

## East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust: Relying on Help Desk Functionality From Numara Track-It!

When East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust wanted to continue its adoption of a practical, easy-to-use help desk solution, it turned to the latest version of Numara Track-It!

### Business Driver

The need for an effective, simple-to-use, quick-to-implement help desk system.

### Industry Sector

Public Sector (NHS)

### Why Numara Software?

Ease of use and functionality; future adoption of KnowledgeBase for users and technicians.

### Business Benefits


Costs are always at a premium within the NHS, and with the merger of hospitals in the region, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust needed a help desk system that it both trusted, and was easy to use and manage with the option of additional features being adopted in the future.

### Background

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust provides medical services for the local population of over half a million people across East Lancashire and the surrounding area. It employs 7,000 staff across four hospital sites: the Royal Blackburn Hospital which opened in July 2006; Burnley General Hospital which in May 2006 opened its Phase 5 development with a £33 million investment in state-of-the-art new facilities including new inpatient and outpatient areas; Rossendale Hospital, which provides a local facility for the population of Rossendale; and Pendle Hospital, a modern community hospital which provides inpatient intermediate care and medical beds.

The East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust was created by the merger of the Burnley Health Care NHS Trust and the Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley NHS Trust in 2003, and has subsequently had to implement the demands of the NHS National Programme for IT (NPfIT).

NPfIT is an initiative by the Department of Health to move the NHS towards a single, centrally-mandated electronic care record for patients and to connect 30,000 General Practitioners to 300 hospitals, providing secure and audited access to these records by authorised health professionals.

East Lancashire Hospitals   
 NHS Trust

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### Successfully completing a necessary help desk upgrade

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust first came to Numara Track-It! from its use at Burnley General Hospital before Burnley General merged with Blackburn Royal Infirmary in 2002. (The Blackburn Royal Infirmary was subsequently decommissioned in 2006 to be replaced by a new hospital, the Royal Blackburn Hospital.)

There are currently 6,000 users within the Trust supported by the help desk which covers the whole of East Lancashire and the surrounding area, and supports functions such as administration, clerical, medical, finance, procurement, and consulting, including nurses, doctors and ward clerks.

Christine Oldham, who has been the Trust's IT Services Help Desk Manager for seven years, takes up the story:

*"We were using an earlier version of Numara Track-It! at Burnley. We'd evaluated one or two options before we merged the hospital trusts in 2003 and we've been using Numara Track-It! since then, upgrading to the latest version in September 2008."*

*"We log around 2,100 jobs a month on the help desk and those calls cover a number of areas: hardware and software, plus a range of applications which include bespoke software for hospitals, plus patient applications such as scanners and monitors, as well as telephone systems and networks."*

## Managing help desk demand at critical times

18 months ago, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust had to move to IP telephony from analogue systems and found that that implementation put the help desk under severe pressure to respond to an increase in the number of calls, as Christine Oldham explains.

***“When we moved to IP telephony from analogue systems, we were bombarded with calls because there was a huge learning curve for users who were asking things like ‘How do I set up voicemail?’ When something goes wrong, it really does go wrong, and we were grateful for having Numara Track-It! in place to manage that. We’ve had a busy few years with the National Programme for IT too, but now, we’re fairly stable.”***

***“We are the first point of call on the help desk and we’ll do any quick fixes. But we’re limited by the amount of time we can spend and we don’t have any remote access. We can sort out issues such as querying the print queue. Then we have to allocate a call to the second line support team. Someone manning that team will get back to the user in 20 minutes to see if they can resolve it with remote access. If not, then they allocate it to the technical support area. They’ll then go out to fix things.”***

## Cutting training time through Numara Track-It! templates

One function of Numara Track-It! that Christine Oldham and her team see as being particularly useful at busy times is the templates set up in the latest version. This is especially the case in trying to brief contractors on how to question users. Christine Oldham details the problem:

***“A lot of the progress made in dealing with calls comes down to the help desk staff in logging them, which is why the templates are so useful. The latest version of Numara Track-It! has templates set up, for example, for printer or PC problems. When we have contractors filling in on the help desk, I can just point them to the templates, which detail the questions that need to be asked of users in the various problem areas. At a busy time, that cuts down the time needed for in depth explanation and training of contractors, which makes a big difference.”***

## Stepping up Numara Track-It! usage and considering ITIL

Christine Oldham admits that simply keeping on top of the number of calls received and the job tickets created to service them means that the East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust has had to be cautious both in its adoption of new Numara Track-It! features and in its interest in the ITIL best practice framework for service management.



Christine Oldham explains:

***“One of the things we are looking forward to using is the Numara Track-It! KnowledgeBase. That will give help desk technicians and users access to a centralised and comprehensive technical support database. Technicians can focus on core business responsibilities instead of authoring content and responding to redundant questions, while users can solve many of their own issues. We’ve had no problems at all in getting to grips with the front end of our new version of Numara Track-It! and its additional features. On the help desk, we were able to adapt to them within a few hours, and it was a similar story for the engineers.”***

***“We have been using Numara Track-It! for a number of years now, regularly upgrading the versions we are using as our needs grow. Over the years it has more than matched our expectations.”***

***We wanted a solution that includes logging, managing and monitoring of all our calls plus the preparation of monthly reports. Looking ahead, we are keen to utilise the email notification feature and the KnowledgeBase, as well as moving towards adoption of ITIL.”***

Christine Oldham,  
IT Services, Helpdesk Manager,  
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust



About Numara Software

Founded in 1991, Numara Software is a global provider of service desk management solutions. Its flagship products, Numara Track-It! and Numara FootPrints, support over 50,000 customer sites worldwide making it the leader in this market for small to mid-sized enterprises.



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