



How One of the Largest Private Healthcare Providers in the UK Fulfills DSARs in Seconds



“If we use DatAnswers to search for DSAR information across the entire estate, the answer comes back in a matter of seconds. It’s freed up a lot of internal resources.”

ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY:

Our customer is one of the largest private healthcare providers in the UK. We have happily accommodated their request to anonymize all names & places.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Answering a single DSAR took hours or even days
- Enforcing least privilege on a single fileshare took weeks
- Lack of visibility made it difficult to ensure patient and employee data was properly protected

SOLUTION

Varonis Data Security Platform:

- **DatAdvantage** maps access across file and email systems
- **Data Classification Engine** scans for and classifies sensitive data
- **DatAnswers** helps fulfill DSARs by quickly finding patient data

RESULTS

- Fulfilled DSARs within seconds instead of hours or days
- Data migration projects that used to take a year are now completed within weeks
- Increased visibility into permissions and sensitive data

Challenges

Completing DSARs within one month

One of the UK's largest private healthcare providers is leading the way when it comes to quickly and efficiently fulfilling patient Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs) as mandated under GDPR.

For many large organizations, completing DSARs within the one-month time limit can be a herculean task. Once upon a time, this was true for this company (anonymous by request) as well. With thousands of users spread out across dozens of hospitals, each request took hours—if not days—to fulfill.

As the Head of Security explains:



“We have over 40 servers. Depending on the extent of the DSAR, we might have to search through each fileshare server manually.”

If the Data Protection Team didn't know exactly what they were searching for, **the search for DSAR data could take an hour or more per server—and they might have to search through all 40+ servers one by one.**

But that was before Varonis. With DatAnswers, searching for patient data is a breeze. And the Head of Security soon discovered that it was just one of Varonis' many capabilities.



“We had no visibility over our unstructured data or permissions across the whole estate—until we purchased Varonis. Figuring out who owned what in a certain folder was a long, complicated, and manual process that could take weeks of investigation.”

Varonis enables the healthcare provider to streamline GDPR compliance and proactively protect sensitive patient data.



“From a cybercriminal’s point of view, we’re a goldmine. We have lots of patient data, as well as employee data, financial information, medical files, and government contracts. Protecting all of that data isn’t a game for us.”



“We had no visibility over our unstructured data or permissions across the whole estate—until we purchased Varonis.”

Solution

DatAnswers makes DSAR fulfillment easy

The healthcare provider adopted two other Varonis products in addition to DatAnswers: DatAdvantage and Data Classification Engine.

DatAdvantage is the heart of the Varonis data security platform. DatAdvantage for Windows supports the company's on-premises data stores by mapping who can and who does have access to data across file systems. This high level of visibility makes it easy to change access control lists and enforce least privilege.



“DatAdvantage enables us to highlight all of our permissions and discover where we have excessive access. It helps us make some smart decisions and take fast, decisive action.”

The Head of Security illustrates with an example: migrating data from an old fileshare server to a new one.

Migrating data was a huge job, requiring the Data Protection Team to untangle file ownership, different access levels, and stale data. Before Varonis, migrating just three terabytes of data could take as long as one year.

With Varonis, data migration takes a fraction of the time:



“We did another file transfer after Varonis, and it was super clear who had permissions, when they last accessed data, and who didn't need more access than read-only. We finished that file transfer in a matter of weeks.”

Data Classification Engine, which finds and flags sensitive data, helps the Data Protection Team figure out which large remediation projects to prioritize.

Fulfilling DSARs used to be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Now, **DatAnswers** helps them find the information they need within seconds.



“Before Varonis, carrying out those searches was quite intensive and the results we got were inconsistent. Sometimes you’d get a lot. Sometimes you’d get a few. It depended on your search terms.”

“Now we type the name of the person into DatAnswers and use filters to narrow down our results and retrieve relevant documents quickly, even for patients with common surnames.”

Varonis’ development team worked closely alongside the Data Protection Team to equip them with all the functionality they needed. They also helped the team ensure that critical files were properly indexed and added extra fields for more precise results.



“The person assigned to our account is fantastic. Nothing is ever too much for them. Anything from a little advice, all the way up to helping us implement and get the most out of a new Varonis product. They’re always happy to help.”



“We can use filters to narrow down our results and retrieve relevant documents quickly, even for patients with common surnames.”

Results

Completing DSARs in a flash

DatAnswers makes DSAR fulfillment fast and intuitive:



“Before, doing searches for Data Subject Access Requests could take hours, sometimes days, depending on the amount of data. With Varonis and DatAnswers and the indexing tool, it’s just like using Google: you type in a search term and all the information for that person comes up.”

This fast and intuitive solution has streamlined and expedited DSAR compliance. It’s a night and day difference—an intensive task that used to take days now takes mere moments.



“Even if we use DatAnswers to search for DSAR information across the entire estate, the answer comes back in a matter of seconds. It’s freed up a lot of internal resources.”

But while GDPR compliance may have been the driving force behind the company’s adoption of Varonis, it’s just the tip of the iceberg. The Head of Security says that the best thing about Varonis is heightened visibility and access control.

Now, the team can tackle even huge projects, like migrating data to a new server, in a fraction of the time.



“Varonis gives you the visibility you need—and it’s vast. When you’re fixing permissions manually, you might spend months fixing an area you think is high priority, only to be wrong. Having that overall visibility allows us to focus our attention on the higher impact areas.”

Just as importantly, clear and actionable reports make it easy for the Data Protection Team to demonstrate the value of steps taken and facilitate buy-in with senior leaders.



“In terms of reporting, Varonis gives you graphs and shows you where you were versus where you are versus where you need to be. It’s easy to see progress, or set and track goals.”

The company is now considering adding **DataPrivilege** to their security stack. With it, data owners gain the ability to directly manage access control via an intuitive web UI, no IT assistance required. DataPrivilege also helps achieve GDPR compliance, making it easy to demonstrate to auditors that all sensitive data is being continually protected.



“It’s just like using Google: you type in a search term and all the information for that person comes up.”



Quickly and decisively fulfill DSARs.

Varonis helps you find hidden sensitive data and
streamline GDPR compliance.

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