What's next

Healthcare

What is the role of cloud solutions within the UK healthcare sector?

Today there is an ever-growing pressure for healthcare workers to be as efficient as possible with the limited time that they have. As a result, NHS workers are turning to cloud solutions in order to enable documentation processes to be more efficient and cost-effective, whilst also allowing processes to be more flexible and streamlined simultaneously.

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With an ever-present pressure to increase efficiency and do 'more with less', senior staff in all areas of the NHS and the wider healthcare sector are searching for technological means do just that. A growing number are turning to cloud solutions, and are finding that such software not only allows for more efficient and cost-effective working, but also greater flexibility and streamlined processes.

The hidden costs of on-premises software

Why are Chief Information Officers and IT specialists in the healthcare sector turning away from software that is installed on local computers which are physically on the premises? For many, the financial cost savings alone make it worth the initial investment in healthcare cloud solutions. Consider the following additional costs of traditional on-premises software, beyond the actual cost of purchasing it:

- According to research analysts at the Yankee Group, the typical ratio of IT staff to company size is 1:30. So for large healthcare organisations, significant extra costs can be generated by software that needs to be maintained internally.
- Average IT salaries are £50,000 pa, while service desk operations account for roughly 5-7% of total IT spend.
- An estimated further 6% of IT budgets are spent on systems maintenance per year, while an additional £50,000+ is spent on system reporting tools. Systems maintenance tasks are greatly increased by the use of on-premises software.
- In-house data storage can also present a significant cost, as can security measures taken to protect it.

With locally installed software there is also the risk that the system could go down on any given day, and if you're lacking in IT personnel due to sickness or turnover, this can result in significant operational bottlenecks that impact across the organisation.

The role of mobile medical solutions and the cloud

Cloud solutions – that is, software packages which reside on remote servers and are accessed via a client app on a local computer or mobile device – conversely deliver a number of key cost savings:

- Less drain on IT resources – technical issues, updates and system problems are handled remotely by the provider.
- Predictable, scalable spend – No complex budgeting or unexpected costs, simply choose an option or plan that fits your needs (eg. number of users). Additional users or features can often be easily added at a later date.
- Fast, light-weight deployment – Because the heavy lifting is done by the remote servers, there's usually no need to upgrade machines or invest significant resource hours during the install.

But it is not only financial matters that are driving healthcare professionals to adopt cloud solutions. They can also allow medical staff to operate in completely new ways that can in turn lead to enhanced patient care.

Nuance's Dragon Medical One for example enables clinicians to speak directly into the electronic patient record (EPR) wherever they are, and using whatever mobile or desktop device they have to hand. This speech-to-text solution frees them from the restrictions of being bound to their desk, and can save considerable amounts of time versus typing up patient notes. This translates to more available time to spend with patients.

From an IT management perspective, significant time-savings can be made as the client app requires little or no system administration, and the software is always available and secure. Cloud solutions are also future proof, as they generally provide continuous updates and instant access to new features and services as they are released.

Dragon Medical One – secure, cloud-based speech-to-text software

Using Dragon Medical One, clinicians can turn their smartphone or tablet device into a microphone with which they can record directly into the patient record. Once they've set up their own personal 'voice profile', they can access this from any workstation or device, enabling easy portability and collaboration.

All data sent to the cloud is protected by Microsoft Azure data centre security, while Nuance's strict adherence to industry best practices further help to secure your data. In addition to integrating with most EPR apps, Dragon Medical One can be securely connected to NHS England's national broadband network.

Find out more about Dragon Medical One and the mobile medical solutions it offers today.

Tags: Cloud IT, Dragon Medical One, mobile

More Information

	Join the revolution in medical documentation Speech-to-text software gives you more time to spend with your patients. Find out how it can benefit you. Learn more

About Sarah Fisher

Sarah Fisher is regional marketing manager at Nuance healthcare division covering UK, Ireland and APAC. Sarah has 25 years in marketing and sales at companies including Xerox, Siemens and Cisco. A spell at Novartis leading a team to deliver 'more-than-medicines' solutions in UK healthcare combined her degree and a first job in Pharmacology research with a passion for the potential of healthcare IT to overcome the many challenges faced by all healthcare systems. In her spare time Sarah leaps fences and tackles tricky trails pursuing her hobbies of horse trials and mountain biking.

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