

Modernising the Delivery of Care with Apple Technology at **Stepping Hill Hospital**

Modernising Inpatient Care

Stepping Hill Hospital, part of Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, is a leading example of digital transformation within healthcare. Serving a population of over 350,000 people in Greater Manchester, the hospital has 470 beds and a busy inpatient care environment.

To elevate the patient experience, Stepping Hill sought a modern solution to replace outdated bedside entertainment and communication systems.





The Challenge:

Outdated Systems, Limited Experiences.

Before the iPad deployment, traditional bedside units were no longer meeting the needs of both patients and staff. We spoke to Stepping Hill Hospital's Chief Technology Officer, Peter Hughes, to get more insight into the project. "The previous entertainment solution had remained largely unchanged for the last 10 years and was very limited in what it provided to patients."

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Chief Technology Officer

Legacy hardware offered only limited access to TV and radio, and had become increasingly difficult and costly to maintain.

With outdated features and restrictive functionality, the systems no longer aligned with the expectations of today's tech-savvy patients - contributing to a lack of entertainment, limited communication, and ultimately, a sense of isolation during inpatient care.

It became clear to the hospital that a more meaningful solution was needed. One that moved beyond basic entertainment to actively support overall patient wellbeing during their hospital stay.



sync

The Solution: Putting Patients First

For patients, time spent in hospital can be difficult - especially when they feel disconnected from normal life. Stepping Hill recognised this challenge.

To create a more engaging and inclusive bedside experience, the hospital expanded its digital ambitions by integrating iPad into daily patient life, entrusting Sync and SPARK TSL to bring this vision to life.

The deployment included iPad for over 500 bedside units, each providing seamless access to SPARK Fusion, a platform designed specifically for healthcare that offers entertainment, translation services, meal ordering, hospital information, and more - all from the comfort of the patient's bed.

With iPad and SPARK Fusion, patients can enjoy entertainment on demand, including streaming TV and films, listening to the radio, browsing the internet, and playing interactive games. But the benefits extend far beyond entertainment.

Patients can now access hospital information, use translation services to communicate with staff, complete digital feedback surveys, and even order meals - all from the bedside.

Thanks to the intuitive design of iPad – and the familiarity many people already have with Apple technology – the transition is easy and accessible for patients of all ages and abilities.

Unlike traditional bedside terminals, iPad offers a user-friendly interface that's quick to learn and simple to navigate, even for those with limited tech experience.

With responsive native performance and seamless app-based experiences, iPad ensures SPARK Fusion runs smoothly and securely – delivering the high performance and reliability needed in sensitive healthcare environments.

Unlike traditional terminals, iPad offers patients a familiar, instinctive interface that's easy to navigate, regardless of age or tech confidence.

With iPad, patients are empowered to feel more connected and in control of their own hospital experience. The device is supported by a wide range of built-in accessibility features – from VoiceOver and AssistiveTouch to Speak Screen and Zoom – ensuring that patients with physical or cognitive challenges can benefit equally.

“Replacing these outdated units with SPARK has expanded our entertainment options and allows us to deliver targeted information and leverage digital capabilities.”

Peter Hughes,
Chief Technology Officer





The Action: Supporting Frontline Teams

The benefits of this project go beyond the patient experience, extending to clinical staff. For healthcare professionals, the introduction of iPad supports a more streamlined and connected approach to care.

Staff benefit from the portability & performance of iPad. They are able to easily alternate apps, communicate with colleagues securely, and even capture photos if required. By linking SPARK Fusion with the hospital's digital systems such as EPRs, the trust is supporting easier access to information at the bedside, less clutter on wards, and smarter integrations with systems like Nurse Call. It's a step forward in the trust's journey towards higher levels of digital maturity.

500 iPad Bedside
units deployed



Compliant
Purchasing



Bespoke
Training



Technical
Support



Tailored
IT Solutions



Trade-in &
Buyback



"The go-live for our first lighthouse project is a tremendous achievement and we are confident it will help us enhance patient experience and support frontline teams in their delivery of care."

Jane Stephenson,
CEO, SPARK TSL

"With an eye on the near-term future and our EPR programme, the ability to leverage devices at the bedside will absolutely improve the availability of the patient record."

Peter Hughes,
Chief Technology Officer



The Impact: Designed for the Future

The combination of iPad and SPARK Fusion at Stepping Hill Hospital marks a significant step towards modernising patient engagement and care delivery in the NHS, transforming the inpatient experience by helping patients feel more connected and informed while ensuring that modern technology works hand-in-hand with compassionate care.

The rollout supports the hospital's wider digital transformation strategy - ensuring that modern technology works hand-in-hand with compassionate care.

Having seen the platform succeed in 40% of hospitals in the Netherlands, this UK deployment at Stepping Hill sets a clear example for other NHS trusts to follow. A second lighthouse trust, to further demonstrate the potential of SPARK's digital technology, will be announced shortly.



Working With Sync

Sync worked closely with SPARK TSL and Stepping Hill Hospital at every stage of the project - from sourcing and deploying iPad devices to integrating with the wider Apple ecosystem and providing long-term support.

With over 30 years of experience delivering Apple technology into complex healthcare environments, Sync plays a central role in ensuring a smooth, secure, and future-proof rollout.

Our expertise in zero-touch deployment, mobile device management (MDM), and ongoing support allowed the trust to implement the solution with minimal disruption to patients or staff.

As part of our commitment to healthcare innovation, Sync continues to support NHS trusts with Apple deployments that deliver value, sustainability, and improved patient outcomes.

Our work with SPARK TSL and Stepping Hill Hospital is just one example of how the right technology, in the right hands, can make a real difference.



Discover how our
team can support your
Hospital Trust today

