

# Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

Case study



## About

Serving a large population across North East Surrey and South West London, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust operates two busy hospitals in Epsom and Carshalton and provides specialist services through several other healthcare centres. In a typical year the Trust sees around 900,000 people who attend for care and treatment, and has a team of some 5,000 staff and 500 volunteers who all keep its services running smoothly.

Epsom's first hospital opened in 1873. Known as the Cottage Hospital it was based in a converted private house and had just eight beds. Today the trust has more than 1,100 beds across all its sites and boasts a very broad range of specialities from anaesthetics and antenatal care through to trauma and urology. The Carshalton site is also home to the South West Thames Renal and Transplantation unit as well as the Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, while Epsom is host to the South West London Elective Orthopaedic Centre. Both sites provide 24/7 Accident and Emergency care.

## The challenge

Telecoms at the trust was undergoing something of a perfect storm. Its legacy Siemens ISDX PBX - once the mainstay of private and public sector Britain - was now 'end of life' and becoming difficult to maintain. ISDN has rapidly been overtaken by far superior VoIP technology. And relatively high-by-comparison ISDN30 line costs were increasingly a factor. The Trust's IT team knew VoIP was the way to go. The challenge then became one of finding the right supplier.

In this respect it was well placed. Its Head of Telecoms, Simon Owen, also serves as joint chair of the National Performance Advisory Group, a national working group dedicated to driving efficiency and innovation throughout every facet of the NHS, including telecoms and IT. This has given him an unusually broad insight on the market place. Key to enabling SIP at the Trust was SIP Trunks and these were available from many suppliers. But after a searching evaluation Simon and his colleagues chose market leader Gamma.

**"We felt Gamma offered the best possible, robust, value for money solution. Gamma presented as a 'first class' organisation that was reliable, honest and trustworthy, all of which leaves the customer with a genuine sense of security. I have a good idea of what's available in the market place and it was my opinion that, for our particular situation, Gamma was the only real way forward. The whole organisation exudes professionalism and inspires confidence."**

Simon Owen, Head of Telecoms.



## The solution

The Trust chose Unify's PBX platforms running OpenScape Voice to replace its old Siemens ISDX equipment. Connecting them are 140 Gamma SIP channels into each of the Epsom and Carshalton sites, delivered over diverse fibre circuits for resilience. This gives the trust the ability to perform call routing between sites, one backing up the other in the event of failure. The solution also allows the Trust to scale up or scale down its call capacity on demand as requirements change.

**"We felt Gamma offered the best deals and they came across as a good firm to deal with, a genuinely honest and trustworthy organisation."**

## The results

The new system supports some 4,000 extensions and handles a large volume of calls, many to and from patients, and many being dealt with by the Trust's call centre. A big plus has been Gamma's bundled call minutes totalling more than 1.96 million to landline and mobile numbers. Simon Owen says this has helped to achieve a reduction in call costs of around 40%. Support too has been outstanding.

**"I've always found Gamma's helpdesk to be super friendly and very responsive. In particular the people working in the background at the network management centre in Scotland. I've always had a first-class service from them."**

Next steps for the Trust include providing additional voice and data services for 120 users at Surrey Downs Health and Care sites.

## The benefits

Fully resilient solution for the future

Ability to **upscale and downscale** at the flick of a switch

**40% savings** in call costs

**Very good value for money** - a critical factor in the NHS

**Ease of dealing** with Gamma's helpdesk and support team

**Simplified billing**, easier to understand

**Flexible telephony** network



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