

Dukinfield Medical Practice keeps one step ahead

Greater speed, flexibility and a more complete patient story with Dragon Medical Practice Edition

Challenge:

- Rising patient numbers
- Reduce dependency on paper-based records
- Administration backlogs

Solution:

- Dragon Medical Practice Edition
- Training and support from Nuance Healthcare Connections partner Freedom of Speech

Results:

- Four more patients being treated per day
- More comprehensive patient records
- Freeing up time for the whole team to care

Dukinfield Medical Practice

Treating approximately 11,000 patients a year puts a requirement on any practice to optimise efficiency if its patients are to receive the level of care they have come to expect. For 25 years, Tameside-based Dukinfield Medical Practice has ensured that it's stayed on top of its responsibility to deliver high quality service combined with compassionate care to local citizens, even against a backdrop of patient numbers rising by approximately 5% a year.

Dragon Medical Practice Edition brings the benefits of modern speech recognition to practices

Today, Dragon Medical Practice Edition from Nuance Communications is playing a key role in helping the practice keep one step ahead of its medical document workflow, while freeing up doctors to spend more time with their patients. Dragon Medical Practice Edition is a front-end, real-time speech recognition solution for a single user working within primary care practices and clinics and hospital departmental working groups. It has been designed to be easy to deploy and is rich in end-user features while boosting information capture directly within practice information systems or Electronic Patient Records. Dragon Medical Practice Edition helps doctors improve productivity and document specialised care and make medical decisions faster and more accurately.

Explaining how it came to deploy Dragon Medical is Julie Pregnall, the Practice Manager at Dukinfield Medical Practice. "One of our secretaries retired which presented an opportunity for us to look at how we could fill that gap while also sharing the role among existing staff. It was also an opportunity to reassess how we create and manage healthcare documents."

Dragon Medical – a solution worth recommending

Part of the solution to the challenge materialised in the form of speech recognition software, as Julie stated: "Another practice had been using Dragon Medical, and they thoroughly recommended it." Based on that endorsement, Dukinfield Medical Practice researched the technology and saw how Dragon Medical had evolved over the years, and its potential to meet the needs of the practice today.

Until that point, the practice's six GPs had been using digital voice recorders to dictate notes. The files were then transcribed by the secretaries, a process which could be prone to backlogs. The speech recognition alternative, with its ability to transcribe up to 160 words per minute with accuracy rates of up to 99%, not only enables GPs to transcribe detailed, accurate notes – which is fundamental to patient care – but it can also free up secretarial teams to concentrate on other, more patient-focused, tasks.

Dukinfield Medical Practice called on the services of authorised Nuance reseller partner, Freedom of Speech Ltd. It also came via a recommendation, and Julie describes the company's training and pre- and post-sales support as 'excellent'.

As qualified training consultants, Freedom of Speech Ltd established the users' individual needs then set up Dragon Medical for each GP. It also ensured the correct medical vocabulary was set up and gave the GPs guidance on how to switch vocabularies if necessary. Freedom of Speech Ltd also trained them on using the voice-activated Commands, how to easily correct any errors and provided a full explanation about how to dictate effortlessly; this now ensures enhanced recognition accuracy with consistent use.

The training provided by Freedom of Speech Ltd was offered on a one-to-one basis, a major advantage of which is that the training session could be tailored to the individual's specific requirements. As well as offering numerous benefits, the training ensured that the GPs were not away from their practice for more than a couple of hours, minimising any disruption to their working day or to their patients.

Doctors enjoy a seamless introduction to speech recognition

Dragon Medical's deployment and user acceptance was aided further by the fact that it didn't require the doctors to change the way they work. "They accepted that we had to make the move to speech recognition if we were to optimise efficiency," Julie added, "but it wasn't actually a disruptive change, because it didn't impact the way that the doctors worked given that they were already used to the process of dictating."

Creating a complete view of the patient story with Dragon Medical

Today, the GPs are getting maximum value from Dragon Medical, using it for creating and sending patient-related emails as well as writing documents, referral papers, and creating tasks. The team is already enjoying accuracy rates of 95%, which is improving all the time that Dragon Medical is used. The GP's feedback states that patient letters are now much more detailed than before, capturing a more complete view of the patient's story, which, in turn, leads to better care. This compares to the quality of information captured on the medical records before, which Julie describes as being 'quite fragmented'.

Freedom of Speech Ltd also recommended that the user profiles were stored on a shared network drive. This flexibility allows the GPs to dictate across multiple PCs, thus avoiding the inflexibility of being limited to using one PC. Julie added: "With each individual's voice profile on a shared drive, their profiles can be pushed to other PCs giving doctors the flexibility to work wherever there is a PC, which is great for us as we do a lot of hot desking."

In her capacity as Practice Manager, Julie uses Dragon Medical for dictating minutes and co-ordinating meetings. When asked about Dragon Medical's key strengths based on her experiences, she stated "It's the speed and flexibility of Dragon Medical. It also works in any situation across multiple applications like Word, Outlook or clinical systems, seamlessly."

Such is Julie's experience with Dragon Medical that she has no doubts that she would recommend it and she has, in fact, already done so – "...another practice is already looking at using it based on our positive experiences," she confirmed.



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