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NHS EDUCATION FOR SCOTLAND : DELIVERING THE LATEST EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO RURAL AND REMOTE LOCATIONS

REQUIREMENT

Overcome geographical barriers to learning.
Deliver latest education and clinical training to NHS staff in rural and remote locations.

SOLUTION

Created network of over 40 TANDBERG videoconferencing systems linking NHS organizations throughout the north of Scotland.

Installed equipment capable of supporting high quality transmission of teaching materials, including PowerPoint presentations, video clips and x-ray images.

Provide ongoing technical support, aiding and encouraging use.

RESULTS

Improved employee interaction and engagement.

Improved access to relevant educational learning opportunities.

Reduced travel time and expenses.

More efficient allocation of resources.

Better use of trainers' and trainees' time.

Increased productivity.



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TANDBERG

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NHS EDUCATION FOR SCOTLAND PROVIDES EDUCATION, TRAINING AND LIFELONG LEARNING FOR THE NHS WORKFORCE IN SCOTLAND.

March 2003 saw the launch of the North of Scotland Tele-Education Project (NoSTEP), an initiative funded by the Scottish Executive Health Department and led by NHS Education for Scotland. The project's primary purpose was to overcome the barriers to learning and support a program of educational activities for all health professionals living and working in rural and remote locations.

Conventional healthcare training methods such as on-site, distance and Internet-based training were all considered too costly. By contrast, studies showed that interactive teaching and its association with networking, peer contact and connectivity with the 'outside world' was the most sought after educational delivery method. As a result, videoconferencing-based teaching and learning commenced in April 2004.

CityIS was commissioned to deliver this unique telemedicine project across the north of Scotland. Three years later, CityIS has created a network of over 40 TANDBERG videoconferencing systems linking NHS organizations in Shetland, Orkney, the Western Isles, Highland and Grampian regions.

Today, this videoconferencing network is used to deliver the latest education and clinical training to NHS staff in rural and remote locations through a combination of single interactive teaching sessions and group training courses. Either way, the equipment

ensures high quality transmission of teaching materials, including PowerPoint presentations, video clips and x-ray images.

BENEFITS

Videoconference-based training is delivering considerable cost benefits. Travel time and accommodation costs have both been significantly reduced and better use is being made of trainers' and trainees' time.

Knowledge transfer is occurring and with better access to relevant educational learning opportunities, patients are benefiting from greater confidence among practitioners.

Videoconferencing is also enabling remote practitioners to participate in group activity and peer supported learning. As it becomes embedded in practice, it's also helping to promote staff engagement.

RESULTS

Videoconferencing delivers immediate results. By embracing the technology as an essential real-time communication tool, NHS Education for Scotland, like with many other organizations, is realizing the productivity gains possible. Not only that, it is benefiting from improved employee interaction, reduced travel time and expenses and more efficient allocation of resources.

The delivery of up-to-date, evidence-based, high quality care, meanwhile, has led to a reduction in the number of hospital referrals with more patients being treated locally.

The compatibility of the technology has ensured the success of the project. The video and audio quality makes using videoconferencing as realistic as being there in person. The technical support provided by CityIS has given us more confidence and is encouraging further use of videoconferencing.

Beverley Beasant, Project Manager, NHS Education for Scotland