



## A higher return on telephony

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Ray Sage  
Financial Services Manager  
Lincolnshire NHS Shared Services

### Lincolnshire NHS Shared Services improves productivity and unlocks quick savings with complete BT Voice solution

#### Client

For healthcare providers, improving the quality and value for money of non-clinical services releases funds for re-investment in frontline patient care. Working with the Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and the Lincolnshire Teaching Primary Care Trust, Lincolnshire NHS Shared Services (LSS) plays a crucial role in this process. It helps to identify and accelerate savings through collaborative purchasing for member trusts.

#### Challenge

Reform programmes and structural change – such as trust mergers – have reinforced the need for greater efficiency and a sharper commercial focus in the NHS. Against that background, LSS has launched a new initiative to improve return on investment from telephony services. The immediate challenge was to overcome lack of visibility and control – a common problem for many NHS organisations.

Ray Sage, Financial Services Manager for LSS, explains: “Our trust clients serve a population of 715,000 spread over 2,000 square miles. The voice estate that underpins those vital healthcare services includes remote carers, health centres, clinics and more than 100 GP practices. The starting point was to find out exactly what was out there.”

The promise of cheaper calls drove a decision to switch from BT to another service provider but, as it transpired, this compounded the problems facing LSS. “Each month we would get around 500 phone bills,” Ray Sage continues. “We would have to register them, send them out for coding and authorisation and await their return before paying. For both ourselves and our clients, processing took up so much time that it prevented us seeing ways to make serious improvements.”

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### BT Voice differentiators

- BT was able to offer a complete solution
- In addition, BT provided value added services for improved billing and cost control
- BT service and support is critical in a clinical environment
- Seamless migration to other BT products and services for future improvements

## Case study

# Lincolnshire NHS Shared Services

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## Solution

Savings on one hand were being lost in inefficiencies on the other, and LSS decided to return to BT. A hosted voice network was proposed by BT with features such as inter-site calls at no extra charge, extension calling, and call transfer. In addition, a usage-based charging arrangement would be complemented by consolidated contract management and billing.

Ray Sage comments: “BT was able to offer a complete solution. It combined BT FeatureNet 5000 for call savings, with BT One Bill for efficient invoice processing, and BT Billing Analyst for improved monitoring and control. Also, if our telephony services were to fail vulnerable patients would be put at risk, so knowing that BT will respond quickly to fix faults or divert calls was another key factor in our decision.”

## Value

Several months on and Lincolnshire NHS Shared Services has already noticed a big difference. BT Featurenet supports all incoming and outgoing calls, fax lines and provides desk-to-desk dialling capabilities between sites. While it is still early days, LSS expect to see significant savings delivered as more sites migrate to the hosted voice platform.

BT Billing Analyst provides a complete picture including usage, calling patterns and inter-site traffic. For LSS, it has delivered quick wins and early savings. With improved visibility, LSS has been able to cut down on international calls, unnecessary calls to directory enquiries, and instances where the NHS is footing third party bills (e.g. retailers within hospitals). It has also brought to light phone and fax lines that are not being used.

Ray Sage says: “Using BT Billing Analyst we discovered a building that had been knocked down where we were still paying for services. Conversely, it has shown up lines that don’t have many calls, but still need to be retained, such as back up connections. For example, phones that community carers can use if their mobile goes down or they enter a mobile black spot.”

BT OneBill has consolidated invoicing down to just one bill per month for both clients, delivered on a CD-ROM rather than in paper form. Ray Sage says: “As well as enabling us to complete tasks much faster, BT OneBill has also helped to improve our financial reporting. In fact, our clients want to get the CD-ROM to drill down and check the details of their telecommunications spend. For us, it provides a second set of eyes, which is great.”

The benefits do not end there. LSS is already investigating moving all BT private circuit spend onto their BT OneBill to ensure that nothing slips through the net, and that all VAT that can be legitimately claimed back is identified. There is also the possibility in the future to migrate to BT e-invoicing. This will enable LSS to receive their BT OneBill electronically – delivered online into their accounts payable system – without the need for a CD-ROM or manual entry. Going forward, Lincolnshire NHS can better plan and make more informed decisions on how and when they choose to deploy next-generation technology.

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## Core BT Services

- BT Featurenet
- BT Billing Analyst
- BT OneBill

## Offices worldwide

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