

Dorset HealthCare NHS Trust

Dorset HealthCare believes that prevention is better than cure when it comes to email

Dorset HealthCare NHS Trust is a specialist UK Mental Health and Learning Disability Trust, providing services for the 450,000 residents of Eastern Dorset and specialised services across Dorset. The Trust has an annual turnover of £54 million and employs 2,500 staff.

A Growing Concern

In 1997, the Trust realised that email volumes were increasing. There was growing concern about offensive email and email-borne viruses and about implementing a system which was sensitive to users' rights by application of impersonal automated monitoring. The Trust was also encouraged to start intercepting email because of managers' suspicions that some users were spending too long on email business and were possibly sending offensive emails. Finally, the Trust felt the need to protect the organisation and the individual staff who work for it. As a result the Trust drafted an acceptable usage policy for email and looked for ways to implement this with minimal manual intervention.

An Ideal Solution

The Trust purchased and installed Clearswift MAILsweeper™ for SMTP software, supplied by Foursys, in 1998. MAILsweeper for SMTP analyses incoming and outgoing email at the Internet gateway, allowing organisations to implement management and security policies to block inappropriate emails, comply with legal requirements and increase user productivity.

As part of the acceptable usage policy, staff are encouraged to use email on a personal - but moderate - basis. The use of the Internet and email systems is permissible at appropriate times of the day as part of the Trust's commitment to developing the general IT literacy of its staff, as long as this does not compromise the principles of the acceptable usage policy.



The Trust provides email services for its own staff as well as for Bournemouth Primary Care Trust and South and East Dorset Primary Trust. Altogether there are 4,500 email accounts, of which 2,500 are currently active email users. MAILsweeper monitors some 40,000 incoming and 40,000 outgoing emails every day. The Trust uses Microsoft's Exchange 2000 email system, utilising a single email server.

"We believe that prevention is better than cure when it comes to email. MAILsweeper allows us to successfully block worms, hoaxes, rude, offensive and other inappropriate email messages and attachments programmatically," said Nigel Rodgers, IT Manager, Dorset HealthCare NHS Trust.

Summary:

Number of Users: 2,500

Products Deployed:

- MAILsweeper for SMTP

Reasons for choosing Clearswift:

- Efficient email management
- Capability to implement an acceptable email usage policy, with minimal human intervention
- Ability to support ESMTP protocol, as mandated by the NHS

" Using spamActive around 350 spam emails are being trapped by the Trust each day. "

Nigel Rodgers

Dorset HealthCare NHS Trust

Complying with New Regulations

In 2003, the Trust upgraded MAILsweeper for SMTP to deploy and use Extended SMTP (ESMTP) Authentication. The use of ESMTP Authentication has been mandated by the UK National Health Service to provide protection against message spoofing and unauthorised access to email.

"The installation and deployment of the ESMTP upgrade to MAILsweeper was straightforward and trouble-free. It enabled us to continue using MAILsweeper and comply with the NHS authentication standards, without using any additional hardware or software," said Nigel Rodgers.

In January 2004, the Trust installed Clearswift's spamActive™ service. spamActive is an anti-spam service which is based on the thousands of examples of spam which Clearswift 'harvests' from global seed email accounts. Spam terms and subject lines are routinely extracted from these global sources and are placed on the Clearswift website for customers to download. spamActive can be configured to download the latest database automatically and update email filtering policies. Any incoming emails that match the latest spam profiles either immediately trigger the anti-spam policies set by customers, effectively blocking unsolicited email, or are 'marked', allowing the user to define local policies to delete or move them to a separate inbox folder. The database is updated every three hours. Using spamActive, around 350 spam emails are now being trapped by the Trust each day.

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