s ability to deliver both DECT and Wi-Fi devices that natively integrate with Microsoft Lync was key as both services were required depending on location and Polycom’s commitment to standards allowed the Wi-Fi deployment on the existing Juniper wireless network.

The Trust made its first deployment of High Definition conferencing through delivering new High Definition Polycom® RealPresence® Room Solutions, (HDX® 2000’s). Within excess of 400 Polycom RealPresence Desktop video collaboration systems rolled out to deliver care closer to where it’s needed and an additional 20 large video conference meeting facilities, harmonising and integrating the existing legacy trusts audio and video conferencing network systems was made possible through deploying the Polycom® RealPresence® Collaboration Server (RMX® 2000). This enabled the Trust to connect up and centrally manage all the devices and delivered the benefits of open unified communications by mixing multi-party voice, video and content collaboration sessions together while streamlining complexity and reducing costs.

As part of their Microsoft Lync, Polycom integration rollout, the Trust added 5,000 Polycom® CX600 IP phones along with Polycom SpectraLink® 8400 Wireless Telephones to improve productivity and responsiveness for on-site mobile staff.

Results

One of the program’s major focuses was to improve video facilities and to make it easier for Healthcare staff to collaborate through a fully interoperable unified communications solution. By delivering wireless telephony solution in 100+ locations the trust were able to make valuable operational cost savings on the support of the defunct systems and offer a superior user experience to the users.

Increasing productivity through increasing patient care is another focus for the Trust. A major benefit of having a unified communications solution in place is the time saving and increased productivity that has been seen by avoiding having to travel to another site. Departmental meetings are normally a morning activity and members would generally have to set a whole morning aside to attend and to go to a place where video conferencing would be. The delivery of both Microsoft Lync and Polycom solutions provide an end-to-end unified communications solution. Healthcare staff are now able to access video on their desktop by clicking a name within the Lync contact list and instantly meet with a colleague face-to-face via video on the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform. This highly personalised unified communications experience has allowed staff to conduct online meetings easily and therefore have more time for direct patient engagement. Thus allowing them to treat more people more effectively than they would if they were away from their point of care and enabling the Trust to improve patient care while reducing costs.

Product Listing

Video and telepresence systems

- Polycom® HDX® 2000 Room Telepresence Solution
- Polycom® CX600 IP Phones
- Polycom® SpectraLink® Series 8440 Wireless Telephones

Infrastructure

- Polycom® RealPresence® Collaboration Server (RMX® 2000)

Partner Solution

- Microsoft® Lync™ Server 2010

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Paul Duffy, Co-Director IT and Telecommunications at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

“We are seeing people using video conferencing in ways we hadn’t originally forecast. People are having more ad hoc video calls and conference calls than we thought they would do, because it’s easy to do, and that speeds up our decision making because we’re actually getting decisions made, where before you would have had to wait maybe a week to get people in their diary to attend a meeting.” Said Paul Duffy, Co-Director IT and Telecommunications at Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, “Within healthcare, information needs to be passed quickly and accurately through the system in order to get a response quickly which in turn means we can see more people, another added benefit we are seeing to the implementation of our new unified communications solution.”

The Future

The Trust are looking to make unified communications available across the Health and Social Care Trust and potentially to patients in their homes, connecting them to their carers more quickly and efficiently. Another key agenda for the Trust is sustainability and the environment, but this can be difficult to

measure as patient care comes first. However, when factoring in staff, patients and clients visiting different locations, the Belfast Trust is responsible overall for approximately one third of all the Belfast traffic. It’s a major goal of the Trust to reduce this traffic and the carbon output associated with it by utilising technology to move to virtual meetings.

Learn More

To find out how Polycom solutions can help your organisation, visit us at www.polycom.co.uk or speak with a Polycom Account Representative on +44 (0)1753 723 282.

About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in open standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, specialists, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best total cost of ownership, interoperability, scalability, and security for video collaboration, whether on-premises, hosted, or cloud-delivered. Visit www.polycom.com or connect with Polycom on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

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