



NHS North Lincolnshire provides secure mobile access to patient records

NHS North Lincolnshire designs secure agile working solution and improves the speed and delivery of patient care

16 March 2009 - NHS North Lincolnshire is pioneering an Agile Working initiative to provide secure wireless access to patient records for clinical staff and other health workers and managers. Clinicians now have instant access to vital patient information at the point of care on portable Panasonic Toughbooks, using a local wireless Wi-Fi connection or over mobile GPRS or 3G links.

Based on WatchGuard Edge UTM (Unified Threat Management) appliances, NHS North Lincolnshire has created a totally secure virtual infrastructure across 109 sites that treats both fixed and wireless devices in the same way. Remote users have the same access to authorised data and applications as if they were logged into a desktop PC, while the IT team can manage all fixed and mobile devices centrally. The WatchGuard appliances create secure encrypted VPN (Virtual Private Network) mobile connections to ensure the data is always protected, while Radius servers handle the user authentication.

“The initial pilot schemes have proved extremely successful and have demonstrated the major benefits of mobile working,” said Darren McKay, the Network Manager for NHS North Lincolnshire who designed the secure mobile solution. “The ability to access and update clinical records immediately without having to go back to a PC improves the speed and delivery of patient care dramatically. More accurate and up-to-date record keeping, better coordination and reporting along with increased productivity are just some of the other benefits.”

“We chose the WatchGuard VPN solution because of its security, user friendliness and because it offered true integration to our infrastructure,” adds Darren McKay. “Secure connections are established before the user logs on, which means these aren’t just standalone devices with remote access - these are a true, secure, extensions of our network.”

The mobile initiative follows a major shift at NHS North Lincolnshire from leased lines to a flexible DSL-based IP network which has involved over 120 WatchGuard UTM appliances installed across the community including 58 GP surgeries, two major hospitals at Grimsby and Scunthorpe and a number of office sites.

WatchGuard devices were chosen because they offered high performance and reliability, along with easy installation and management. They also meet the specific technical standards set by Connecting for Health. These include certification to Common Criteria Evaluation Assurance Level 4 (EAL4) and IPsec VPN protocols that support secure exchange of packets in the IP layer.

The WatchGuard security appliances are delivering significant cost savings, high levels of security, performance and reliability and unified threat protection for Northern Lincolnshire. And the easy installation, centralised administration and extended network management to mobile devices has taken the burden off the IT team.

WatchGuard will be exhibiting on stand G20 at Infosecurity Europe 2009 from 28-30 April in Earl's Court, London.

About Northern Lincolnshire NHS services

Northern Lincolnshire NHS services comprises of both NHS North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus and covers a population of over 320,000 served by 58 rural and town based GP practices and two major hospitals.

Northern Lincolnshire aims to provide or commission high quality care in the most appropriate setting. Patients, the local community, healthcare professionals, social services and voluntary organisations are all involved in the decisions around how and where care should be delivered to the local population. The aim is to ensure this care is accessible to all, gives best value for money and maximises patient independence.

About WatchGuard Technologies, Inc.

Since 1996, WatchGuard® Technologies, Inc. has been the advanced technology leader of network security solutions, providing mission-critical security to hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide. The WatchGuard Firebox® X family of wired and wireless unified threat management appliances and WatchGuard SSL VPN remote access solutions provide extensible network security, unparalleled network visibility, management and control.

WatchGuard products are backed by WatchGuard LiveSecurity® Service, an innovative support, maintenance, and education program. WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle and has offices serving North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. To learn more, visit <http://www.watchguard.com/>.

Contacts:

Natasja de Groot
WatchGuard Technologies Inc
+ 31- 70 711 2085
natasja.degroot@watchguard.com

Allie Andrews
PRPR
+ 44 (0)1442 245030
allie@prpr.co.uk