

Case study

# Thorndike Medical Centre

Thorndike Medical Centre works with fi Series image scanners & iDocs Solutions to reduce the burden of data requests

## The customer

Name: Thorndike Medical Centre  
Country: United Kingdom  
Industry: Healthcare  
Website: [www.thorndike.nhs.uk](http://www.thorndike.nhs.uk)



## The partner

Name: iDocs Solutions  
Country: United Kingdom  
Industry: IT  
Website: [www.idocssolutions.com](http://www.idocssolutions.com)



## New Solutions from iDocs Solutions

- **Lloyd George Scanning**  
Digitize your legacy medical records in line with The NHS Long Term Plan. Records scanned, indexed, and compiled into individual searchable e-Catalogues. Attach the individual PDF e-Catalogue to the corresponding medical record on EMIS / System One.
- **Medical Record Summaries**  
Save considerable time reviewing Medical Records prior to consultation. Electronic or Paper records are classified and coded against an universal Medical Lexicon. A summary is extracted, with links to the relevant section of patient's record for quick reference.

**Subject access requests (SARs) and other requests for information such as medical reports for insurers are "a huge nuisance, tedious and time consuming," according to Dr. Dan Kerley of the Thorndike Medical Centre, based in Rochester, Kent, which looks after 13,000 patients.**

Dr. Kerley looked for a digital solution to minimize the impact of data requests and worked with iDocs Solutions to implement a hardware and software solution that streamlines the fulfillment process across data capture, processing and compliant delivery.

## The background and burden of data requests

Producing the information required by a data request involves significant work for practices because each record requires checking to ensure it does not contain details about third parties.

Respondents to a GPonline/Medeconomics survey said that their practices received, on average, seven SARs a week – although some received many more. The majority (62%) said it took them longer than 30 minutes to process a single subject access request, and 18% said it took longer than an hour. Practice staff members are therefore spending significant time processing SARs – for which practices receive no funding. Practices also incur the costs of photocopying, printing and postage.

The BMA estimated that in 2019 GPs received 1.25 million SARs requests. The Chair of the General Pharmaceutical Council, Dr. Richard Vautrey, said: 'We know from our members that they are concerned about the increase in SARs since GDPR legislation came in, and the knock-on effect on both workload and practice finances.'

## The Thorndike Partnership looks for ways to cut the time and costs of SARs fulfillment

Dr. Kerley is committed to improving the patient pathway and takes a keen interest in technology that improves healthcare systems.

He points out that primary care remains heavily paper based. In order to fulfill requests for patient records the practice historically had to print, photocopy and manually redact (mask) content in records page by page. The records of patients with lengthy medical histories could extend to hundreds of pages, so the effort involved to produce compliant copies was significant.

The practice's secretarial team was responsible for the redaction process, which would have to be signed-off by a doctor once completed. Based on his experience at a previous practice, Dr. Kerley observes that the SARs production and approval process is a poor fit with general practice work. Requests await fulfillment until staff can find time to begin processing them and doctors have to give up time that they

could otherwise spend on patient care, in order to read and approve documents prior to release.

In his efforts to reduce the burden of data requests, Dr. Kerley looked for a solution to capture and redact data, and to generate digital records that could be easily and securely transmitted electronically.

He also stated another system imperative heightened by the introduction of GDPR: "Security and compliance are important to the practice as we don't want Thorndike to become another test case for data breaches that can result in stiff penalties and reputational damage."

## Streamlined digital SARs fulfillment

The Thorndike Medical Centre implemented iDocs Bindr® digital redaction solution integrated with fi Series image scanners.

iDocs software identifies content by user-selected keywords in scanned paper documents and digital documents and permanently redacts potentially regulation-breaching data.

The new system overcomes issues such as incomplete data masking associated with manual redaction and also the problem of operator fatigue that naturally occurs with repetitive mundane tasks.

SARs fulfillment costs have been reduced significantly in terms of staff time, print costs and postage.

The iDocs redaction solution gives the practice confidence that it can fulfill data requests efficiently and more comprehensively than when it was using daisy-chained manual processes.

A significant benefit is that complete digital records can now be emailed to the requestor compliantly.

## System training and positive user feedback

It often takes time to embed operational changes, especially when change involves new technology, which can trouble operators until the technology becomes familiar. However, Thorndike reports that software installation, hardware implementation and training went smoothly and system users have no negative feedback. Dr. Kerley says, "staff feel trained and confident."

## Image scanner fi-7300NX

The introduction of fi Series image scanners has proven to be popular and the fi-7300NX, in particular, is described by the Centre as "a good piece of kit that is easy to use."

The fi-7300NX is an Image Scanner that supports web systems and connects directly to client systems. Users can initiate scanning from the scanner's touch screen or from applications on smart devices. The fi-7300NX scans 60 pages a minute and loads up to 80 sheets at a time.

The capability to scan batches of paper documents makes data capture far more efficient and the practice has since invested in another fi-7300NX for its vaccination center.

Thorndike can also extract documents from patient management systems, which are held in multiple formats, and convert them to PDF in order to redact them in iDocs Bindr®.

## Potential for further system enhancements

iDocs Bindr® has established roots in the legal sector where leading law firms use the system to collate and transmit sensitive case documents securely. Digital redaction is relatively new in the medical sector and both iDocs and The Thorndike Partnership are interested to explore ways to extract even more value from digital document processing.

The practice views the iDocs implementation as a gateway system that has the potential for future enhancements, such as the attachment of DWP forms (Department of Works and Pensions) and summaries. Once the events of 2020-1 ease, the practice and iDocs are also interested in conducting research to learn if

requestors, especially patients, appreciate the new data processing and delivery methods.

## What positive difference has iDocs Bindr® made?

Dr. Kerley reports that, since the introduction of iDocs Bindr®, Thorndike Medical Centre has been able to catch up on its backlog of data requests, relatively speedily, and "free of pain" in comparison with the tedium of manual processes.

He also notes that the Centre has not replaced a secretary who left, which indicates the contribution of iDocs Bindr® to improved levels of efficiency in aspects of the practice's administration.

In conclusion, Dr. Kerley says that GPs have generally been a long way ahead in implementing digital solutions compared with most other medical institutions. Practices function as small businesses so it is worth medical professionals investing time to explore iDocs digitization for its cost savings, compliance confidence and improved service.

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## About The Thorndike Medical Centre

The Thorndike Medical Centre is based in Rochester, Kent, and looks after 13,000 patients. Dr. Daniel Kerley graduated from Kings College, London, School of Medicine in 2009. He joined the speciality GP training scheme in Kent and has worked as a partner since 2015.

He joined Thorndike surgery as a partner and GP trainer in 2019.

## About iDocs Solutions

iDocs Solutions is the leading provider of modern document compilation and Data Subject Access Request solutions for Healthcare, Legal and other professional service organisations. iDocs Bindr® applies powerful technology that creates secure digital bundles, medical record binders and compliant data requests with ease.



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