

Documentation capture, Healthcare AI

How we help NHS trusts realise the benefits of speech recognition software from first use

[Dr. Simon Wallace](#) | Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO), Nuance Healthcare UK and Ireland

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A successful large-scale rollout of speech recognition software in a healthcare setting demands a wealth of expertise and an in-depth understanding of clinicians' working practices. Simon Shanks' NHS informatics background and project management experience enables him to deliver lasting transformation and help customers embed speech recognition technology effectively. Here, Dr Simon Wallace interviews Simon Shanks to explain how the Professional Services team supports Nuance's NHS customers from planning to training and beyond, helping them derive value from the outset.

An interview with **Simon Shanks**, Head of Professional Services at Nuance Communications, Inc.

[Dr Simon Wallace] What is your background and how

did you come to join Nuance?

[Simon Shanks] I started out working for NHS trusts in various roles, including six years in informatics at Leeds Teaching Hospital. I deployed trust-wide and regional clinical information systems and managed the rollout of speech recognition software across 1500 clinicians. I then moved into the private sector with Winscribe, which was acquired by Nuance in 2018, after which we amalgamated the two professional services teams.

How does your experience and expertise equip you for your current role?

A big part of my role as Head of Professional Services is driving projects, both internally and with our customers, and during my career I've worked in a number of roles key to the successful delivery of projects, so I've got an excellent understanding of how to deliver projects and all the working parts. I've also seen the common pitfalls in project delivery and change management and built up a wealth of lessons learnt, which I share with customers and our teams to give them the best chance of delivering projects successfully.

How does the Professional Services team work with NHS trusts?

The team supports our NHS customers with the large-scale installation and rollout of Nuance software from both a technical and training perspective, optimising workflows and helping ensure the software is rolled out in the most efficient and effective way.

We tailor the services we offer to the needs of our customers, so we can help on a guidance and planning level right through to full project delivery. Our typical involvement is to support customers from initiation, making sure they've got a realistic strategy for deployment and training, and working with them to the point where they have an established user base. We're training the internal teams throughout, to ensure they can be self-sufficient and continue rolling out the software across the rest of the organisation.

Why is the team important to the deployment of Nuance software in clinical settings?

AI-driven speech recognition isn't yet core technology in healthcare, and until it becomes standard supplier expertise and advice around that technology is essential. Because there's a larger level of transformation and change required for customers to embed that technology, without our involvement and understanding the customers would have a much more difficult adoption.

How does working with the services team help organisations reap the benefits of voice recognition software?

We go in with the 'right first time' principle, which is about ensuring customers have a realistic plan in place. This results in users utilising the most efficient and automated workflows from the outset and seeing benefits from first use, which demonstrates the value of the technology from day one and ensures that continued use.

How do you approach training differently in a clinical setting compared with businesses in other sectors,

particularly when clinicians often have little time for workshop training sessions?

There are high demands on clinical workforces and it's important to have a tailored approach that takes into account local factors and how trusts want to progress their training – no trust is the same. We ideally like to train clinicians within their natural environment and everyday working practices, whether that be in a clinic or on a ward round to ensure they are comfortable.

Flexibility is also key. There are plenty of opportunities to upskill on the product, whether that be at the outset or at optimisation touchpoints in the future. We can use data to pinpoint where further training or support is required, and ensure customers are engaging with their workforce effectively.

Could you detail the positive outcomes you have seen from your work with NHS trusts?

We see benefits across a number of areas. Reduction in letter production turnaround time is a major one – our technology helps trusts meet increasingly tighter targets around this, which reduces clinical risk, keeps patients informed, and generally allows trusts to offer a better service. The software also enriches patient notes, building a better picture of interactions which informs future care and boosts patient safety.

Tags: [Digitisation of the NHS](#), [Professional services](#)

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About Dr. Simon Wallace

Dr. Simon Wallace is the Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) of Nuance's Healthcare division in the UK and Ireland. Simon has worked as a GP, hospital and public health doctor in Brighton and London. His interest in health informatics began in the 90s when he spent a year at the King's Fund investigating the impact of the internet on shared decision making between patients and their healthcare professional. For the past 15 years, he has worked for a range of organisations including Bupa, Dr Foster, Cerner Corporation and GSK across a range of technologies which include electronic patient records, telemedicine, mobile health and lifestyle devices. Simon has a keen interest in the voluntary sector, recently completing a 7 year term as a Trustee for Fitzrovia Youth in Action, a children and young people's charity based in London.



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