

# The Rewards of a Networked Transfusion Solution



Ben Holmes, Blood Transfusion Laboratory Manager for Pilgrim Hospital, Boston, UK shares his experience on the rewards of connectivity for blood transfusion services provided by Path Links, a pathology network in the UK. By implementing a network IT infrastructure, Path Links was able to demonstrate massive savings in resources through consolidation of services and sharing of staff expertise across sites.

## About Path Links

Path Links was formed in 2001 by joining the NHS (National Health Service) pathology services in Boston, Grantham, Grimsby, Lincoln, and Scunthorpe, and creating a single managed network that operates across the county of Lincolnshire. Serving a population of approximately one million, it is the largest clinical pathology network operating in the United Kingdom.

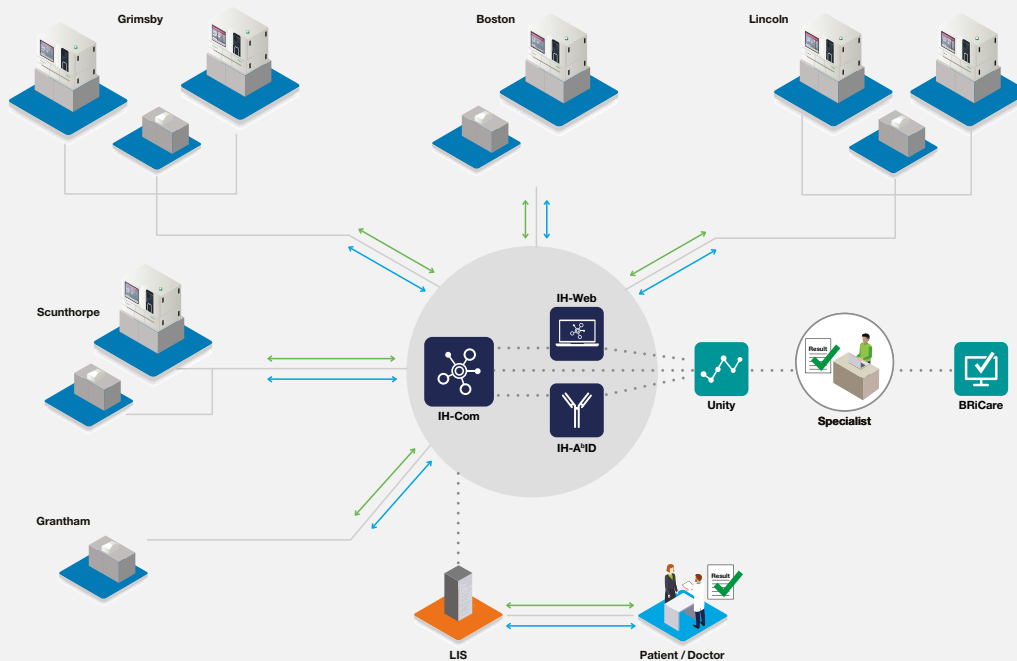
Laboratory services are provided at each of the Path Links sites offering Blood Transfusion, Haematology, Chemistry, Immunology, Cellular Pathology, and Andrology services. Blood transfusion testing represents around 7,500 samples per month at the five sites located across the county.

## Background

In 2021, a combination of automated (IH-500) and semi-automated (Banjo ID-Reader) Bio-Rad systems for ID-Cards were installed at the five sites. Since each laboratory had different workloads and testing needs, the implemented solution was tailored to each site. All instruments were networked through Bio-Rad's IH-Com software to allow for single point access to patient information, worklists, and results.

*"Pathology networks bring about change, but when you are through the difficult stages, there are significant rewards [including] cost savings through efficiencies, time savings, developing a quality service, and giving you the ability to adapt to changes faster..." Ben Holmes*

## A pathology network of 5 interconnected laboratory sites



The Bio-Rad Connectivity Portfolio provides a single network interface where doctors, laboratories, and transfusion medicine specialists can review results and make decisions from a single IH-Com host. IH-Com centralises data in a single database; meaning only one connection to the LIS (Laboratory Information System) is needed. IH-Web provides remote access and the IH-AID module automates and simplifies antibody identification.

## Connectivity

Additional IT support tools complement the IH-Com connectivity. IH-Web software enables requests and results to be remotely managed which allows the more experienced staff to provide support from home or during out of hours. IH-AID antibody identification software assists the biomedical scientists in decision making, providing suggestions for additional tests that can be ordered directly from the software itself. Unity Real Time QC (Quality Control) trending allows for immediate cross-site comparison of data points. Finally, BRiCare, Bio-Rad's remote support and monitoring system, increases instrument availability and reduces response time for technical support calls.

## Rewards

A networked transfusion solution provides opportunities for improvements in quality and efficiency. Continued development of Bio-Rad's connectivity software with refinements and additions required by users, allows IT in transfusion to further advance alongside technology innovations and to address the evolving needs of the laboratory staff.

Ben Holmes was the featured speaker for the Transfusion Science Webinar entitled, **Laboratory IT and Service Consolidation: Shared Resources, Better Care.**

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