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NHS South East London Bexley Business Support Unit

With rising costs for onsite support, Bexley Business Support Unit (Bexley BSU) wanted to centralise and automate the management of endpoints across its 40 sites. By deploying Novell® ZENworks® Configuration Management, the Trust significantly reduced the proportion of onsite support, accelerating resolution and reducing costs.

Overview

Bexley Care Trust (now referred to as Bexley Business Support Unit) is one of six Primary Care Trusts in the NHS South East London cluster. The organisation is responsible for providing statutory primary healthcare services to the local population, and also provides health promotion and education to local communities and schools.

Challenge

The Business Support Unit within Bexley provides services and tools to a diverse group of some 900 professional users. In addition to managerial and administrative staff in the head office, this covers doctors and nurses working in 28 General Practitioner (GP) practices across a total of 40 geographic sites.

The geographically dispersed nature of the organisation was contributing to difficulties in maintaining effective communications. The adoption of the 'cluster' model across the NHS in 2011—whereby Trusts were grouped together to facilitate the sharing of management teams—meant that some teams were split across different locations and no longer working side by side.

> **"Novell Vibe gives us a ready-made environment for sharing information and best practices among medical staff."**
>
> **NISHA WHEELER**
> *Assistant Director of ICT*
> NHS Bexley Business Support Unit

Equally, with a small IT team and limited budgets, keeping PCs and applications functional and secure across a large user community in multiple locations was a major challenge for Bexley BSU. Travelling between sites to resolve issues and to deploy new software was a significant drain on time as well as a major contributor to operational expenses.

Solution

Following the move to the 'cluster' model, Bexley BSU anticipated that some of its staff would move to other locations, potentially losing the face-to-face interactions they had with some colleagues. To ensure that staff could continue to communicate easily, and to facilitate new information-sharing initiatives, the Trust deployed Novell Vibe® as a strategic collaboration tool. Novell Vibe enables the rapid creation of secure online workspaces that empower users to build teams, interact, and create and manage content.

"Novell Vibe is helping us to make sure that staff can still 'rub shoulders' in a virtual way," said Nisha Wheeler, Assistant Director of ICT. "It's also solving other issues: for example, our Pharmacy service is using the solution to build a set of FAQs and a guidance library. Rather than having to field calls and answer the same questions time and again, they can now refer queries to Novell Vibe."

Novell Vibe is being deployed for several important projects, including an Ophthalmological screening programme that will gather information from Bexley and two other Trusts. The organisation is also expecting to deploy Novell Vibe as a collaboration tool for senior executives across three local boroughs, which will enable them to share ideas and take joint action.
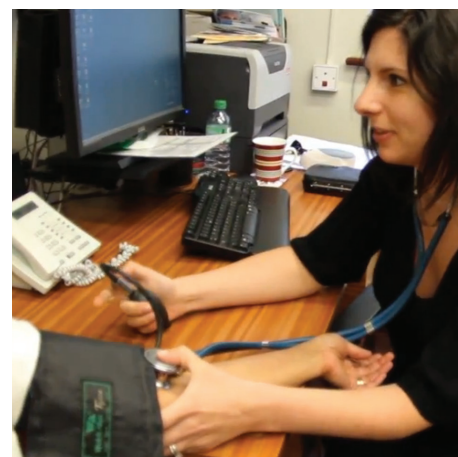
Bexley NHS Care Trust

NHS Bexley Business Support Unit at a glance:

Division of UK National Health Service in South East London

■ **Industry and Location**
  Healthcare, UK

■ **Product and Services**
  Novell Vibe
  Novell ZENworks Configuration Management

■ **Results**

+ *Deployed a flexible environment for sharing information and best practices*

+ *Cut travel time and costs by reducing the need to visit sites to fix users' PCs*

+ *Improved consistency and quality of support, minimising downtime for users*

To address its challenges around application and system support, Bexley BSU deployed Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, working with Sector IT to integrate the solution with its existing NetWare and Microsoft Windows domains.

"The Novell solution met all of our functional requirements and fitted well into our mixed infrastructure," said Pin Bhandal, Head of ICT. "With Novell ZENworks Configuration Management, we can manage most monitoring and support tasks from a central point of control, which significantly reduces the need to send technicians out to the GP surgeries."

Novell ZENworks Configuration Management provides an integrated set of tools for managing practically every aspect of endpoint computing, including desktop imaging, the packaging and deployment of software, security management and remote support. Bexley BSU is using the solution to manage almost 650 PCs across 40 sites.

"Our staff travel costs were pretty substantial in the past, and the need to provide onsite configuration and support also meant that skilled technicians were spending a lot of their time just travelling between locations," said Nisha Wheeler. "With Novell ZENworks, the cost and time impact is much lower, and we're also offering a better, faster service to the business."

Results

Using Novell ZENworks Configuration Management enables the Bexley BSU team of just five IT specialists to support approximately 900 users across 40 sites.

"In the past, our service to the business was not always as seamless as it could have been," said Pin Bhandal. "With Novell ZENworks, it's easy to get the right person on the case straight away and fix the problem remotely. This also means less downtime for the business."

Novell Vibe is helping Bexley BSU personnel work effectively together in spite of the broad geographic spread of the organisation. "With the NHS environment changing so rapidly at the moment, health professionals and managers need to be able to work together fast and efficiently," said Nisha Wheeler. "The Novell Vibe product helped and supported us to meet our requirements in a short space of time."

Bexley BSU also values the long-term benefits of using Novell solutions. "For us, the Novell Vibe software is robust and well-supported when it comes to security," said Pin Bhandal. "We also appreciate the strong community and user groups: it's easy to flag up issues and get support from Novell."

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