

KING'S COLLEGE NHS HOSPITAL CASE STUDY



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FAST helps King's College NHS Hospital to become software compliant

King's College Hospital implements the FAST Compliance Programme to focus on software management and IT security.

King's College Hospital is a major London hospital serving a diverse local, regional, national and international population.

It provides the full range of hospital services for a population of 700,000 in the London Boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham. The hospital site also houses parts of the Guy's, King's and St Thomas' Schools of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences.

Buildings, facilities and services have been continuously developed over the past few years, the highlight being the opening of the Golden Jubilee Wing in 2002. This has meant several offices and wards have changed location, some more than once, and has generated an ongoing headache for the IT department which currently has to ensure that over 3,500 users are able to access information on the hospital's network on a 24/7 basis.

It's also essential that the IT department keeps a record of Trust-owned hardware and software assets and to where or to whom these have been allocated and, most importantly, ensures that installed software is correctly licensed. This is because the Copyright Design and Patents Act (1988) conveys responsibility for software licensing to the directors of any organisation. The maximum penalty for breaching this law is 10 years imprisonment.

“One of my key responsibilities is to ensure that we are software compliant,” said Derek Farlow, IT security manager at the hospital. “We need to be able to audit across a complex network that connects some 14 separate buildings on and around the site.”

An added complexity for the IT department is monitoring the use of IT equipment on the hospital site by medical school staff and students. Funding for software licences comes from two separate sources - King's College Hospital obtains finance through the NHS and the medical school through the Education Department - making clear demarcations of ownership a difficult exercise.

“Some of the hospital computing facilities may be used by medical school staff and students - something that doesn't tend to be an issue in a private company,” Derek added.

A large part of the solution to this licensing problem came in the form of FAST, which provides an education programme to help organisations to become software compliant.

King's College Hospital was already a FAST customer when Derek joined the Trust, and he was immediately given responsibility for working through the four-step software management programme. Derek made this a priority.

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The first stage of the programme involved reviewing and amending existing policies and procedures to ensure that staff were fully aware of what they were entitled to install on their PCs. Additional policies were subsequently introduced to cover the use of email and the Internet. An Information Systems Security Policy Summary was introduced. With formal support from the Human Resources Department, all staff are regularly made aware of this policy and are required to sign its declaration of compliance.

Secondly, a full audit of the hospital's network was carried out. On the advice of FAST, the Trust purchased and installed an electronic auditing tool.

Derek added, "FAST had recommended that we use a tool as a manual audit across all of our networked locations would have been impossibly time-consuming. By the time we had completed a walk-round of (at that time) about a thousand PCs, the information would have been out of date anyway!"

Derek set about reconciling software with the licences held by the IT department. A foolproof method of identification was required, so each Trust-owned PC was given a unique configuration number that is used as a basis for licence reconciliation. KCH is now confident that all assets are correctly referenced, regardless of whether users come from the hospital or the medical school. In addition to this, unauthorised software was removed, shortfalls in authorised software licences were made up and the software ordering process was amended both to control purchasing and to help build a more accurate licence database.

As a result, King's College Hospital was one of the first NHS Trusts to achieve FAST Audit Certification, and completes an audit every year as part of its ongoing software management plan.

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on our account manager to advise us of things like legislative changes so that we can update our policies and procedures as and when necessary," said Derek.

The certification process has an added benefit for Derek in his capacity as IT security manager, "As an NHS body, we are required to be compliant with the Information Security Management Standard BS7799, and the FAST certification scheme very usefully covers a significant proportion of this."

In conclusion, Derek said, "Our aim with software management and control is one of continuous improvement, and we wouldn't readily be able to achieve this without the help and support of FAST."

For more information please call **0844 815 5742**, email **contactus@fast-compliance.co.uk** or visit **www.fast-compliance.co.uk**

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