

Dragon Medical.

Time saved, accuracy up, errors down. Wellspring Medical Practice, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Site profile:

- Five doctors
- 5,500 patients
- 60 patient letters produced per month

Challenge:

- Doctors not proficient at typing
- Reports slow and inaccurate
- Strain on secretarial team to correct content

Results:

- Accurate, easy and quick capture of patient notes and clinical documents
- Patient letters more detailed and comprehensive
- Secretaries save half a day

Wellspring Medical Practice

Founded almost 60 years ago, Killingworth-based Wellspring Medical Practice attends to the medical needs of almost five and half thousand patients. An experienced team comprising doctors, nurses, practice and healthcare professionals, work together to provide a range of services as wide and diverse as general health checks, baby clinics, travel immunisations and health advice, diabetic clinics, psychology, counselling and chronic disease management.

Accuracy is vital

It is widely acknowledged that accurate patient records are central to patients receiving precise, timely and appropriate medical treatment. Therefore capturing data accurately is essential. With this in mind, Wellspring Medical Practice decided that its process for creating general practice records could be improved by offering its doctors the ability to dictate them using speech recognition technology, rather than type them — a process that resulted in records of varying quality, because the doctors were not professional typists. Their lack of typing proficiency caused delays in the creation of both referral letters and general practice records while typing them up was a time-consuming task for the secretary.

A meeting with Nuance Communications Healthcare Connections partner, Voice Power Ltd, introduced the surgery to Dragon Medical integrated with TPP's SystmOne clinical software, which allows patient information to be shared electronically. Dragon Medical is Nuance' front-end, real-time, desktop, speech recognition software. Developed to enable doctors to conveniently and efficiently

generate clinical documentation and navigate clinical systems, Dragon Medical maximises healthcare professionals' productivity and performance, enabling them to do more with less, improve information accuracy and raise the quality of service and care delivered to patients. With Dragon Medical, clinical letters can be dictated directly, up to three times faster than typing, helping to meet targets to get discharge letters to patients within 24 hours. With accurate reporting central to delivering optimised patient care, Dragon Medical's accuracy rates of up to 99% ensure clear, accurate and timely clinical letters. To ensure consistent accuracy, Dragon Medical has been optimised for non-native speakers too, while new medical vocabularies cover almost 80 specialities and sub-specialities.

Dragon Medical — a speech-based solution

Already open to the concept and benefits of speech recognition, Wellspring Medical Practice heard Voice Power explain how, when used as front-end speech recognition on the surgery's desktop PCs, Dragon Medical could not only help increase the accuracy of the general practice records, but — thanks to people speaking faster than they type — also increase the detail included, to provide a more comprehensive practice record. This contributes to optimising the quality of healthcare for patients. Voice Power also explained that Dragon Medical could be personalised to the needs of each user, showing that the technology fits around them, rather than the other way around. This flexibility encourages acceptance, accelerates deployment and doesn't impact the doctor's workflow, or working practices. Convinced that Voice Power presented a compelling case for Dragon Medical, a successful pilot trial was conducted before Wellspring Medical Practice decided it would deploy the software. Voice Power then further assisted with individual training, personalising Dragon Medical to each user's requirements with specific macros to speed up tasks, such as adding standardised or generic text to a document.

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The benefits of using Dragon Medical were apparent early on, according to Liz Brittlebank, Practice Manager at Wellspring Medical Practice. "Not all of the doctors are good typists. Dragon Medical presents them with an alternative way to create general practice records without typing." Additionally, Dragon Medical enables the GPs to create the patient record at a time convenient for them and, because the quality and accuracy is far better using Dragon Medical, the secretaries spend less time editing. Once they have received the referral letter, their time is now mainly spent formatting the document rather than editing it. The impact on their productivity has been considerable with Liz stating they save 'approximately half a day' since deploying

Dragon Medical, with letters being turned around in between one and two days. There is a further benefit that contributes to better patient outcomes, as Liz explains. "Dragon Medical's accuracy makes the continuity of care a lot easier to achieve. It helps create letters that are coherent and can be read at-a-glance. Both medically and legally, I feel much more comfortable with the quality and accuracy of letters produced using Dragon Medical."

The overall satisfaction with Dragon Medical has been bolstered further, as Liz states. "Dragon Medical is much more flexible than we initially realised. The doctors are impressed that it can be used to create and send emails and conduct research online in addition to creating text. Additionally, it has integrated really well into our medical record workflow process." Wellspring Medical Practice has been so impressed with Dragon Medical that not only has it recommended it to other surgeries, it has invited other medical professionals over to see it in action, explaining the benefits it has delivered and how these can filter back into improved patient care — the objective of all medical professionals, wherever they are based.

Wellspring Medical Practice uses Dragon Medical Practice Edition 2 from Nuance Healthcare, provided by Nuance Healthcare Connections partner, VoicePower Ltd:

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