

# NEP HISTORY

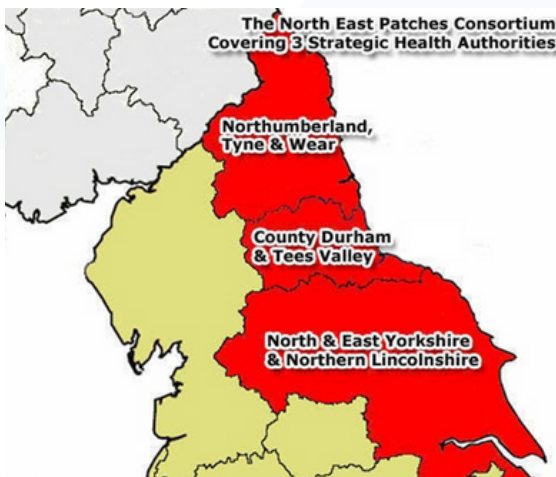
## 5-minute read



**Christine Hall, Managing Director**  
NEP Shared System Group

NEP was first established in 2001 and formed as part of the Shared Services initiative which started in 1999.

It was at this point, Sir James Mackey, the then Regional Director of Finance of the Northern and Yorkshire Regional Health Authority, put forward a case to compare shared system and shared services. There was a very strong argument regarding local economies and staff retention in the North of England not being an issue as in other areas of the NHS. We believed we could easily demonstrate cost saving efficiencies through technologies and data quality, not just focusing on reducing staff numbers. A business case was provided and approved to implement within 3 geographical regions in the North East of England a solution to compare and prove the objective.



The bid was successful, and it was secured that the Northern and Yorkshire Region would be the pilot for both the West Yorkshire Shared Services Pilot and North East 'Patches' for Shared System.

The name of North East Patches was established as it was the three geographical areas collaborating together from **forty - nine** NHS Organisations to form the one system across these areas. NEP at this point became known as North East Patches.

### Background

The shared services initiative was initially driven by three distinct areas:

### Political Drivers

1997

- New NHS, Modern and Dependable.

2000

- NHS Plan.
- Preparing Finance Staff for a modernised NHS.

2001

- National Shared Services Initiative.
- National Finance and Supplies Procurement Initiative.
- A Vision for Finance Staff.

2004

- Gershon Targets.

### System Objective

- Deliver a leading-edge common Finance & Procurement Solution
- Provide the technical infrastructure to aggregate data across organisations
- Deliver the technical infrastructure to facilitate procurement savings
- Deliver the technical infrastructure to facilitate Transaction Processing improvements

## Benefit Objectives

- Improved Information to support business decisions
- Improved Process to reduce support costs in favour of frontline support
- Deliver Procurement Savings through a common catalogue for better information and strategic purchasing and reporting
- Increased efficiencies through aggregated data and staff resource

## Project Implementation

Originally, we had three project managers each leading a regional implementation team, and after three months, it was clear we had made progress. However, when we assessed where we were, we had three different solutions! It was at this point that I was appointed as Programme Manager and brought all three teams together to implement one shared system solution. This was the first step that was to pave the way in collaboration and working together to make efficiencies across the Northern and Yorkshire region.

It was at this point, we created our Central Team at Stokesley North Yorkshire, whereby it was equal distance of travel for each of the regions.



Once the programme management and team had settled, we quickly established leads in each process area. It was important that we had an NHS team, with NHS knowledge and skills to define the solution for our members. It was equally important that we had input from procurement as the design required the full benefit of a Purchase to Pay solution and the engagement of Procurement professionals was key. We believed this was the first time that procurement had been thought of when designing and building a Finance solution which had addressed this crucial relationship.

In 2001, NEP were ready to present the solution to our members, and we conducted a conference room pilot. Ironically, held at the Shared Service Centre in Leeds, at Phoenix House. Process Leads from each region were invited over 4 days whereby NEP presented the designed solution. It was a regimented process and worked like clockwork, which was amazing! After a great deal of networking, a strong relationship was formed right across the 3 patches, and at the end of the first session, we ended up with just shy of three hundred issues. Our NEP team went away and through discussion, and redesign we reassembled the teams over two days, again in Leeds, where we presented the solutions to our potential members. We were delighted that we signed off with one hundred non-urgent issues still to be resolved, and we eventually went live with just twenty - two issues. This was a fantastic achievement and a great start of how NEP have collaborated and continued to work for over twenty years!

We have since been on a significant, yet exciting journey with our membership, seeing changes in both technologies and that of priorities, as the NHS changed frequently, including our decision to change to our true cloud solution.

We saw the challenges in 2020 and 2021 with the global pandemic; however, the steadfast equilibrium has been NEP Consortium, NEP Cloud and the strength of working together. With NEP being NHS staff, we understand pressures people are under and we understand the NHS.

NEP ethos is that our collaboration and working together is key, ensuring all our members from across the English NHS have a say in our NEP Cloud solution. This, combined with our networking forums and working groups supports this, as does our robust governance, our NEP team and most importantly, our membership.

When we say we are stronger together, we actually are, as a not-for-profit NHS Consortium organisation, we have proven time and time again, that our NHS colleagues do not have to go far to get a leading-edge, true cloud solution, designed for the NHS by the NHS with the absolute latest technologies which are supported by our complimentary services enabling benefits, opportunities, and savings to all our Finance and Procurement colleagues. We have delivered this not only for over the twenty years but we are here to support you tomorrow. NEP Cloud, the NHS at its best.