



## Medical speech to text cuts typing backlog for Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust - Clinical Genetics

### Site profile:

- The Yorkshire Regional Genetics Service within Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.
- Treats patients across North, East and West Yorkshire and North Humberside.
- Department is made up of approximately 25 clinicians and 25 administrative support staff.

### Challenges:

- Staff were using a digital dictation platform which led to a large typing backlog resulting in delays in patients receiving their letters.
- Clinicians were having to do some re-work due to the length of time it was taking for letters to be typed, approved, and issued.
- A backlog of patients waiting over 5/6 weeks to receive their letter following clinic was not uncommon.

### Results:

- The Clinical Genetics department have embraced Dragon Medical speech to text software with 14 clinicians reaping the benefits and another 7 users about to be set-up.
- Patient letter turnaround time has gone from 5/6 weeks to 1 week.
- Clinicians have reported increases in efficiency within their working practices.

### Background

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust's Clinical Genetics Department provides a diagnostic service and genetic counselling for individuals or families with, or at risk of, conditions which may have a genetic basis.

This service is called The Yorkshire Regional Genetics Service and as the name suggests, receives approximately 7000 patient referrals per year patients across North, East and West Yorkshire and North Humberside.

The service has an administrative base at Chapel Allerton Hospital in Leeds but holds clinics at sites within Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust as well as Bradford and Hull. The team consists of approximately 25 clinical staff: Consultant Geneticists, Genetic Counsellors, Genetic Associates, Nurse Specialists, and trainee doctors. The clinical team are supported by around 25 administrative staff.

We caught up with Business Development Manager, Katherine Thomas, to discuss the department's journey as they embraced Dragon Medical speech recognition software.



**The Leeds  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust**



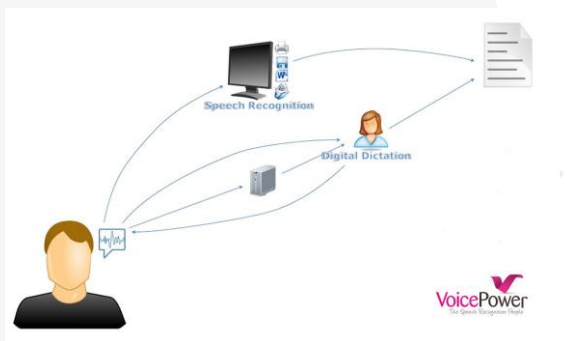
## It is time to banish the backlog

Playing a key role in the departments swap to medical speech to text technology, Katherine Thomas reflects on what led them to the decision to change their processes.

**“Clinical staff used a dictation platform to record their clinical dictation onto sound files which were then transcribed by medical secretaries. Those letters were produced within the LTHT letters system. Once letters were transcribed there were further steps in the pathway for authors to approve those letters which were then returned to the secretarial team for issuing to patients.”**

- Katherine Thomas

Whilst digital dictation is a great option for some GP's or NHS trusts, what works for some doesn't work for others and this was the case for Katherine and her team. The genetics department experienced large backlogs due to what we at VoicePower call the reporting loop:



As you can see on the diagram, the Clinical Genetics team were experiencing a duplication of tasks whereby the dictations needed to be sent back to clinicians after transcription to be approved and distributed.

**“Clinicians felt they were having to do some re-work following delays in clinic letters being typed due to the length of time it was taking for letters to be typed, approved and issued.”**

- Katherine Thomas

Therefore, this reporting loop led to a delay in the letters being sent to the patient creating a backlog, as Katherine explains:

**“We had large typing backlogs which meant delays in patients receiving their letters. This also led to inefficiencies within our processes and caused bottlenecks within administrative pathways.”**

- Katherine Thomas

Well aware that there was a more efficient method out there, the Clinical Genetics team reached out to workflow and speech technology experts VoicePower Ltd after another service in our CSU (Clinical Service Unit) was working with them and were experiencing improvements in turnaround times.

## Dragon Medical impresses Leeds Teaching Hospitals

Taking the team through their Workflow Consultancy Service, VoicePower took the time to understand what the Genetics department were hoping to achieve by upgrading their workflow, as Katherine confirms:

**“Our service had several meetings with VoicePower representatives to go through the product on offer and discuss how it may work for us. A project plan was devised, and we met regularly to launch a pilot then full adoption of the product.”**

- Katherine Thomas

The product that they decided on was in fact Nuance Communication's medical speech to text software: Dragon Medical Practice Edition. This version has an in-built medical vocabulary, is compatible with most clinical systems and allows users to create words 3x faster than if they were typing!

After being fully supported through the installation and set-up of their new licences, the clinicians were able to get stuck in and see what Dragon was really about.

As it stands, the department currently has 14 Dragon Medical users with another 7 to soon be deployed, and Katherine was pleased with the users' feedback:

**“Dragon has been well received and users have been impressed with the accuracy and speed. I have reports of increases in efficiency within individuals working practices. The biggest positive impact has been patients receiving their letters more quickly.”**

- Katherine Thomas

### An investment that pays off today

Katherine goes on to explain that traditionally over the last few years department has carried a significant backlog of patient letters waiting to be typed, approved, and issued to patients. This was caused by a number of factors. Furthermore, Katherine commented: "A backlog of patients waiting over 5/6 weeks to receive their letter following clinic was not uncommon."

It is important to note that the department's deployment of Dragon coincided with the emergence of COVID which of course put strain on them and the trust as a whole: "The pandemic had an impact on our workload as routine GP referrals were paused for a period of time which in turn cause patients presenting in clinic to fluctuate."

However, Katherine explains that there has still been clear evidence that Dragon has led to improved efficiency:

**"Dragon has contributed to a position where we now do not have a backlog of letters waiting to be typed. We are working differently and on average patients are now waiting approximately less than 1 week to receive their letters following their clinic appointment."**

- Katherine Thomas

### The journey to speech recognition

Looking back at their transformation so far, the Clinical Genetics department had nothing but great things to say about the swap and their experience:

**"VoicePower provided valuable support during the roll out of training to users, they were very accessible and provided extensive support to me and other colleagues delivering the product to our team. There were a number of internal technical challenges which VoicePower helped and guided us through. VoicePower's expertise were available at the end of the phone or via email and nothing was too much trouble."**

- Katherine Thomas

VoicePower pride themselves and the success of their clients on their 1-2-1 Dragon training courses; The sessions are personalised to each user and not only ensure successful adoption of the software but also boost productivity and efficiency. Evidently, Katherine and her team concurred:

**"The training was comprehensive and provided those being trained with confidence in then delivering the training to our colleagues. The training VoicePower delivered was easy to understand and to follow. Guidance and advice were offered to us in rolling out the training to the department – this proved very useful."**

- Katherine Thomas

As Katherine reflects on their journey with medical speech to text software so far, she summarises:

**"VoicePower's support service has been very valuable. Having access to expertise and advice was key in being able to confidently deliver training to users."**

- Katherine Thomas

