



Customer: NHS Fife

Web Site: www.show.scot.nhs.uk/fhb

Customer Size: 8,750

Country or Region: Scotland

Industry: Healthcare

Partner: DNS

Partner Web Site: www.dns.co.uk

Customer Profile

NHS Fife is responsible for maintaining and improving the health of the population of Fife in Scotland, where approximately 350,000 people live.

Software and Services

- Microsoft® Windows Server™2003
- Active Directory®
- Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000
- Microsoft Identity Integration Server 2003
- Microsoft Visual Studio® .NET 2003

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www.microsoft.com/resources/casestudies

NHS Fife Lists 90 Per Cent of Staff in U.K. National NHS Directory

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Business Needs

NHS Fife is responsible for healthcare services for approximately 350,000 people in Fife, Scotland. Its operating division manages acute services, and there are three Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) looking after mental health, community health, and general practitioners.

Identity management and synchronisation is a major challenge for NHS Fife due to the number of users of e-mail messaging systems (7,000 in total). To comply with directives from NHS Scotland, it is necessary for NHS Fife to have all staff on the United Kingdom national NHS directory system.

Donald Wilson, Head of IT Services, NHS Fife, says: “The business challenge is to gather all the identity information and keep it synchronised internally as well as with the

national directory. When we started the project for the implementation of a local metadirectory system, we only had between 5 and 10 per cent of our users on the national directory.”

NHS Fife also saw additional merit in the metadirectory solution, because unlike using tactical solutions to create and maintain local directories, it would result in:

- Accurate user data in its operating division and the CHPs.
- One stop for creation and deletion of users' accounts.
- Centralised and easier password management.

NHS Fife evaluated a proposed in-house solution as well as alternatives from Sun and Novell before accepting a proposal in April



2004 from dns, a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner for Security and Advanced Infrastructure Solutions, for a turnkey directory synchronisation system based on Microsoft Identity Integration Server (MIIS) 2003, which is part of Microsoft Windows Server System™ integrated server software. Wilson says: “MIIS 2003 was the best fit for this type of directory synchronisation problem, because it is so feature rich. The choice meant we could use our existing Microsoft operating system and database skills to address our identity management issues.”

Solution

The metadirectory using MIIS operates with the Microsoft Windows Server™ 2003 operating system, the foundation of Windows Server System, and the Active Directory® directory service, which is part of Windows Server 2003.

With help from dns, NHS Fife implemented the solution using the Microsoft Visual Studio® .NET 2003 development system and Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000 Standard Edition for data storage. It went live in September 2005 after some 40 working days of dns consultancy time.

The first stage involved the link to the national NHS directory and included the development of a Web-based data entry application for modifying identity credentials. It has two levels of delegation. It permits, for example, a General Practitioner practice to keep identity information up to date, but not to change any information outside its domain.

Mike Wawro, Managing Consultant, dns, says: “MIIS 2003 is the best-of-breed solution for identity management in NHS Scotland where the regional IT systems are based almost exclusively on Microsoft technologies. NHS Fife was the first to choose this solution, but

other NHS Scotland authorities have followed its example.” According to both Wawro and Wilson, MIIS 2003 is better than other solutions because among other features, it has more connectors out-of-the-box.

Wilson says: “MIIS is highly feature rich in terms of connectivity and gave us no problems with integrating legacy systems.” The legacy systems included a domain based on Microsoft Windows NT® Server version 4.0.”

Benefits

By using MIIS, NHS Fife has a robust, scalable, and flexible system that automatically synchronises staff identities with internal and external systems. Over 90 per cent of NHS Fife staff are now in the national directory.

Wilson says: “One unexpected benefit was that the implementation exposed the need for us to clean up our data and remove inconsistencies and errors of spelling in common Scottish surnames, especially those starting with ‘Mc’ and ‘Mac.’ This took time, but we are now in a much better position going forward.”

Other benefits include:

- The ability to delegate responsibility for data maintenance, minimising the need for a centralised administrator.
- Reduced risk of spreading incorrect and insecure identity data.
- Core technology for creating automated user provisioning and deprovisioning to systems—another key benefit in improving security.
- Customisable through multiple development languages.

- Diverse range of out-of-the box connectors. NHS Fife can easily implement links to applications and databases to keep user information synchronised.
- The use of SQL Server 2000 database with no need for a proprietary database or additional training for administrators.
- Standards-based Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) access through Active Directory Application Mode (ADAM).
- Having the ability to test modifications to connected databases in ‘preview mode’, which reduces testing time and simplifies directory changes.