NHS-HE Connectivity Best Practice Working Group

How did the working Group evolve?

In response to a presentation to the national NHS-HE Forum in Manchester on 24th November 2010, it was agreed that work was required to find a way of developing some common and good practice guidance to overcome local access issues to applications that support learning and research.

10 years of discussion around the topic of inter-operability between NHS & HE networks.

Members

Mark Blakeman (MB, chair)	University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust
Betsy Anagnostelis (BA)	Royal Free Hospital Medical Library & UCL Library Services
Max Finch (MF)	NHS Technology Office, DH
Chris Franks (CF)	Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Andrew Howe (AH)	University of Dundee, Computing & Media Services
Joe Grant (JG)	University of Plymouth
Dickon Jackson (DJa)	University of Edinburgh
Mark Packer (MP)	Brighton & Sussex Medical School
Andrew Simpson (ASi)	Hampshire Healthcare Library Service
Andrew Steel (ASt)	University of Leeds
Malcolm Teague (MT)	JANET(UK)
Martin van Eker (MvE)	University of Bristol, Centre for Medical Education
Ged Connelly-Thompson (GCT)	NIHR LMBRU
Natalie Lafferty (NL)	University of Dundee, Centre for Academic Clinical Practice
Martin Liddament (ML)	The Information Centre for Health & Social Care
Elizabeth McDowell (EM)	University of Edinburgh
Dave Moody (DM)	Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Andy Pellow (AP)	University of Leeds
Andy Richards (AR)	UCLH
Tim Robinson (TR)	Net North West
John Treadwell (JT)	Royal Devon & Exeter IMT Shared Service
Brian Henderson (BH)	Aberdeen University

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What is trying to be achieved?

- Improve inter-operability between Universities and the NHS to support;
  - Access to NHS systems from University networks
  - Access to University systems from NHS networks
  - Access to internet based systems and web sites from within the NHS, when these would otherwise be blocked.
  - To leverage bandwidth available to University staff and students when they are on NHS sites.

- To put in place policies and procedures to support connectivity, whilst not increasing the risks of data security to either party.

- To give organisations confidence that they are implementing best / common practice.

What is trying to be achieved?

- In effect:

    To achieve good inter-operability between NHS and Higher Education (HE) networks that enable secure anytime, anywhere access by medical, nursing and allied profession students, clinical teachers and researchers

Work so far……

- Initial meeting in Manchester – 10th February, 2011
- Teleconference – 18th April, 2011
- Meeting in London – 23rd May, 2011
- Teleconference – 15th July, 2011
- Teleconference – 4th August, 2011
- Teleconference – 12th September, 2011

- Meeting/VC – 26th September, 2011

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Work Strands

- Strand 1 - N3 JANET Gateway
- Strand 2 - Access directly from NHS desktops
- Strand 3 - Use of terminal services
- Strand 4 - How the NHS and HE can network securely
- Strand 5 - Information Governance and Data Sharing

Strand 1 – N3 JANET Gateway

- Positive feedback over the use of the Gateway for access to JANET from N3 (Phase 1)

- Watching brief from Malcolm regarding the 6 deliverables of phase 2:

    - Bi-directional service

    - Computer to computer interaction

    - Integrate NHS and academic video services

    - Secure email solution between NHS and academic networks

    - Support for Eduroam in NHS networks

    - Federated access to web resources

- N3 JANET Gateway is viewed as complimentary to local links that are currently in place between large teaching hospitals and Medical Schools

Strand 2 - Access directly from NHS desktops

- Developed a Web 2.0, Social Media and Standard Desktop Facilities paper which will highlight the risks and issues and give a list of sites and services that ;
  - we would recommend are made widely available (white list)
  - that should be supported at least in limited locations.
  - could be best delivered via a University log in.
- Producing a case study into the potential use of proxies (where by the user authenticates to a University gateway for browsing beyond the host trust's usual browsing provision).
- Sample policies and procedures for adaptation with regard to issuing usernames and passwords to students.

Strand 3 - Use of terminal services

- Practical and successful solution
- Cost is an issue, though some organisations are looking at the technology strategically anyway.
- Gathering case studies from
  - Dundee University
  - Bristol
  - Brighton and Sussex Medical School
  - Cambridge
  - International corporate case study/design docs
- Considered and discounted the potential for a national solution.
- Approaching suppliers

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Strand 4 - How the NHS and HE can network securely

- Looking at best practice for direct networking between teaching hospitals and their local university.
- Complementary rather than a replacement for the N3 JANET Gateway
- Case studies from;
    - University of Manchester – shared network, separated by VLANs
    - Leeds – two physical networks on one site.
    - Truro and Oxford – Use of Eduroam as part of a solution to provide wireless access
    - Sheffield Teaching Hospitals - CISCO guest access white paper.
    - Aberdeen University – Shared PC model (dual authentication) and shared wireless network.
    - Edinburgh University – Clinical Research Imaging Centre, network infrastructure, to allow communication to both Edinburgh University and NHS Lothian networks.

Strand 5 - Information Governance and Data Sharing

- Information Governance and Data Sharing

- Clearly important.

- Need to be clear about the scope of what we are trying to do.

- Potential to mushroom beyond the original scope of what we are trying to do.

- Contacting Clare Sanderson at the Information Centre for Health and Social Care for advice.

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Next Steps

- Completion of the case studies this month.
- Need to consider
  - Recommended actions
  - Best practice
  - Good practice
  - Case study
- Process for getting the report out;
  - Publish and be dammed ?
  - Work with DH ?
  - Writing to Katie Davis (England), Ron MacDonald (Scotland) and Gary Bullock (Wales) to ask for their support.
  - Part of current review of IT strategy ?

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What will the group deliver?

- A report into the issues.
- A series of case studies.
- Sample policies and procedures.

- Potentially leading to
  - Identification of best practice / good practice
  - National policies