

Case study

Client → Pure Physiotherapy
Industry → Healthcare

HSCN access helps Pure Physiotherapy grow



Pure Physiotherapy helps over thirty NHS Primary Care Networks deliver faster access to physiotherapy services under the First Contact Practitioner scheme.

At a glance

Challenge

- Access patients' NHS medical records
- Provide secure remote access to records
- Fix HQ's slow internet connection
- End dependence on Primary Care Networks sharing HSCN access

Solution

- Cloud-based HSCN connection
- Fortinet-based SSL VPN Service
- New 200 Mbps leased line for HQ
- Pure Physio has own HSCN connection, own VPN, accessed via its own laptops

Result

- Staff can read & update patient records
- Staff safely access HSCN from anywhere
- Fast, dedicated internet access supports use of MS Teams video conferencing
- No need to wait for clients to arrange laptops, VPN credentials and tokens.

Physiotherapy provider picks hSo to supply remote access to HSCN

To help free up overstretched GPs' time, NHS England offers extra funding to Primary Care Networks (PCNs) so they can create additional roles known as First Contact Practitioners.

Pure Physiotherapy has been awarded contracts to supply over 30 PCNs with physiotherapy services under this scheme. As a result, it required access to the medical records of NHS patients it had been asked to assess and treat. It needed:

- **HSCN Access** – Authorised staff had to be able to access EMIS, SystemOne and nVision via the Health and Social Care Network.
- **VPN Access** – Authorised staff needed access from anywhere, including from GP surgeries, clinics, HQ and employee homes.
- **Internet Access** – More bandwidth for video conferencing, clinical calls and general internet use by group companies.



Pure Physiotherapy assesses, diagnoses and treats musculoskeletal conditions.

It works closely with the NHS, providing First Contact Practitioner physiotherapy services to over thirty Primary Care Networks.

In addition to its NHS work, Pure Physiotherapy supports patients referred by private GPs, medical consultants, patients themselves and major insurers such as BUPA, Nuffield, AXA and Aviva.

The company has grown rapidly, doubling in size as a result of its NHS contracts. It now has over 100 employees.

Reducing Dependence on PCNs

“One of the things we were doing initially was getting given a laptop by a practice and using that on their behalf,” explained Tom Beadle, Pure Physiotherapy’s NHS Services Lead.

This approach wasn’t ideal for the firm or its clients.

“We were encountering some barriers with regards to... access to systems.” These included shortages of spare laptops, delays in PCNs configuring laptops for Pure Physiotherapy’s use, and access being made available solely at specific premises.

These barriers led to unnecessary delays in starting new contracts, while each client sorted out access to its IT systems.

Pure Physiotherapy decided a better way would be to have its own laptops, its own VPN and its own HSCN connection, so it wouldn’t be as dependent on PCNs for access, going forward.

hSo was selected to supply remote access to HSCN via a VPN.

Speeding Up Client Onboarding

Pure Physiotherapy can now access patients’ medical records without its clients having to share hardware or connectivity.

“Every PCN that we’ve offered that option to has taken it up... to avoid having to worry about the IT aspects,” said Beadle.

Pure Physiotherapy can begin First Contact Practitioner contracts quicker than when it had to rely on PCNs for IT.

The agile, light-touch onboarding process has proven attractive to PCNs, helping the firm more than double its NHS work.

Cutting IT Complexity

Pure Physiotherapy connects to the medical record systems of over 30 Primary Care Networks without having to follow 30 different processes or use laptops with 30 different builds.

hSo offered Pure Physiotherapy a simple nationwide way to give all relevant staff remote access to HSCN, without access tokens.

“We were increasing quite a bit at the time, but got to the point where it would’ve been harder for us to continue increasing in size... at the same pace without this,” said Tom Beadle.

Accessing HSCN from Anywhere

“If we’ve got people working remotely, we haven’t got to worry about getting a PCN laptop out to them. That person can be anywhere in the country,” said Tom Beadle.

Now that many of Pure Physiotherapy staff have tokenless VPN-based access to HSCN, the firm’s physios can access the NHS systems from home or wherever they are working.

Improving Connectivity

Pure Physiotherapy shares its Sheffield HQ with sister companies Referrals Direct and MLAS (Medical and Legal Admin Services), and ultimate parent, Unity Health Group.

The HQ’s internet connection was no longer fast enough for the growing group. Beadle wanted a supplier that could fix that, in addition to providing remote access to HSCN.

hSo installed a 200Mbps leased line giving the HQ plenty of bandwidth for clinical calls, Microsoft Teams video calls, SharePoint-powered file sharing and general internet use.

Increasing Flexibility

Tom Beadle says having remote access to NHS patient records, including from employees’ homes “allowed a little bit more flexibility in how we approach things.”

“Typically you would have one laptop provided for a contract, and if we needed someone to cover that, we would have to arrange a way of transferring that laptop to carry out the clinic. Until we had our own VPNs, we weren’t able to share that around and cross-cover things quite as easily.”

Now, any authorised member of staff working on a First Contact Practitioner contract can securely access HSCN via a VPN on their work laptop. Tom Beadle says this makes it easier to arrange cover for clinics.

Minimising Disruption

“In terms of NHS work, COVID didn’t stop anything. We were plowing on.” With clinical work continuing despite lockdowns “...the requirement for remote working has been huge.”

“We have a clinical call centre in our Sheffield base where a number of clinicians use that space for calling out. When the last lockdown hit, we were able to scale back to a minimal number of staff coming onto site.”

“There was no real disruption, because everyone has the VPNs and can quickly switch to working in any location. That is a massive benefit, given how the last year has been.”

“Our offering is now quite strong because we can say we have this independent access to the HSCN... Having the VPN itself means that we can set up the access much, much quicker without the need for the practice input or practice hardware.”

– Tom Beadle, NHS Services Lead, Pure Physiotherapy

About hSo

hSo is an accredited managed service provider delivering connectivity, cloud, telephony and IT security services to UK organisations.

hSo is a Health and Social Care Network (HSCN) consumer network service provider and a registered supplier under the UK Government’s Network Services 2 and G-Cloud procurement frameworks.



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