

## Dr Hillier and Partners

### Blishworth, Northampton

How do you connect 20 doctors, 8 secretaries and 4 supervisors across 4 remote branches to a centralised digital dictation system: this is the question that led James Buggy, Practice Manager at Dr. Hillier & Partners, to cross the Crescendo path back in 2009.

Dr Hillier & Partners are one of the largest GP group practices in Northampton, with one main surgery and three branches looking after 18,000+ patients. In James' mind, the Milton Keynes surgery and the three Northampton surgeries were to become one through technology: if referrals dictated from any of these locations were centrally managed from one server, workload could be shared between the branch secretaries and bottlenecks avoided. In other words, he wanted a real-time network twist to the digital dictation and workflow management recipe.



"We needed a true multi-branch system which would allow us to see all outstanding work at each of the surgeries and share workloads where necessary. However I was aware of the impact digital voice files would have on our network and needed to be careful which product we chose to work with."

#### NET-WHAT? REAL-WHAT?

James started investigating, inviting all suppliers for demos until it became clear that only one of them had properly read the respective entries for "network" and "real-time" in the Collins dictionary. With its unique Voice on Demand (VOD) technology, Crescendo was also the only supplier able to deliver on every single requirement he had outlined initially. After a successful trial period, James decided to go live with the new system.

#### NETWORK. REAL-TIME.

"The Digi system is quite amazing and it delivers everything we asked for: it records directly to the main server at the Park Slope surgery in real-time, but has virtually no impact on our network speed. Even if the branch network was to go down, everything which has been recorded so far is safe on the server and the doctors can continue to work offline until the network comes back up."

Although transcription of the referrals usually takes place at the surgery where the patient has been seen by the doctor, Digi allows dictations to be pooled and shared between typing resources across any of the four surgeries in case of backlogs due to holiday, sickness or general busy periods. Thanks to VOD, voice files are streamed from the central server directly across the network, which means they are instantly accessible by the secretaries.

#### MOVING WORK. NOT PEOPLE.

"From a management point of view, and because the system works in real-time, I can see exactly what referrals are scheduled to be done or outstanding for typing at each surgery, without the need for telephone calls or site visits", James explains. "Should there be an overload at any of the surgeries, we can now move the work to where the required resource is available – instead of secretaries having to travel back and forth between surgeries, which was the case in the past."

#### CHERRY ON THE CAKE

There is one last tool that James didn't expect to find in a digital dictation system; yet a tool he couldn't do without: "Running the monthly reports based on turnaround times and referral patterns greatly help me with the CCG reporting I have to do on a regular basis. I have to say this reporting module is a gem for every practice manager out there, especially in the new NHS."