

Case Study



Northgate Medical Centre A CTI/Record a Call Solution

Northgate Medical Centre

This case study outlines how a medical centre embraced the latest communications technology to enhance customer (patient) support and service and to streamline its back office business processes.

“This system is not only efficient and stream-lined but we also now get up to 90% of the calls to the right ‘desk’ with the correct record ‘on screen’ as the calls are answered”

Maureen Sharp,
practice manager,
Northgate Medical Centre

Customer Background

For some years the Northgate Medical Centre was aware of the need to offer better patient facilities to the area which would mean expanding the building and increasing the number of medical and support staff. The existing premises was demolished and the practice moved into Portakabins while a new centre was being built. Plans were drawn for a purpose-built, ‘state of the art’ medical centre which would include nine Doctor consulting rooms, two Nurse consulting rooms, a minor surgery suite, an endoscope unit, an audiology room and a recovery room. Added to this is a 24hr mother and baby help-line with baby clinics; ‘parent craft meetings’ and evening sessions.

The Business Challenge

Northgate Medical Centre had a real need for streamlining its call processing and database systems to give its valued patients the best ‘patient care’ in the district. A large practice of this nature with over 45 extensions had to get it right first time and that meant the latest telecoms equipment as well as IT infrastructure.

The Practice also saw the benefits of being able to route calls effectively to the right person. By enabling inbound calling patients to be connected to the right ‘desk’

(appointments, prescriptions or results) - quickly and efficiently would speed call handling and improve customer service.

Northgate also wanted to retrieve patient database records at the same time the call was handled so that a higher through-put of calls could be achieved, resulting in better patient care. However, since the legacy medical database was not ‘TAPI’ compliant it would could not communicate automatically to a standard telephone system. This in itself posed a further challenge to streamling the patient care system.

The advent of voice processing, call recording and Computer Telephony Integration (CTI), together with more stringent accountability for call tracking and conversation retrieval, meant that the system chosen would need significant flexibility and scalability if it was to adapt to impending stricter legislation in the future.





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Why Inter-Tel?

Another important factor was the fear that once the system was installed, the Practice would be left in the hands of a 'faceless telephony manufacturer' for their training and aftercare needs.

Inter-Tel's route to market, via dedicated and highly qualified resellers, means training and aftercare is just as dedicated as the initial enthusiasm for the sale. Always having a personal, friendly contact for service and support was vital to Northgate for a 'complete solution'.

Inter-Tel Europe's partnership with its Resellers and other strategic partners gives the end user customer the certainty of a highly flexible, yet focused, communication system designed to enhance business applications. At the same time highly trained technicians deliver superior pre- and post-sale support ensuring a seamless transition to a converged voice and data platform.

It was these factors, combined with the superior flexibility and scalability of the Axxess, that made Inter-Tel the only option for Northgate.

The Solution

Northgate's solution has incoming calls being handled by Inter-Tel's integrated voice mail solution which features STAR (Scheduled Time-based Application Routing). This is configured to know when each department is open or closed, and, if the department is open, the system connects them accordingly. If it is closed it relates to them any emergency numbers and politely informs them of the opening times.

When the patient chooses the 'Results Desk' for example; the call is routed to the Results extensions. When the call is answered the medical database instantly retrieves the patient associated with the callers' telephone number. If, for example, a mother is calling on behalf of a child, the receptionist brings a list of patients from the calling household or associated mobile with a single keystroke without leaving the 'Results' section.

If patients choose Prescriptions or Appointments then the relevant part of the Medical Database will be brought to the screen. Receptionists can even log-on as different roles to facilitate busy periods.

Northgate also utilises the record-a-call functionality built into the Axxess. The facility for recording delicate or 'awkward' calls at the touch of button and being able to forward that same recording to appropriate medical personnel has proved invaluable.

"Yet there is also the factor of simply being able to get things done quickly. The ease and simplicity of recording holiday opening times and training day announcements months in advance allows me to concentrate on more important issues." said Northgate's practice manager, Maureen Sharp.

Results

"This system is not only efficient and stream-lined but we also now get up to 90% of the calls to the right 'desk' with the correct record 'on screen' as the calls are answered. This in itself allows more calls to be answered resulting in improved patient care." concluded Maureen Sharp.

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