



# Sophos MDR 'bridges the gap' with round-the-clock support for **Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust**

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust provides comprehensive mental healthcare for residents of Birmingham and Solihull, and specialist mental health services to communities across the West Midlands and beyond. The trust serves a population of 1.3 million and has an income of more than £240 million. Its workforce of around 4,500 people operates out of 40 sites within the region.

## CUSTOMER-AT-A-GLANCE



**NHS**  
**Birmingham and Solihull  
Mental Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

**Customer Name**  
Birmingham and Solihull Mental  
Health NHS Foundation Trust

**Industry**  
Healthcare

**Number of Users**  
4,500

**Sophos Customer**  
Since 2018

**Sophos Solutions**  
Network - Sophos Firewall  
Endpoint - Sophos Intercept X  
Managed Services - Sophos  
Managed Detection and  
Response (MDR)

*“We just didn’t have the time, expertise or budget to effectively manage our cybersecurity around the clock. We really needed to find a solution to bridge the gap, particularly during evenings, weekends and public holidays, when the team’s not in the office.”*

Abdullah Guled, Senior Cybersecurity Officer, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

Major mental healthcare service provider Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation (the “Trust”) provides services to residents and communities across its region. To deliver its services, the Trust engages in a wide range of regional services and partnerships, including inpatient, community and mental healthcare, across 40 sites. The Trust has a large workforce of around 4,500 people, including remote workers, and the same number of endpoints. Longstanding Sophos partner ITHealth supports the Trust with all aspects of IT provision and management.

## **Business Challenges**

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust has been a Sophos customer for around five years, using endpoint and firewall solutions managed via the Sophos Central Platform. With rising threat risks and increasing complexity of cyberattacks, the team at the Trust realised there was a gap in its ability to effectively detect, manage and respond to the threat landscape. With a small team of just four people managing cybersecurity, it was simply not possible to have the time and resource for 24/7 threat monitoring or responding to attacks. In 2023, the team decided to find a suitable solution to provide a heightened level of cyber protection and response.

## **The Technical Solution**

The IT team at the Trust explored the option of implementing Microsoft Defender Antivirus, but concluded that it would not provide the level of managed detection and response they required. As an existing Sophos customer, they were familiar with the solutions Sophos provides, so they turned to Sophos partner ITHealth to explore whether Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) might be the right solution.

Following further investigation with ITHealth, the Trust opted to implement the full Sophos MDR service in August 2023. Sophos provided the Trust with guided onboarding to ensure the deployment and all configurations were set correctly, and the Trust could maximise the benefits of MDR from the outset.



*“The implementation of MDR went very smoothly and the guided onboarding was really helpful. We worked with Sophos experts to ensure all our policies were set as they should be from the start. There was little to no disruption to our users or operations.”*

**Mark Cooper, Project Manager, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust**

## Business Benefits

Since implementing Sophos MDR, the Trust experiences significant benefits from the service. The Trust’s ICT Operations Manager Mark Thornton highlights a standout benefit as being the 24/7 support. “Knowing that our systems and network are being monitored round-the-clock makes a big difference and is an absolute game changer for me. It bumped our security up massively and that has made a huge difference.”

The IT team at the Trust list additional benefits from Sophos MDR, including:

- The ability to check and manage threat activity easily through Sophos Central
- Consistent monitoring across the Trust’s entire IT infrastructure

- Significant time saved for the IT team and Helpdesk
- In-depth root cause analysis and reporting on activity and threats
- Managed onboarding and support from Sophos throughout implementation
- Access to Sophos MDR’s team of experts for advice, training and support
- The ability to easily configure policies to feed down to the Trust’s endpoints
- Deployment of Sophos updates to endpoints across sites and remote users

“To anyone in a similar organisation or position, I definitely recommend Sophos. Not just for the virus and threat detection and response, but for the whole package of benefits. With the MDR team supporting us, we’ve got a team of experts helping us with the cybersecurity work we don’t have the capacity or expertise to do ourselves,” said Mark Cooper, Project Manager, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

ITHealth has been a Sophos partner for twenty years and has been working with Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust for ten years. In 2023, ITHealth suggested the Trust implement Sophos MDR with the ITHealth support wrapper as a more comprehensive way to protect systems and networks than Microsoft Defender.

*“Whereas the national SOC might take days to respond, Sophos MDR can respond within hours. This is why the Trust chose to stay with Sophos for endpoint and server protection, and implement Sophos MDR for one single cybersecurity solution. It’s a fixed cost, it’s fast time to value, you just switch it on and it works.”*

Chris Booth, Healthcare Account Manager, ITHealth

ITHealth continues to be a trusted provider that understands the Trust’s environment and any issues that occur, as well as suggesting and supporting security solutions from Sophos. They provide the Trust with a safe pair of hands, effectively deploying, managing and optimising solutions. ITHealth trusts in Sophos due to its expertise in the healthcare sector and deep understanding of the challenges its healthcare customers face.



[www.ithealth.co.uk](http://www.ithealth.co.uk)



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