

Case Study

Royal District Nursing Service

160,000 Reasons to Upgrade

The Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) of South Australia is an organisation that specialises in providing nursing and ancillary services - not telephony!

The RDNS receives 160,000 telephone calls per annum, or over 4000 each week. While some of these calls are routine, others may be inbound or outbound from carers during and after regular business hours or, most importantly, from callers with an urgent need for assistance.

The challenge for any call centre operation is to determine each caller's need and to deliver their call to the right area. For the RDNS, it's mission-critical that this is done as quickly as possible and on a 24-hour basis.

The Goal: State of The Art

When the RDNS wanted to upgrade its three-year old telephone system to incorporate a state-of-the-art call management system to improve its communication with clients and service partners (a key component of its business), they needed a supplier prepared to understand its complex business environment and system requirements.

Therese Theodosi, Call Centre Manager at Healthcare Access, said, "NEC Business Solutions really helped me to understand and become familiar with call centre technology."

The RDNS needed to upgrade the quality and speed of responses to referrals and client inquiries. It wanted to install a high-technology call centre that would provide the highest level of service to its clients, including the fastest possible response times. To offset the costs of developing this system, the RDNS planned to market the service to other health agencies.



RDNS – 120 years of care



"Establishing a single point of entry with a strong focus on customer expectations has helped us achieve a high level of customer satisfaction."

Ms Theodosi,
Call Centre Manager
Healthcare Access

NEC Business Solutions

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The Solution: NEC Q-Master

The RDNS chose to use as its call centre a state-of-the-art NEC enterprise communication platform with call management provided by NEC's Q-Master. An external communications consultant was retained to review and confirm that these NEC solutions were the best possible choice.

According to Ms Theodosi, using NEC call centre technology has enabled RDNS and its subsidiary, Healthcare Access, to improve the quality of service that they provide.

The RDNS chose NEC for a number of reasons. First, NEC took the time needed to understand the nursing service's business situation and needs, including determining how to handle each individual telephone call. This involved investigation and analysis, followed by some coaching and training of selected RDNS staff in call queuing procedures and techniques.

A Tailor-Made Solution

NEC discovered what the customer wanted and needed and was able to supply a tailor-made system that matched these requirements. The system NEC provided also allowed for future expansion via an easy migratory path that would enable RDNS to utilise greater capability when this became needed.

Second, RDNS was impressed with NEC's credibility as an established and quality provider of call centre technology.

Third, RDNS liked the fact that NEC was an Australian-based operation with an excellent reputation for after-sales service. It has a Melbourne research and development centre where problems could be diagnosed or necessary design changes could be undertaken as and when required.

Quality was also an important issue for RDNS. The nursing service decided that reliability and functionality were more important than price. It wanted a quality system that could deal with its current situation and which could accommodate its future requirements.

Continuous Service

The 24 hour, seven-days-a-week (24x7) call centre started in May 1999. After it received contributory funding from the Department of Human Services, it became a specialist health call centre under the banner of Healthcare Access. It now services the needs of more than 4000 RDNS clients a month and other service professionals.

Given the nature of its clients and their expectations, particularly the elderly or infirm, the 21-seat call centre employs 'real people' to answer all calls, rather than using devices such as voice recognition and auto agents.

These staff comprise a mix of nurses and clerical staff, all selected because they have a caring, empathetic attitude and a passion for customer service. They receive a thorough induction in call centre operations, followed by regular training and ongoing 'MAC': monitoring, analysing and coaching.

The Result: An award-winning formula

This improvements delivered through this solution are measurable. "Since establishing the call centre in May 1999, we have regularly exceeded the predetermined minimal standard of answering 85 per cent of calls within 30 seconds," Ms Theodosi said. Less than two per cent of calls are abandoned, while 98 per cent of its clients report that call centre staff were able to help when they called.

This mix of highly trained, motivated staff and leading edge technology has provided Healthcare Access with an award-winning formula. In 2001, it won the Australian Teleservice Association award for best South Australian call centre under 50 seats.

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