

CUSTOMER UPDATE - PLEASE READ

Important request for all NHS IT users

Over recent weeks, 1000s of devices have been deployed, along with new digital tools, to enable a large majority of our healthcare professionals to work from home, collaborate and most importantly continue to deliver care.

Whilst this is currently working well, it has placed extra strain on our VPN network, which has seen an **increase in usage from 200 users (pre-COVID-19) to over 3,000 users per day.**

To improve network performance, over recent weeks, our engineers have upgraded the network to deliver a **5-fold increase in bandwidth.** To support the on-going growth in demand, and deliver a more resilient solution, **plans are underway to urgently upgrade the network further.**

What can you do to help?

Whilst we are waiting for the upgrade to take place, **your support** would be greatly appreciated in helping to alleviate some of the pressure on the network by following the guidance below.

<h3>Access online services using your personal device</h3> <p>Viewing news websites, listening to radio stations and watching live streams and videos all consume significant Internet bandwidth and place extra strain on our network. Please use your personal device for accessing these services.</p>	<h3>Use Skype for Business during quieter network times</h3> <p>Our network is at its busiest from 8-10am (Monday to Friday). Where possible, please arrange your Skype for Business calls during quieter times or for 1:1 conversations, please use mobile phones.</p>	<h3>When to use video with Skype for Business</h3> <p>The video functionality within Skype for Business can be a really useful tool however, it does consume significant Internet bandwidth. Please only use video when necessary.</p>

We appreciate that these are extremely challenging times for all however, by following the guidance above, you will be helping to ensure that everyone who needs to use the VPN network to deliver critical services, is able to do so. We thank you in advance for your support and will update you as soon as the network has been further upgraded.

For guidance on using the digital tools available to you, please visit the [Self Service Portal](#) or [NHS Informatics Merseyside website](#).