



CASE STUDY: THE NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

About

The North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) operates across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Darlington and Teesside. It provides emergency care services to respond to 999 calls and a Patient Transport Service (PTS) for pre-planned non-emergency transport to help patients in the region.

Since 2013, NEAS has also delivered an NHS 111 service alongside a 999 service for the region to provide urgent medical help and advice, as well as seamless access point for patients.

These emergency care, 111 and PTS services are supported by the Trust's emergency operations centres based at Newburn Riverside and Hebburn, which manage in excess of 1.5 million calls per year.

“One of the easiest migrations ever carried out” by The North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

In 2012, The North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust encountered a number of IT challenges, including malware, that led to them to switching their entire IT security software requirements to Sophos Endpoint Protection, supported by Sophos partner, Trustmarque.

Business Challenge

A team of five IT systems senior analysts at NEAS manage 900 endpoints at multiple sites across the northeast of the UK, from the Scottish borders to North Yorkshire. In 2015, they were facing a number of challenges, including:

- Complex security requirements as a mobile ambulance trust
- Issues around visibility of threats
- Consolidation of IT security to a single synchronised platform

The team was keen to choose a new vendor who could offer a flexible yet scalable solution that would continue to be effective for many years to come.



“We were looking for a solution that was simple to roll out to all endpoints and sites.”

**Daniel Malone, IT Systems Analyst,
NEAS**



Technology Solution

Sophos EndPoint Protection was due for renewal in 2015, so the NEAS IT team decided to explore wider propositions from Sophos with the support of their Sophos partner, Trustmarque. After a number of meetings in which they discussed several Sophos offerings – including next-generation firewalls, Sophos Synchronized Security, Sophos UTM and Endpoint Protection – they decided to move forward with a complete solution from Sophos to improve their IT security and upgrade their traditional on-premises lineup. NEAS has now implemented the following Magic Quadrant-leading products:

- Sophos Central with Server Protection Advanced – a unified console for managing Sophos products
- Sophos EndPoint Protection (five-year renewal) – prevention, detection, and response technology
- Sophos UTM (bought in batches in April 2015 and March 2016) – a unified network security package in a single modular appliance
- Sophos RED – which makes extending a secure network to other locations easy. In this case, it was used to access patient data. RED was tested with the air ambulance service, allowing first responders to securely access patient files while mobile.

NEAS placed the order through Sophos partner Trustmarque. It was also pivotal to include training in the purchase, which was delivered by Sophos Certified Architects with Yorkshire-based Evolve North.



“Our key objectives in the procurement of this security software were to reduce management time and ensure a seamless migration from the existing software. Many of our challenges were overcome with this procurement, ensuring that our information is now secure.”

**Daniel Malone, IT Systems Analyst,
NEAS**





Business Benefits

Most importantly, NEAS reduced its IT security risks through increased visibility of threats using one synchronised platform. In addition, the organisation now also has:

- Total confidence with a 'best of breed' lineup
- Flexibility and a stable solution that will meet current and future demands
- Collaborative and more efficient ways of working using a single platform, saving the team hours every month
- The ability to access patient data from anywhere at any time
- Automatic and continuous updates through
- Sophos Central, allowing the team to spend their time on more important tasks
- Cost efficiencies because no on-premises servers are required
- Simplified management and reduced training requirements, saving time and cutting back on costs

According to NEAS IT Technical Engineer Daniel Malone: "Our key objectives in the procurement of this security software were to reduce management time and ensure a seamless migration from the existing software. Many of our challenges were overcome with the procurement, ensuring that our information is now secure."

Among its future plans, NEAS intends to further upgrade its existing Wi-Fi solution and implement Intercept X, a next-gen anti-ransomware, anti-exploit solution, and will work closely with both Sophos and Trustmarque to make these additional improvements.



"Through close consultation and collaboration, Evolve North, Trustmarque and Sophos were able to create a solution tailored to meet the requirements of North East Ambulance Service, ensuring security, availability and integrity of our environment and infrastructure."

Daniel Malone, IT Systems Analyst, NEAS