



Trust-wide implementation of MediSpeech powered by SpeechMagic™

## Breaking new ground

### Customer Story

To achieve trust-wide report turnaround times of less than 48 hours, NHS Northumbria was first to aim for an entirely speech recognition-based dictation and transcription system. Requiring nothing less than a complete cultural change, the implementation team faced many challenges while relegating tape-based dictation to history. But knowing why they do what they do, helped them stay focused and on track: "It's all about the patient," says Anne Wright, the trust's Executive Director for Elective Care and Surgery.

*"SpeechMagic is the foundation of information-driven medicine. It is at the heart of an IT infrastructure that allows us to deliver the perfect experience of care."*

"You've got to be brave if you're aiming for a real change," says Anne, who started out as medical secretary herself. "The work of medical secretaries hasn't changed much from twenty years ago." And neither has their equipment. Despite the rise of digital technology, the healthcare sector seems to love its tapes. And the truth is, they served well for many years; but so have vinyl records. "In SpeechMagic I saw the technology that allowed me to think of a totally different way to produce documents," remembers Anne.

#### It's possible, (if you want it)

Jen Henderson, who is managing the speech recognition implementation, finds that bringing turnaround time down to less than 48 hours is a huge undertaking. "People said it is impossible, but it's not." Pain management, is one of the departments that has already met the target. Here a speech recognition workflow is used by 4 consultants, the specialist nurses, the psychologist and the secretaries. Compared to a previous turnaround time of up to 13 weeks, it improved by 98%.

#### Front-line orthopaedics

90 secretaries and 87 authors throughout the hospital have so far been equipped with MediSpeech powered by SpeechMagic™. It will be 325 authors in nine hospitals when the project is finished.

"We started with Orthopaedics," explains Jen. "It was hard and tough, but what we learned here made everything that followed a lot easier."



Dr. Simon Jones, Orthopaedics Project Lead, sees one of the big advantages in the fact that he can now work flexibly throughout the trust as files can be downloaded from his Philips Digital Pocket Memo everywhere. The files are transferred to the server farm in Newcastle, from where they are picked up by a secretary. "Files don't leave the clinic anymore, and urgent files can be easily prioritised," he says.

Denise Patterson, Senior Secretary, Orthopaedics, saw her office being turned into a technology showcase at project start for others to see the technology working. After six weeks, the hype was so great that all secretaries wanted SpeechMagic. In a survey a couple of weeks later, all but two said that they would never return to the tape-based system. "The two girls missed the typing," smiles Denise. One secretary said that it is the first time ever that she felt in control of her job: "It's giving me control that I never had."

Denise finds she can manage the team much better; the transparent job list identifies areas of backlogs, so that work



*“MediSpeech powered by SpeechMagic™ is an extremely user friendly system. I love it as do all of the girls in the unit.”*

Denise Patterson,  
Senior Secretary, Orthopaedics

## Top 5 benefits of speech recognition

*Compiled by Denise Patterson, Senior Secretary at Wansbeck General Hospital*

### **Speed**

Transcription is twice as fast. Information is available when needed for treatment and GPs receive letters more quickly.

### **Management**

Workload immediately visible. Easier staff planning during holidays, sickness, etc. Priority settings identify urgent dictations.

### **Accuracy**

Identical orthography of medical terms throughout all documents. No disruption through lost or damaged tapes.

### **Transparency**

Job list identifies backlogs and free capacity. In-house and home-based staff on one central system.

### **Service**

Fast and reliable quality of patient care. Reduced waiting times for patients.

can be distributed equally. In-house secretaries have been pooled at Wansbeck General Hospital, working together very efficiently with their home-based colleagues; all of them share a central system for all nine hospitals.

### **The perfect experience**

Jen gives a simple example why the fast availability of information is so important: “If a consultant changes the patient medication and the GP receives the information twelve weeks later, we have a problem.” That’s why she is a full supporter of speech recognition, but points out the importance of doing things right: “In the beginning, it can slow you down. The secretaries listen to the dictation and automatically their fingers start to type. It is a new way of working which they must get used to.”

It’s recommended to start with the senior secretary. She knows the movers in her department and she also knows those who are not so excited about new technologies. “If Denise and her consorts can prove it works, then the others can’t say: ‘Well but it doesn’t work for me.’” said Jen.



*“Many said trust-wide availability of patient documentation within 48 hours is impossible. But it’s not.”*

Jen Henderson,  
Project Lead Speech Recognition

Essential for large-scale installations: Get your support network in place before you start. “From supplier, to IT, to training – everybody should be briefed, prepared and ready to go. There are many things in the workflow that you can’t think of in advance.” At Northumbria the patient administration system (PAS) did not support dictations for deceased patients. “But whatever came up, G2 Speech and Philips solved our problems fast. And we expect that one year down the line, we will be self-sufficient.”

While Jen is still fully occupied with getting MediSpeech and SpeechMagic to everybody within the trust, Anne is already thinking of the next step: She wants to re-engineer the whole secretarial and administrative service, envisioning a central point of contact for all patient relations, equipped with a state-of-the-art customer relationship management system. And she is heading for electronic health records. “SpeechMagic is the foundation of information-driven medicine. It is at the heart of an IT infrastructure that allows us to deliver the perfect experience of care.”

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