

Documentation capture, Healthcare AI

# Re-imagining clinical documentation processes for NHS Scotland

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Explore highlights from our recent panel discussion with experts from Nuance, Microsoft, and Voice Technologies, where we discussed how speech recognition is helping NHS Scotland streamline its documentation processes.

There's a huge burden of clinical documentation on both medical and support staff in the NHS, which is a major contributor to [stress and burnout](#)—both common reasons for healthcare workers to leave the profession.

So how can leaders alleviate that admin burden, while still creating and maintaining detailed, accurate patient documentation?

We recently hosted a webinar exploring how Scotland's NHS trusts are approaching this challenge. In "[Re-imagining clinical documentation processes for NHS Scotland](#)," experts from Voice Technologies and Microsoft joined us to discuss how technologies are making a difference, and the progress they're seeing so far. Our panellists covered healthcare speech recognition in both theory and practice, with fireside chats and live demos of our solution, Dragon Medical One.

Here are the top takeaways from the panel's discussion.

## Practical technologies make the biggest difference

In his fireside chat, James McPherson, CEO of Nuance partner Voice Technologies, noted that while digital technologies have been great for increasing documentation accuracy, detail, and availability, they often end up adding to the admin burden too. With so many different digital health records and other systems to navigate, staff still need to spend a long time making sure patient information is up to date and accurate. The opportunity now is to add smaller quality-of-life technologies to support those centralised patient management systems.

For example, a single sign-on service helps healthcare workers move between different systems more quickly, and without having to repeatedly log in. And speech recognition helps clinicians fill out notes and referrals, and dictate letters for patients and other clinicians faster, more accurately, and without the need to type.

“Speech recognition helps collect information as close to the point of care as possible,” said James. “It significantly reduces the time between a clinical event and documentation becoming available.” So, a patient can drop in for an appointment and, with their doctor using speech recognition to take down information as they talk, their new notes can be available on the system before they’ve even left the building.

In some cases, James explained, clinicians have even been able to create a follow-up letter during a consultation. That means the patient walks out with their most up-to-date recommendations in their hand, instead of waiting for them to arrive in the post. With many stretched facilities failing to meet the government’s seven-day target for sending outpatient letters, sometimes by weeks, this is a simple but effective way to improve patient experiences and reduce the admin workload simultaneously.

## Security is the number one priority for healthcare data

The webinar’s second fireside chat saw Chris Slemph discuss Microsoft’s role in helping NHS Scotland modernise documentation. Chris is a Customer Success Manager for the public sector in Scotland.

With patient numbers growing and a COVID-triggered backlog to work through, but slashed budgets, reduced capacity, and staff shortages standing in the way, the cloud is proving a compelling solution for healthcare organisations. “Moving processes to the cloud provides key advantages,” said Chris.

According to Chris, automation, AI, and continuous machine learning are all helping to streamline manual, resource-heavy healthcare processes, especially for documentation. But these technologies require a lot of computing power to back them up, which he noted is “only possible at the scale of the cloud”.

Chris also stressed the importance of Microsoft’s approach to security for healthcare organisations. It recently launched its first industry-specific cloud offering, [Microsoft Cloud for Healthcare](#), which incorporates features such as zero trust, using strict authentication measures and unique user credentials to secure data.

## Consistency and flow are key to effective speech recognition

The session closed out with a live Q&A with input from the audience. One question, from a native Polish speaker in the audience, was particularly interesting: can speech recognition tools, like Dragon Medical One, cope with strong accents?

During the demo we’d already seen James, who has a strong Scottish accent, use Dragon Medical One with ease. He said the most important thing to focus on is speaking naturally, so the engine can adjust to your specific accent and preferences as you work.

Panellist Terence Lippert, our Head of Solutions Consulting for the UK, also noted that many large hospitals in diverse areas throughout the UK have successfully deployed speech recognition for their staff, who have a wide variety of different accents.

## Watch the webinar on demand to find out more

These are just some of the discussion topics covered in the webinar. We’ve made the full recording available on-demand to make sure you can catch up on everything you missed. In addition to the fireside chats with our guest speakers, James and Terence both took the audience through detailed live demos using Dragon Medical One with [WinVoice Web](#) and within Nuance’s demonstration EPR. As NHS Scotland works to modernise its documentation processes, speech recognition tools like Dragon Medical One play

a key role in reducing the admin burden for healthcare professionals. You can discover more about Dragon Medical One, and Nuance's other healthcare speech solutions, [on our website](#).

**Tags:** [Digitisation of the NHS](#), [Cloud](#), [Customer success story](#)

## More Information

### Watch the webinar replay

See Dragon Medical One with WinVoice Web in action, and hear our panellists talk about how technologies like speech recognition are helping NHS Scotland improve clinical documentation workflow.

[Learn more](#)



### 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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