

CASE STUDY  
Dorset Healthcare University  
NHS Foundation Trust



For the first time, CriticalArc SafeZone technology is allowing Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust to provide meaningful protection for its staff undertaking vital work in the community – specialist medical and mental healthcare workers who are assessed to be at higher risk.

For the Trust, this is not only reducing pressure on staff retention, recruitment, and budgets, it is helping to ensure that it meets its duty of care obligations.

### Staff at highest risk don't always get the best protection

Dorset Healthcare is one of the largest providers of integrated community and mental health services in the country, with more than 6,000 staff working to serve 800,000 people in the county, and to provide specialist services to the wider region.

For the Trust's security department, the need to reduce the threat of violence and aggression against staff has long been a priority.

While most incidents occur in the Trust's mental health in-patient settings, where good protective measures are in place, those working in the community, out-of-hours and in unfamiliar locations, did not have the same protection. This was affecting sickness, absence, recruitment and retention - the metrics which were higher for those undertaking higher risk community work.

### SafeZone technology backed by flexible 24/7 monitoring from Chubb

The Trust identified SafeZone as the technology solution with the greatest potential for protecting staff while offering other significant benefits, including improved security



**SafeZone**  
by criticalarc

*"Working with CriticalArc and Chubb is a win-win partnership. You don't get this kind of service or responsiveness from other suppliers, and the results have been even better than we hoped."*

**ROGER RINGHAM**  
Assistant Director,  
Security and Fraud Experts for  
Dorset Healthcare University  
NHS Foundation Trust

team coordination and better resource management.

One of SafeZone's key advantages for healthcare providers is that it can be implemented with the option of 24/7 specialist monitoring support from Chubb. This means that an immediate response is guaranteed whenever a user requests assistance, regardless of whether in-house security staff are available. For Dorset Healthcare's busy security team, this flexible service was a key enabler, and for the staff they protect it provides a critical level of reassurance.

Now, using either the SafeZone app on their phones, or a discrete wearable personal alarm, they can request assistance at the touch of a button wherever they are. In the monitoring control room officers can see the location of every checked-in user, and they can see the identity and location of anyone calling for help. This enables an immediate response.

The solution was rolled-out rapidly, with over 2,000 staff enrolled in less than two weeks. An escalation protocol was developed, with first and second line support and response established for all system activations, including emergency alerts, and routine assistance requests. Despite the fact that managers providing support are mostly clinical, they quickly became confident with the new system developed jointly by the Trust's security department, CriticalArc and Chubb.

During this roll-out, CriticalArc also responded to a request to add a new 'test' button which allows each user to check that their app is working before and during their shift.

## Pressure on sickness and absence reduced by improved perceptions of safety

The introduction of SafeZone at Dorset Healthcare in response to safety concerns has been warmly welcomed by staff, unions, clinical heads, and the senior executive team.

The assurance of 24/7 response is helping to embed a new culture which is placing higher priority on employee wellbeing. Alongside this, other SafeZone features, including its mass communications and targeted alerts tools, will allow staff notifications and coordination in the event of an emergency.

The improved sense of care and oversight is reducing costs as well, helping to cut sickness and absence rates among staff in higher risk roles.

Looking ahead, the Trust plans to develop the way they use the command and control tools in CriticalArc's OmniGuard management platform. The technology will support more efficient coordination of clinical teams day to day, as well as allowing faster deployment of emergency responders. It also has exciting potential to help track and locate medical equipment.

## SafeZone and Chubb together: delivering important new benefits for Dorset Healthcare

- Improved 24/7 safety and feelings of reassurance among higher risk staff, leading to lower sickness and absence levels, reduced spending on bank and agency staff, and less pressure on staffing levels.
- Improved standing of Dorset Healthcare as a responsible employer, supporting efforts to attract and recruit the best qualified and motivated staff.
- SafeZone is a clear demonstration of the trust's duty of care compliance, reducing the threats, vulnerabilities and liabilities faced by both staff and the organisation.



CriticalArc is a leading technology innovator, designing, and developing the distributed command and control solution, SafeZone, which is revolutionizing the way organizations manage safety and security operations.

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