

## Case Study

### UPMC Beacon Hospital



# BT delivers critical connection

## Challenge

Beacon Hospital is operated by UPMC (University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre) and one of Ireland's leading full-service hospitals. The Dublin site had an IP network that provides telephony to 900 people and data services to around 1,000 users, including patient access to the internet.

Many organisations consider connectivity to be business critical. For the Beacon, it can be a matter of life and death. The connection back to UPMC in the States is used for medical imaging and real-time interaction with doctors in the Pittsburgh hospital using video conferencing.

The Beacon's stocktaking system is also based in the US and the connection is used to order vital medical supplies for operations. If an item fails to arrive by 12 o'clock on the day of a procedure then the operation has to be cancelled.

**"Reliability of our data connection is extremely important to us. We had a fibre connection with a telecoms company that would go down for an hour at a time, five or six times a year. That was unacceptable for us,"**

David Mulqueen  
IT Manager, UPMC Beacon Hospital

The hospital went to tender looking for a telecoms provider that could give the hospital the resilience it needed, with an optimised network for voice and data traffic. Around 10 companies responded. BT won the contract.

"Our primary goal was reliability and our second goal was to achieve it at reasonable cost. BT met both aims," said Mulqueen.

## Benefits

The migration to BT was seamless and took about two weeks, according to Mulqueen. "The engineers that came on site were top class. Nobody in the hospital even noticed we had made the switch."

The new contract saw BT install its product suite across the Beacon, BT Direct Voice, BT Telenumbers and a 10MB radio link. But the individual components were less important to Mulqueen than the resilience of the infrastructure.

A crucial part of what BT delivered was DDI (Direct Dialling In) routing. With the previous provider, groups of numbers were allocated to one of three Primary Rate Lines. If one line went down, all the numbers went with it. With BT, the 500 Beacon lines utilise whichever line is free. "If a PRI goes down it doesn't matter," said Mulqueen. "Only BT was able to offer us this level of service."

Further resilience came with the radio link. If the fibre goes down the microwave takes over, and vice versa. "The Beacon could lose either one and users wouldn't notice. It would be business as usual in the hospital because we can seamlessly switch from one to the other with no impact on the customer," explained Liam Donnelly, BT Account Manager.

This is a big benefit to a hospital. "The network wasn't very reliable before. Now it is rock solid," said Mulqueen. "It's vitally important that you can make communicate with voice or data at any time of the day, seven days a week."

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