

# NHS Forth Valley: How We Achieved Service Desk Certification In A Pandemic



## Introducing NHS Forth Valley

NHS Forth Valley is one of 14 regional health boards and serves a population of around 300,000 in a diverse geographical area which covers the heart of Scotland. The Digital & eHealth department is one of a number of support services within NHS Forth Valley. Delivering high quality patient care is the goal of everyone in our organisation and we all have a part to play in achieving this objective.

## Tell us about your service desk

There are a total of 10 members of staff in the service desk team, led by our Service Desk Manager Linda Wolanski. The service desk is based in one of our four community hospitals in Falkirk. Digital and IT services are increasingly in demand and are vital to help improve patient pathways and deliver more effective ways of providing care to local people.

## How many users are supported by the service desk?

We provide ICT support to over 8000 staff working across primary, secondary and community care. The service desk handles on average around 3000 incidents and 1500 requests a month.

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## **When did you decide to pursue Service Desk Certification?**

We started our certification journey in April 2019 when Lynne Nash, Auditor, SDI performed her initial audit. The idea to join the programme came from our Service Desk Manager, Linda Wolanski.

The SDI certification programme was an ideal opportunity to take a structured and targeted approach to achieve our main goal of customer service improvement.

## **How did you know SDI's programme was right for you?**

We started by doing some research, looking at organisations who had already completed the certification programme, and we decided to travel to the SDI conference which had many presentations and workshops on this topic.

We also approached NHS Lothian who helpfully shared their positive experiences and encouraged us to proceed with the SDI certification programme.

The service desk team, Senior Management and the whole department were on board to begin this journey. Even though we knew it would be hard work, we felt it would also be rewarding and very beneficial for not only us as a department, but for our whole customer base.

## **What challenges did you encounter during the process?**

The challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic were significant and unprecedented. Front line staff members across NHS Forth Valley have worked incredibly hard to respond quickly to the pandemic and support our local communities.

Our NHS Forth Valley Digital & eHealth staff members have risen to the challenge in the past 18 months, not only in maintaining our current service levels, but also striving to continually improve our processes and deliver increased value to our customers through a better user experience.

## **Tell us about your experience of working with SDI...**

SDI has been instrumental in guiding NHS Forth Valley's Digital & eHealth department on a continuous improvement process which has greatly improved our customer experience and added significant value to the organisation.

The SDI team has been a joy to work with; always available to answer our queries and help us progress the project. We have greatly appreciated their patience, support, and professionalism throughout our certification journey.

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## How has your team responded to becoming certified?

Significant improvements have been made to our services, despite some of the most challenging times in NHS history, and we are very proud to have achieved the two-star accreditation from SDI. We are determined to continue our service improvement journey.

## How did you measure the success of the project?

Our goal throughout the programme was to improve our service management processes, enabling us to deliver quality and effective services that directly benefit our customers. We engaged with stakeholders via world café events and customer focus groups, to ensure we were consistently meeting the needs of our staff and customers.

We have realised many measurable benefits of SDC such as increased customer satisfaction scores, better service level performance, greater staff retention and improved incident resolution times.

## What changes have you observed within the team?

The SDC programme has helped to greatly improve communication levels within the department and with our customer base. It has allowed us to improve our governance and practices, setting us on the correct path to achieve our strategic objectives.

Staff now feel better equipped to meet the needs of our customers, by adopting best practice in incident, change and problem management and regularly sharing their knowledge and expertise throughout the department.

## What future goals do you have for the service operation?

NHS Forth Valley is starting to work collaboratively to remobilise, recover and rebuild a better healthcare system as we emerge from the pandemic. As part of these plans, we intend to develop our new Digital & eHealth Service management tool by improving the automation and orchestration functionality. This project will streamline our account creation and administration processes, leading to a more effective employee onboarding process.

The Digital & eHealth service desk and the wider department are committed to the SDC programme and to continually improving our practices to deliver better value for our customers and patients.



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