



Following the Trauma of a Data Breach and Facing an ICO Fine, NHS Surrey call in Data Eliminate to Stabilize their Asset Disposal Operations.

Client: NHS Surrey Primary Care Trust

Assignment: On-Site Destruction of Hard Drives and Back Up Tapes.
Decommissioning of IT Equipment from Doctors' Surgeries



Supplying Surrey's Health Facilities

NHS Surrey (formerly Surrey Primary Care Trust) is a commissioner of healthcare services from many different organisations. NHS Surrey works with clinicians, patients and the public to make sure that patients can be treated at the right time, in the right place, first time, and ensuring best value for money.

It has contracts with GP practices, pharmacies, opticians and dental practices, as well as 'out of hours' GP services. The services it provides include supporting the IT infrastructure of Doctor Surgeries and other health facilities within Surrey.

This role includes management of the procurement of new IT equipment and the disposal of computer equipment that is no longer required.



The Challenges Facing NHS Surrey

NHS Surrey suffered a data breach which culminated in the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) fining it £200,000.. The fine was in relation to patient records found on a second hand computer which had previously belonged to the organisation. The computer had been sold by the company responsible for recycling NHS Surrey's used IT equipment since 2010 who had failed to destroy the computer's hard drive prior to its resale.

After the data breach,, NHS Surrey urgently needed a genuinely secure solution for decommissioning its used IT equipment such as workstations, printers and networking components from surgeries and other facilities within Surrey.

The principal challenges were to:

- Prevent any further data breaches
- Use an HM Government approved method of data destruction which was in line with NHS requirements
- Ensure that all sensitive information was destroyed before leaving NHS Surrey's premises
- Account for every asset discarded to ensure each was processed
- Recommend an approved solution for individual surgeries with their own data destruction needs
- Find a flexible service structure which could cope with fluctuating quantities of equipment for

- disposal which accumulated at NHS Surrey's HQ
- Dispose of/Recycle equipment in an environmentally responsible manner
- Identify a supplier who could handle all NHS Surrey's Data Destruction and IT Disposal/recycling needs

The NHS Surrey IT Department commenced a thorough search to find a reliable service provider. A Data Eliminate Director visited NHS Surrey's premises to learn about their requirements, answer any questions and recommend a solution specially tailored to NHS Surrey's needs.

Data Eliminate was selected because it had the ability to shred hard drives and back-up tapes to 15mm x 15mm particles at NHS Surrey's premises. Data Eliminate's mobile capability included the cataloguing of all IT data-bearing and non-data-bearing items on-site at NHS Surrey's HQ. Importantly, Data Eliminate also held a suite of independently audited ISO and HM Government accreditations.

Data Eliminate's Solution

Data Eliminate's solution comprised:

- An on-site cataloguing service to ensure every asset was accounted for. Data Eliminate engineers recorded the make, model, manufacturer's serial number and internal NHS asset number of every item being processed including hard drives, workstation base units, printers, screens and network components.
- The movement of non data bearing items from the second floor, their wrapping and palletizing ready for removal from site.
- On-Site destruction of all media by shredding using a vehicle mounted shredder
- A Certificate of Destruction showing full details of each item processed
- Supervision of every stage of the process by a representative from NHS Surrey's IT Department
- Removal of all waste and unwanted IT equipment such as base units, printers, screens etc from NHS premises on the same day
- Documentation such as Waste Transfer Notes and Hazardous Waste Consignment Notes to verify compliance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive.

Data-bearing items were put through a set procedure. Prior to Data Eliminate's arrival, NHS Surrey's IT Department checked each computer chassis to ensure the hard drives had been removed. When they did so, the asset number of the chassis was written on the corresponding hard drive. This asset number and the serial number of the hard drive were in turn recorded by Data Eliminate prior to destruction and printed on the Certificate of Destruction. This provided a full audit trail.



A Successful Outcome

By the end of each site visit by Data Eliminate engineers, NHS Surrey has:

- The knowledge that all data bearing items have been physically destroyed and that sensitive information could never be retrieved
- Personally witnessed the process from end to end
- Reassurance that their data protection and environmental obligations have been met
- Full documentation showing all items processed during the day's activity
- A storage area cleared of computer equipment and data-bearing media

"Data Eliminate's ability to destroy hard drives and data tapes on-site in front of our eyes gives us the reassurance that sensitive information is definitely being destroyed. Most importantly, it brings the data destruction process under our control at our own premises," said Matthew Pullar, Associate Director of IT Services at NHS Surrey, who was responsible for recalibrating the organisation's approach to Asset Disposal after the data breach incident.