![MCH medway community healthcare]

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CASE STUDY
Medway Community Healthcare

Medway Community Healthcare Builds Fit For Purpose Hybrid IT Infrastructure Based On Tightly Integrated Nutanix/Citrix Solution

Business Benefits

With 1,400+ professional healthcare workers spread across 23 locations, Medway Community Healthcare was becoming increasingly constrained by the limitations of its legacy IT infrastructure. Performance and availability were daily concerns but, equally, lack of support for remote and mobile working meant that Medway was unable to provide the kind of agile and responsive healthcare services expected by both staff and patients alike.

Benefits

- No recorded downtime since deployment of robust and highly available private and hybrid cloud infrastructure.
- Staff able to work from anywhere with access to remote desktops and apps from any device.
- Immediate doubling of planned remote/mobile users to cope with COVID-19 lockdown, resulting in delivery of 1,200 remote desktops from day one.
- Scalable and resilient platform for core healthcare apps and other mission-critical workloads using licence-free Nutanix AHV hypervisor.
- Confidence to start planning for new NHS Integrated Care Partnerships and other future developments.

Solution

- **Nutanix Hybrid Cloud Platform**
- **Prism management plane**
- **VMware and AHV hypervisors**
- **Nutanix Files**
- **Nutanix Flow**

All delivered as a managed service by BDR Group

Applications

- **Citrix Workspace**
- **Citrix Cloud Services**
- **4S Dawn Clinical Software**
- **Oasis Patient Administration System**
- **Microsoft SQL Server**
- **Microsoft Power BI**

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Challenge

Second only to medical knowledge and a good bedside manner, access to shared IT services has become an essential part of the professional healthcare toolkit. Clinicians and others working for Medway Community Healthcare (MCH), however, were finding its legacy IT infrastructure more of hindrance than a help. Due, primarily, to issues with performance and reliability but also a lack of support for remote and mobile working, as Gerd Knight, Head of IT, explains.

"Our legacy IT Infrastructure was simply unable to keep pace with the demands of modern healthcare and, rather than helping, was often preventing staff from doing their jobs. Just logging in could take half an hour or more and still result in a black screen. Outages, too, were a daily occurrence and, on one occasion, we suffered a complete loss of service for nearly 4 days.

Even when it was working, the infrastructure could not provide the mobility required by over 1,400 employees expected to work flexibly across multiple locations. That meant, for example, nurses having to return to the office every day to type up notes and doctors having to work late due to slow and unresponsive systems during busy surgery hours. Patients, in turn, were faced with long waiting times and restricted access to essential treatment services.

The need to either upgrade or replace the legacy infrastructure was clear. The question was which of the many available alternatives would achieve the best outcome?

Solution

Fortunately, help was on hand from specialist Nutanix partner, the BDR Group, which recommended Citrix Workspace to meet the healthcare provider's end user computing requirements plus a scalable on-premises private cloud hyperconverged Infrastructure (HCI) to host both this and other core workloads.

A number of vendors were invited to tender for this project with Nutanix eventually chosen as HCI supplier because of the proven scalability and simple management of its software but also for its close relationship with Citrix and integrated support for its End User Computing (EUC) platform.

"The relationship between Citrix and Nutanix was a key differentiator," explains Owen Whitlock, Head of Group IT at the BDR Group. "In particular the ability to plug Citrix Cloud services directly into the supporting Nutanix hybrid cloud infrastructure, which made for almost seamless deployment."

On-demand scalability and high availability were other reasons for choosing Nutanix. To this end clusters were deployed in two geographically separate data centres and configured to use Nutanix built-in data replication and disaster recovery (DR) tools to create a highly resilient and scalable infrastructure. MCH has also opted for a fully managed service, run and supported by the BDR Group which took full advantage of the network microsegmentation tools provided by Nutanix Flow to assist with both planning and implementation of the project.

"Without Nutanix Flow it would have been a lot more complex," explained Whitlock. "Flow allowed us to configure a totally secure and invisible Nutanix/Citrix environment on the existing legacy infrastructure. An environment we could use to trial three successive migrations until we were confident it would all work as expected."

And work it did, with the BDR Group able to configure the combined Nutanix/Citrix platform and migrate users, apps and data across in just 10 days with no real issues or breaks in service.

Customer Outcome

Lack of drama meant that most users were unaffected, except in a good way with slow and unreliable connectivity consigned, almost immediately, to history and staff, at last, able to work where needed on whatever devices work best. Even when the first COVID-19 lockdown was announced during the migration, as Knight explains.

"With our old infrastructure we would have struggled to cope with lockdown but with Nutanix it wasn't a problem, even at such short notice," he commented. "We simply got BDR to plug extra nodes into the infrastructure which, in turn, allowed the support guys to double planned support for remote working from day one."

Beyond EUC, other workloads were, similarly, quickly ported during the migration with immediate improvements in terms of both performance and availability.

"It was like going from zero to 100mph overnight," said Knight. "More importantly, it all just worked and continues to work with no downtime whatsoever since the new infrastructure went live."

Next Steps

Secure in the knowledge that its infrastructure is now fit for purpose, Knight and the team at Medway Community Healthcare are looking forward to many years of reliable, scalable and flexible IT. Moreover, Medway now has confidence to move forward with projects previously considered beyond reach. Not least participation in the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) initiative which will see NHS providers working together to provide joined up healthcare services to staff and patients alike. An initiative that will inevitably involve integrating both on-premises private clouds and public cloud services, an area where Nutanix and its hybrid cloud approach excels.

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