

Enabling High Performance across a Nationwide Network of 50 Imaging Centres and 40 Mobile Scanners



Alliance Medical, the UK's Leading Private Medical Imaging Providers, rely on IntelPACS® for consistency in an ever-changing environment

About Alliance Medical

Established in 1989, Alliance Medical is Europe's leading independent provider of medical imaging services. With operations in 17 European countries, the organization provides intelligent imaging services which focus on the convergence of skill, technology and information. In doing so, they help provide clinicians with vital knowledge to make accurate and speedy diagnoses.

With over 25 years' experience working with the NHS and private sector hospitals in the UK, Alliance Medical currently employs 850 people across 50 centres and approximately 40 mobile scanners. In total, the organization provides over 120 medical imaging services to the NHS and independent sector, and provides services to 400,000 patients in the UK each year. In addition, the company operates a network of scanning centres which offer predominantly MRI scanning, but some sites also offer a range of other diagnostic modalities including CT, PET/CT, DEXA, X-ray and Ultrasound.

In January 2015, NHS England awarded a ten-year contract to a collaborative network (led by Alliance Medical) to deliver PET/CT scanning services to NHS patients at 30 locations across the country. The Collaborative Network consists of The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, local NHS and charitable providers and a number of leading academic institutions.

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Dr. Johann Alberts
Alliance Medical's
Clinical Systems Director

The Need for Flexibility

In addition to the vast amount of Alliance Medical sites across the UK, nearly half of them change location on a regular basis. This posed a challenge with their legacy PACS, which was geared towards a single-site hospital environment and had limited capabilities in regards to image distribution.

“Image distribution was our legacy PACS absolute achilles heel,” said Dr. Johann Alberts, Alliance Medical’s Director of PET/CT Operations. “It didn’t cope with it at all and for that reason we needed a new platform.”

In searching for a new system, it was also clear that flexibility would be a key focus in order to manage a diverse customer base. In serving patients from the NHS, private sector, charities and medico-legal cases, the requirements for image management are quite different from client to client. For instance, some customers require both scan and report, while others only require scanning. Some customers want reporting to take place locally, while others have a need for remote radiologists to do some reporting.

“We had a very clear vision of what we wanted to achieve, which was very much driven by our customer base,” said Dr. Alberts. “At the same time, we wanted a system that would provide us some advantages within the marketplace that we felt our competitors didn’t have necessarily, such as remote reporting.”

Deploying IntelePACS Across a Nationwide Network

After evaluating a number of solutions, Alliance Medical selected IntelePACS as its primary medical imaging system. Highly regarded for its robust, easy-to-use viewer and capabilities in distributed environments, the solution provides a consistent user experience regardless of location. This was beneficial given Alliance Medical’s distributed architecture, and would provide a competitive advantage through its remote reporting capabilities.

“I wasn’t looking for a system that needed lots of development,” said Dr. Alberts. “IntelePACS is a system which, out of the box, worked for us, and only needed some tweaks to the configuration. This, along with the support we received made the deployment itself pretty smooth.”

Providing Immediate Results

According to Dr. Alberts, within a month or two of deploying IntelePACS, the solution’s benefits were clear. In addition to InteleViewer™’s rich functionality delighting radiologists, Alliance Medical immediately benefited from the system’s remote reporting capabilities.

“The fact that I can get a reporter to login from his home and still have the images and his worklist live has really made a huge difference,” said Dr. Alberts. “They are also reporting into the PACS, so the report is captured in the PACS and distributed back to their RIS electronically by HL7, as opposed to copying and pasting them from email into the right system. From a quality and risk management perspective, I think that had a huge impact from day one.”

Dr. Alberts notes that visibility and control around how images are distributed across the network has had a big impact, both in terms of quality and cost control.

“In the past I had four PACS installations, all from different vendors and with varying issues and all of the knowledge to maintain the systems sitting with a select few individuals in our company,” said Dr. Alberts. “With IntelePACS, I’ve suddenly got control because I can firmly see what’s going on across my sites and I can get rid of technology that is old, expensive and redundant.”

Impacting Business Growth

IntelePACS has also been a major influence in terms of business growth, having played a key role in obtaining the National PET/CT Contract.

“One of the core elements of our whole proposal in the tender process was around our technology platform,” said Dr. Alberts. “IntelePACS provided some key differentiators which helped us secure the contract.”

These differentiators include:

- Central visibility of all sites.
- The ability to integrate with specialist packages.
- The ability to get overflow work from one location and almost instantly, at the click of a button, send it to a different reporter at a completely different location.
- A double-read workflow that allows our radiologists to double read studies which have been reported by another radiologist.
- An integrated analytics module.
- The potential to use the system to drive research.

A Strong Relationship is Key to Success

When undertaking a massive project, such as the National PET/CT Contract, it is important to have the vendor support you need to accomplish your goals, for Dr. Alberts, being able to rely on Intelera has been reassuring.

"I think our relationship with Intelera is very strong," said Dr. Alberts. "The integrity and the transparency has been very refreshing, making the company a pleasure to work with."

About Intelera Medical Systems

Intelera is a recognized leader in medical imaging PACS and workflow solutions. IntelPACS[®] relies on a scalable, flexible, and fault-tolerant architecture. Intelera solutions, like IntelOne[®], have a strong reputation for reliability and performance in complex, multi-site environments with challenging workflows.