Pennine Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Transforming patient care and experience with digital innovation

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health, learning disability and autism services to five boroughs across Greater Manchester, serving a population of 1.3 million people.

To better support its 4,000 staff and improve patient care across its 88 locations, the trust recognised the need for an IT overhaul, so it embarked on a digital journey in partnership with us.

With our support, the team decided to enhance their tech infrastructure by moving to a software-defined wide area network (SD-WAN) to help them:
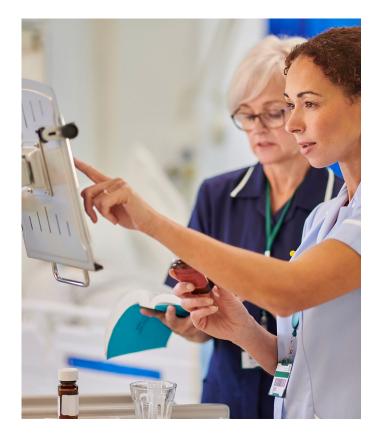
- Boost patient experience and outcomes
- Reduce administrative delays
- Free up clinicians' time
- Improve WiFi reliability and coverage
- Strengthen cybersecurity
- Prioritise bandwidth to key apps

> "
> We're going from an old legacy system to a leading-edge SD-WAN, a managed network, brand new patient WiFi and cybersecurity tools on top of all of that.
>
> We've partnered with Virgin Media O$_2$ Business to deliver it all and with their expertise, we've been able to make these changes quicker and more efficiently.
> "

Monique Duffy-Brogan
Chief Digital Information Officer

A digital upgrade was needed

When the trust conducted a digital maturity assessment, the results highlighted challenges in its existing infrastructure.

It was clear that new systems and improved access to digital tools would enhance both patient care and staff experience.

We worked with the trust to put in place a robust digital strategy that would transform the trust's connectivity, security and support.

Building a resilient network foundation

A major focus was to upgrade the trust's connectivity to an SD-WAN. This cloud-based network improved WiFi reliability and coverage, creating a dependable foundation.

We also established a managed patient WiFi network, replacing the old guest WiFi system with one that was secure, scalable and accessible, making it easy for patients to stay connected with loved ones during their time at the trust.

Empowering clinicians with reliable mobile connectivity

With the trust's clinicians often moving between sites, we provided over 4,100 new mobile connections. This means nurses and clinicians can now access vital patient information whenever and wherever they're working.

Improved connectivity has reduced administrative delays, allowing healthcare professionals to focus on patient care rather than tech frustrations.

Safeguarding staff and patient data

The trust also wanted to strengthen cybersecurity to protect sensitive information even better.

By implementing a zero-trust network architecture with Zscaler's cloud-based security solution, we ramped up the trust's defences against cyber threats. This strengthened data protection for both onsite and remote clinicians, building confidence in the digital tools they use daily.

Improving skills through digital hubs

Recognising that digital improvements are most effective when paired with staff support, we helped the trust launch digital skills hubs. These are walk-in centres where staff can get fast, hands-on IT help without having to raise a ticket and wait.

Stocked with essential equipment and staffed by digital experts, these hubs not only resolve tech issues quickly but also offer ongoing training in digital skills and cybersecurity. This empowers staff with the knowledge to safely and efficiently use new tech.

The hubs have become vital resources for staff development, offering weekly training sessions on apps like Microsoft Teams and creating a 'digital heroes' community of 90+ staff volunteers who are committed to helping colleagues improve their digital skills.

Business

" We are constantly under pressure so having quick solutions to our challenges with equipment and connectivity has significantly improved our ability to enjoy work and focus on patient care.

The digital hubs have been one of the most helpful interventions in the trust. Digital problems don't feel like an insurmountable mountain anymore. "

Dr Nilika Perera
Consultant & Deputy Medical Director

Everyday benefits for clinicians and patients

The new SD-WAN infrastructure had an immediate impact.

With better performance insights, digital leaders can now prioritise bandwidth to key apps like Paris, the trust's electronic patient record system. Clinicians can now prescribe medications and update patient records in real time on the wards, enhancing patient outcomes.

Increased cybersecurity awareness and the trust's 'digital heroes' initiative have also helped staff become more digitally confident, reducing pressure on the IT teams and promoting smoother operations across the trust.

A more connected and engaging patient experience

The digital enhancements didn't just benefit the clinical staff – it transformed the patient experience as well.

For example, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) inpatients can now connect with friends and family more easily through the improved WiFi.

The new network has also enabled Netflix and YouTube movies nights on a network-enabled projector. Everyone enjoys these and gets involved, supporting better mental wellbeing.

Ongoing commitment to digital progress

In partnership with us, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust has built a resilient, secure and people-focused digital infrastructure that empowers clinicians and improves patient outcomes.

As one of Greater Manchester's most digitally improved trusts in 2023/24, the team are not resting on their laurels. They're planning to further automate processes and build on our solutions to meet the evolving needs of patients and clinicians.

> **"**
> The new network has transformed the experience of young people and their carers, as well as all colleagues, professionals and leaders engaged in caring for the young people in CAMHS.
> **"**

Geoff Howard
CAMHS Acute Pathways
Operational Manager

Want to know how we could help your organisation?

Call us on **0800 955 5590** for a chat about your needs.

Or learn more about our **care-ready connectivity.**

Take a look