



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

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# From dialysis to stroke, Polycom® telehealth solutions improves patient care for hospitals across the UK

**Industry**  
Healthcare

**Daily Use**  
Provision of telehealth and video collaboration solutions to enable important round –the-clock specialist care for patients across the UK

**Solution**  
Provision of telestroke and video collaboration solutions to enable important round –the-clock specialist care for stroke patients across the UK

**Results and Benefits**

- Enabling 24/7 treatment
- Improves speed of treatment for patient
- Improved patient outcomes
- Reduction of unnecessary re-admissions
- Improved patient satisfaction
- Improved cost savings
- Patient centered care
- Improved multi-disciplinary team support
- Collaboration independent of physical barriers
- Provide specialist access within 3 – 4 hours of symptoms
- Shared resources

**Overview**

Telehealth incorporates a range of technologies used to deliver treatment or care to patients remotely and has become an important tool for healthcare organizations seeking better means of delivering high quality and cost-effective care. Collaboration face to face: to defy distance, without going there, enables healthcare professionals and patients to communicate virtually anywhere and at any time without the need to travel for routine appointments.

The UK government estimates that telehealth could result in a 20% reduction in emergency admissions, a 15% reduction in accident and emergency (A&E) visits and a 45% reduction in mortality . Meanwhile, consultants who use telehealth technologies spend less time travelling and more time treating patients, collaborating with remote colleagues to improve care and reduce costs. The advent of high-performance video conferencing with true interactive HD-quality viewing and listening capability is bringing doctor and patient closer together in ways only previously imagined. But telehealth is just part of a much bigger picture—one that literally involves a bigger picture—collaborative healthcare solutions from Polycom.

**NHS Cumbria and Lancashire Cardiac and Stroke Network (CSNLC)**

The CSNLC utilizes Polycom RealPresence high-definition video collaboration solutions including software on the consultant’s laptops to improve the outcomes of stroke victims by connecting patients with remote doctors in the time-critical early intervention stage of a stroke. The CSNLC selected MultiSense Communications, a Polycom Healthcare Solution provider, to deliver the Polycom telehealth platform, along with key technology partners including Virgin Media and Imerja to support the service.

“We are using the Polycom Practitioner cart to take stroke specialists to the patient, rather than moving patient long distances.”

Dr Mark O’Donnell, Stroke Consultant and Clinical Lead for NHS Cumbria and Lancashire Cardiac and Stroke Network

“The Polycom solution is an exciting innovation and we’ve found it to be a great addition to the therapeutic tool kit, allowing us to deliver an agile and modern solution of remote assessment, which helps to reduce patient distress.”

Veronica Southern, Principal Speech and Language Therapist at Blackpool Victoria Hospital

NHS funding provided budget for the cost of the equipment which included the provision of high-speed broadband technology in order to remotely connect eight Polycom® Practitioner Cart™ units to each of the eight hospitals. In addition, laptops installed with Polycom video software (CMA™ Desktop) licenses were provided to each of the sixteen consultants. By controlling a remote camera, the consultant can view the detailed examination conducted by the clinician at the patient bedside. This results in a more effective and productive use of scarce medical expertise, with faster treatment time and improved outcomes for patients, especially between the hours of 5:00pm and 8:00am. Over 520 patients in Cumbria and Lancashire have benefited from the telestroke service since its launch in July 2011, with over 220 of those patients receiving thrombolysis. In addition to improving care for patients, improving coverage and work-life balance for physicians, and saving lives, the telestroke service also reduced the NHS costs associated with dependent stroke care by approximately £30,000 per patient.

### Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust

Limited expertise is an issue faced by many healthcare organizations. The small number of pediatric neurologists in the North West of England made it difficult to spread expertise across the region. Diagnosing patients at Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust in Liverpool often involved specialists having to travel long distances for very short consultations. In response, Alder Hey worked with Polycom reseller Imerja to introduce Polycom Video-as-a-Service (VaaS) units in multiple hospital sites across Liverpool, Crewe and Leighton.

Dr Ram Kumar, paediatric neurologist at Alder Hey said: “Imerja has been incredibly responsive to our suggestions throughout the trial and has enabled the full potential of this innovative technology to be unlocked.”

Remote consultation and assessment via high quality audio and video link, enables doctors to communicate with patients regardless of their physical location – saving valuable time and ensuring that patients can be seen more quickly. They also allow specialists to collaborate remotely, sharing data and using visual aids, increasing the quality of their communication. Patients have already benefitted from the solution and noted the improved level of service, and Alder Hey employees agree that VaaS has helped to relieve pressure and free up valuable time.

### Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation

Telehealth can be helpful to patients of all ages but is particularly important for older patients already in residence at a nursing home. Blackpool Victoria Hospital, part of the Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, treats more than 200,000 outpatients from across its region each year. Following a stroke, it is not uncommon

Service Provider



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#### Solutions

- Polycom® Practitioner Cart® - helps time-critical early intervention period by connecting patients in hospital with remote experts elsewhere.
- Polycom® RealPresence® Mobile - helps patients in their own home collaborate with healthcare professionals via mobile video conferencing, meaning they do not have to travel to hospital.
- Polycom® Immersive telepresence solutions are used to deliver medical lectures to improve education, enabling the best people to deliver first-class training wherever their location.

for the patient to develop swallowing difficulties and each case requires an assessment by a Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) practitioner.

Without a rapid response team at the hospital, making the assessments in person typically required patients to be admitted to hospital, which they sometimes found distressing or needed SLT specialists to make costly and inefficient home visits. By trialing Polycom mobile video conferencing solutions at three nursing homes, Blackpool Victoria Hospital connects with nursing staff via high-definition audio and video link to remotely assess the patient. Each assessment saves on average £110 in travel costs and around an hour and a half travelling time. However, this is just a drop in the ocean compared to reducing the number of hospital admissions, which is predicted to save a great deal more budget.

The Renal Care department of Lancashire Hospital utilizes telehealth to help people receive treatment in the comfort of patient's home and providing comprehensive training on its use, the Renal Care department can reduce the burden on practitioner and patient, whilst maintaining a high standard of care.

Polycom mobile video conferencing solutions enable the doctor or nurse to observe the patient's progress with their home

dialysis and offer support or guidance should they need it. The ability to zoom in on the picture while maintaining excellent picture quality means that the doctor or nurse can observe the patient in as much detail as if they were in the same room.

Feedback from patients that have already benefitted from the remote observation is positive. Scott Rayner, IT manager at Lancashire Teaching Hospital, comments: "We would like to provide all dialysis patients who are capable of home dialysis with a video solution. If patients were to use the video unit and then progress to using the software via a tablet they would experience much greater independence and have a better quality of life, whilst still receiving a high level of care."

Telehealth is having a big impact on patients and healthcare practitioners at hospitals and Trusts across the UK. Imerja has implemented a number of successful Video as a Service (VaaS) pilots at multiple hospital sites and Polycom video collaboration solutions are a critical part of the equation, helping to distribute valuable medical expertise across large geographical areas.

Ian Jackson, Managing Director of Imerja said: "The service we offer is an innovative way of improving accessibility to care and provides an efficient way to share niche expertise within the healthcare sector".

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## About Polycom

Polycom helps organizations unleash the power of human collaboration. More than 400,000 companies and institutions worldwide defy distance with video, voice and content solutions from Polycom. Polycom and its global partner ecosystem provide flexible collaboration solutions for any environment that deliver the best user experience and unmatched investment protection.

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