

Homerton Healthcare embraces true SaaS enterprise imaging with **Sectra** and **Microsoft Azure**

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is the first National Health Service (NHS) organization in the UK to deploy a cloud-based enterprise imaging service fully managed by Sectra. The deployment improves clinician workflows, provides more precise diagnostics, and demonstrates how patient imaging can be securely created, stored, and accessed from Microsoft Azure, proving true SaaS healthcare solutions have a promising future for medical facilities around the world.



Homerton leads region with digital transformation

Following a government mandate to embrace cloud solutions, NHS North East London became the first in the region to take on the challenge with its patient records and medical imaging solutions. One of its organisations, Homerton Healthcare, was already having trouble with its existing PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication System) – a core system underpinning Radiology operations. The system was unstable and would go down frequently enough that the radiology and wider clinical teams had learned to work around it. Even the system vendor was unable to pinpoint or fix the root cause of the instability.

In 2023, NHS issued a mandate for healthcare facilities to adopt innovative technology, to ensure the service could “thrive long into the future, delivering vast benefits for patients.” This encouraged Homerton to explore cloud-based imaging solutions that would better support the service and allow data to be shared securely across departments and partnering organisations.



“It’s one thing to replace a core radiology system like a PACS in the NHS. It’s quite another to implement a true SaaS PACS running on Microsoft Azure—but that’s what we’ve done at Homerton.”

— Adham Nicola, Radiology Systems Manager
Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

To achieve this goal, Homerton sought the expertise and solutions of Sectra, a well-established, trusted, and proven solution partner in London. Homerton also had an existing enterprise agreement with Microsoft, which made the decision to partner with Sectra and Microsoft the obvious choice.

Imaging moves to the public cloud

Homerton began by deploying the radiology and orthopaedic modules of Sectra One Cloud, Sectra's subscription-based enterprise imaging solution. Sectra One Cloud is a fully managed software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution featuring eight software modules covering a range of clinical specialties and -ologies. It runs on Microsoft Azure and can scale up as capacity grows and new modules are activated and deployed.

Since it is a SaaS solution, Sectra handles the ongoing maintenance, product innovation, and improvements, allowing Homerton staff to have continuous access to any new features and upgrades as they are released and Homerton can easily implement additional modules and capabilities without having to look for a new solution.



"Given the positive experiences with Sectra in other trusts in the ICS and the NHS's existing agreement with Microsoft, Sectra One Cloud on Azure made sense from every angle. Because it runs on Azure, we know we'll have the security, reliability, scalability, and flexibility to grow with us."

— Mark Jones, Senior Project Manager
Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
(Through Apira Ltd.)



The solution is the first of its kind in the UK and will support an average of 200,000 imaging examinations annually. Today, Homerton's radiology team now have access to content and tools needed to organize, prioritize, and streamline imaging workflows in a single platform.

Among those tools, clinical and operations staff appreciate the Sectra chat functionality that allows them to quickly share images and communicate throughout the workday. Orthopaedic templating enables surgeons to review imaging results and plan treatments accordingly, eliminating a costly third-party solution. The ability to integrate allied systems means critical data no longer needs to be incorporated manually. Images can be shared with any department using a secure web client, and cross-site reporting will eventually allow for wider sub-specialty collaboration throughout the region. Even managers are benefiting with business intelligence reports helping them better track activity, create analysis charts, and understand department turnaround times and pressure points. Additionally, the SaaS solution eliminates the need for Homerton's IT team to manage the solution, maintain the infrastructure, or procure more hardware when adding additional modules.



“Having a new radiology imaging solution as a fully managed cloud service relieves our IT team of management responsibilities—a significant benefit. We’ve also seen clinical benefits, such as faster access to new features and new technology. Choosing a scalable cloud solution moves us closer to a consolidated cloud system supporting all hospitals in our integrated care system.”

— Niall Canavan, Director of IT and Systems
Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Embracing the future of NHS

Sectra One Cloud signals an important victory for North East London Health and Care Partnership. Homerton Healthcare is the first of three trusts in the area planning to adopt enterprise imaging with Sectra and Azure. Today, Homerton is planning to expand its subscription to incorporate the Sectra Radiology Information System (RIS) module. Barking, Havering and Redbridge locations will migrate to the solution with an eye toward additional VNA (Vendor-Neutral Archive) functionality to store images for other-ologies.

The successful implementation also has Homerton looking ahead at new technologies to improve patient outcomes. Until then, they serve as a model for other healthcare facilities seeking ways to successfully embrace digital transformation with the public cloud.





“We’ve achieved a milestone in cloud adoption for NHS imaging. Being bleeding edge can be a challenge, but feedback from radiologists has only been positive. The system is highly reliable, secure, resilient and performs well, supporting our clinical teams with lots more functionality that is proving very popular. Sectra One Cloud also has the potential to help us to adopt AI into the future.”

— Adham Nicola, Radiology Systems Manager
Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust



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