

GP practice group cures print ills with Brother MPS

First 4 Health Group is a healthcare group that operates five surgeries across the London borough of Newham, serving a population of around 50,000 people.

The group uses printers for a range of applications, most commonly printing blood and stool test forms, but also for general documentation, notices, and signage.

However, the ageing printers across its consulting rooms and reception spaces were causing reliability issues, and the need for practice staff to order, manage and dispose of supplies was taking up valuable time and storage space. Working with Brother, via its reseller partner Bates IT, the group decided to implement a Brother Managed Print Service, first at its Stratford Village surgery and then rolled out across its other four locations.

More reliable, more sustainable

The group now uses a streamlined fleet of 68 MPS-supported printers across its estate, with automated supplies re-ordering for all toner and drum units. The connected devices automatically let Brother know when they are running low and a replacement is mailed out, clearly labelled with the location of the printer that is due a replacement.

This has eliminated the need to store spare supplies on site, something that was previously using up precious space at the surgeries, as well as sapping the time of practice managers, who needed to keep track of existing stock and then what needed to be ordered. Under the new arrangement, a member of staff

now just needs to install the supplies as they arrive, by following simple instructions included in the package.

The group now uses Brother's recycling scheme, enabling staff to simply send back any used supplies which then get recycled and re-manufactured, ensuring no waste goes to landfill. Each surgery receives an annual report from Brother, detailing the amount of materials recycled, along with the number of trees planted through the Cool Earth Charity. This information can be put towards sustainability credentials and demonstrates how a change in procedure can have a wider positive impact.

Bates IT also works with Brother and the surgery to help maintain the solution as part of the agreement, making periodic site visits to deliver this support.

Just what the doctor ordered

For clinicians across the group, the reliability improvements have reduced disruption to patient care that was sometimes caused by the previous print fleet.

Dr Mafruha Choudhury, a GP with the group, said: "In the old days, you'd be printing prescriptions and watching the toner get lower and lower until you thought 'okay, this is no longer

acceptable.' Then you're trying to ask somebody to change it for you and they come in mid-clinic to do it. "Now the printers just work reliably, and I never have to think about it, which is exactly what I need."

Overview

The challenge

- An unfit print solution at a busy General Practice group was eating into staff time and taking up excessive storage space
- Poor reliability and lack of clarity over recycling procedures
- Unavailability of stock and fluctuating prices from suppliers.

The solution

- A fleet of 68 printers under a managed print service (MPS) contract
- Connected print monitoring and automated supplies re-ordering
- Automated billing
- Recycling scheme for used consumables.

The results

- A significant amount of staff time freed up to focus on patient care
- Zero-waste to landfill recycling programme with reported waste-reduction figures
- Genuine Brother supplies arriving only when required and at a cost-saving price.