



Node4's cloud services have enabled **Benenden Health** to offer **24/7 GP support** throughout the pandemic.

### Customer

Benenden Health

### Industry

Healthcare

### Size

800,000+ members

## The solution Hybrid cloud and disaster recovery



Cloud-first approach



Cost control via OpEx model



Uninterrupted service



Remote working for IT staff

“Thanks to Node4, we are now on the ‘front foot’, rather than being reactive. When the business wants us to move in a different direction, we are able to do it without a challenge.”

### The Customer

Benenden Health offers high quality, private healthcare at the same affordable cost for everyone. This includes round the clock care such as 24/7 GP and mental health helplines, plus speedy access to services such as physiotherapy and medical treatment. As a not-for-profit organisation, Benenden Health's focus is to offer support to its 800,000+ members at the same affordable cost of just £11.50 per person, per month.

### The Challenge

As a market-leading private healthcare provider, IT applications underpin the entire business. The core applications and the data that sits behind them are a vital aspect of the day to day running of the business - data informs everything from caseload management, capacity planning and decision-making.

Benenden Health was a growing organisation and the IT infrastructure platform was no longer able to keep pace with this growth. Additionally, there was a lot of lead time involved in provisioning new capability. With this in mind, Benenden Health decided to take a step back, embarking on a complete digital transformation, redesigning the IT infrastructure into a rapidly scalable and highly available solution to support Benenden Health's growth for the future.

### The Solution

By choosing Node4's hybrid cloud and disaster recovery (DR) solution, this upgraded cloud-first, DR supported architecture has enabled Benenden Health to keep sensitive member data secure, and allow for rapid scalability and flexibility. This followed the adoption of cloud-based technologies such as migrating to Microsoft Azure and Office 365.

“The first stage in our journey was to take a step back and look at exactly what was available to us,” commented Chris Mullins, Head of IT at Benenden Health. “Node4 gave us a stable platform, which helped us to focus on other areas of the business first. After solidifying where we were internally, we were then able to look at the long-term strategy for providing key services to our members.”

By working with Node4, Benenden Health can now be sure it has a resilient cloud environment, 24/7 tailored support and a scalable roadmap that will grow with its digital needs. An important aspect of its switch to Node4 was to ensure its critical infrastructure was DR capable. Handling sensitive patient data means that working with a highly accredited and fully secure provider such as Node4 was imperative.

“It was important to us that we gain a partner that works as an extension of our core IT team, and that is what we have found in Node4,” said Chris. “As we move into a cloud-driven approach, it is reassuring to know that we have a fully scalable platform that will support our digital transformation initiatives, ensuring that our members are provided with a modernised and always-on experience.”

### The Result

As a result of choosing Node4’s solutions, Benenden Health has been able to embark on the beginning of its digital transformation journey. Before, the company operated on-premise solutions and was inwardly focused. Now, Benenden Health is cloud-first, meaning it can adopt the latest technologies as and when required.

“Thanks to Node4, we are now on the ‘front foot’, rather than being reactive,” said Chris. “When the business wants us to move in a different direction, we are able to do it without a challenge. The risks involved were definitely worth taking.”

When Benenden Health first started looking into its cloud-first journey, it realised it would need a large CapEx to support the uptime, capability and capacity needed as a business. But Node4 has taken away Benenden Health’s CapEx worries by delivering all cloud services.

“We no longer have to worry about trivial things such as whether there is enough RAM,” explained Chris. “It’s all taken out of our hands – Node4 looks after it all. The biggest benefit though, is that our users haven’t noticed a difference. The migration took place over a weekend and when everyone came back in on the Monday everything was normal and worked as normal. No one was aware anything had even happened.”

This uninterrupted service is something that was also critical at the beginning of the year, as Covid-19 put pressure on Benenden Health. The pandemic put strain on the services Benenden Health provides to its members, with private hospitals diverting to help with the pandemic – including Benenden Health’s own hospital which took part in treating patients.

Node4 was able to scale Benenden Health’s solutions to support its move to remote working. Its website relies on Node4 hosted applications, and having the continued backend applications supported by Node4 meant that Benenden Health did not have to deploy IT staff into the office, removing the risk of being unable to get suppliers to attend the site in the face of an issue occurring. Node4 MPLS was also able to ensure continued connectivity between the Benenden Hospital and Society.

The initial DR failover tests conducted by Benenden Health and Node4 have offered a major step change in capability when compared with its previous provider – it has shown the failover can take less than five minutes to the Northampton DR site, with Node4 looking to reduce this further as the solution is refined.