

NEC communications ease the pain of lengthy call queues and stressed staff at busy medical centre

Appletree Medical Practice, UK



Customer

- Appletree Medical Practice

Industry

- Healthcare / Doctors Surgery

Challenges

- Monday morning telephone 'rush hour'
- Irate callers, stressed staff
- No call queuing in place
- High telephony costs

Solution

- SV9100 Comms Server
- MyCalls Application Suite
- Position in queue messaging
- Reduced exchange lines

Results

- Customer service levels transformed
- Reduced holding times
- Happier staff
- Cost savings for both the practice AND the callers!



"There's a real difference in the way my staff communicate on the phone. They now feel empowered to deal professionally with difficult incoming calls."

Stephen Leather - Manager of
The Appletree Medical Practice, UK

Challenges

As with almost every medical practice, Monday mornings were manic with a rush of phone calls and a stream of patients trying to get through.

'The patients sometimes struggled to get through, and when they did it cost them more money as it was an 0844 number which we were tied into,' says practice manager Stephen Leather. 'The staff were also under a lot of pressure.'

Another challenge medical centres face is the importance of business continuity. It was essential the implementation of a new call system within a General Practice environment could continue without interruption.



Solution

The introduction of a local telephone number and a new and effective queuing system was the answer they were searching for.

The Queuing system of the MyCalls Application Suite allows patients to manage their time more effectively. They are told exactly where they are in the queue, which means they can make a judgement whether to stay on the line or call back later.

Calls are now more evenly spread throughout the day, and staff are able to manage the work load, reducing stress and helping them deal with patients effectively.

The previous lease rental agreement was cleared and initially put in 30 exchange lines. This was so that patients could avoid the dreaded busy tone, but this was later scaled down to 15 lines which was more than adequate and saved the practice some money.

Results

The NEC MyCalls Call Management system provides the surgery with concise reports on all of their telephone calls, covering everything from call duration to highlighting their busiest times.

The reports are emailed to key staff for review and they can also run their own reports on demand.

“Callers don’t have to queue unnecessarily for a receptionist, when perhaps they want to speak to a Medical Secretary”

“The improvement in our telephone service has meant we now receive very few adverse comments from patients!”

Proving to be a useful management tool, MyCalls has given the practice evidence they need; ‘We intuitively felt we understood the position before, but the new reports gave us real data on which we could make decisions.’ This included more support for staff at peak times, which in turn was balanced with reduced staffing levels at quieter periods.

Along with the queuing system, management reports and new numbers, MyCalls also records every telephone call. ‘There’s a real difference in the way my staff communicate on the phone,’ says Stephen. ‘They now feel empowered to deal professionally with difficult incoming calls, safe in the knowledge that each call is a matter of record and can be played back to objectively evidence what was said.’ He adds ‘We also use it as a training tool to facilitate better call handling.’



About

Based in Derbyshire, UK, Appletree Medical Practice is commissioned by the NHS to provide primary healthcare for Duffield, Little Eaton and the surrounding villages.

Appletree Medical Practice aims to treat all patients promptly, courteously and in complete confidence, in a safe, comfortable environment.

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