

Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust

Is on target to save £5million a year on reduced agency costs helped by SMART workforce solutions

Major teaching hospital leads the way on innovative approach to fully integrated workforce management systems.



The challenge

In December 2008 the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust embarked on a cost improvement programme, to save 15% of its budget over the first two years, and then over 30% during the next four years. With such financial challenges the Trust had to be mindful of the Care Quality Commission.

The solution – fully integrated Workforce Management

The Trust wanted to ensure that it was deploying its staff in the most efficient way possible to deliver quality care to patients while reducing costs and staying compliant with EWTD. The Trust needed to review skill mixes within wards to ensure that the correct balance of qualified staff were on duty at all times. In addition they wanted to ensure that staff worked their contractual hours.

The Trust implemented a fully integrated workforce management solution from SMART. Jasvier Boyal, Director of Workforce commented, *“The Trust went through a full tendering process and chose SMART because it was the only proven solution that offered us fully integrated rostering, bank, time & attendance, an ESR interface and an interface to the Trust’s agency staff booking management system, called Skillstream.”*

Bank management was the first phase of the project to be implemented. This enabled staff to register for extra hours while matrons/managers are able to search the system to find someone suitably qualified from within existing resources to fill any gaps in the roster. Where there is no match within Bank, the SMART solution automatically switches to the Skillstream agency management service. This system manages the booking of agency staff, manages their hours, timesheets and payments to the agency.

eRostering is currently being rolled out across the Trust and will be completed in Autumn 2011.

Benefits

- £5million saved on agency staff costs per year through bank management – ROI within one month
- 60 days per month released back to patient care for highly qualified matrons and managers as timesheets go online
- Back office time saved and payroll errors reduced dramatically
- eRostering ensures the optimal skill mix is allocated to each shift ensuring patient care standards are maintained in line with the QIPP agenda
- Hosted service reduces requirement for in-house technical support

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Jasvier Boyal, Director of Workforce at Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust.

The Trust has moved from a paper based time sheet system to an electronic one which feeds payroll/ESR directly. This has saved significant amounts of time which have been released back into patient care as 800 timesheets per week are now sent to payroll automatically.

The Benefits – Visibility at every level

The SMART solution has provided visibility of workforce planning at every level. It has enabled matrons/managers to review the skill mixes and ensure that staff resources are used with maximum efficiency. The system ensures that all staff are rostered for their full contractual hours each month, before extra hours at additional rates are allocated.

The SMART system combined with new working processes introduced by the Trust has reduced reliance on agency staff saving, on average £700,000 per month during summer months. When winter pressures are taken into account, a conservative estimate of the costs saved using SMART's bank management will be £5million per year.

The eRostering system means that rosters are now produced electronically, saving each matron/manager one or two days per month, which are now released back to patient care. Conservatively this equates to at least 60 days per month of highly qualified staff time saved.

Hosted Services save additional resources

Royal Free opted to have their solution hosted by SMART. As Jasvier explains, *"We didn't have the capacity in-house to host the servers, so were keen to take advantage when SMART offered this service. It is a cost effective and practical option, and meant that we didn't have to provide the technical support for the system. It is hosted on a database in a datacenter that is secure and encrypted so any information passing from the system would be safe. It also means that there is no likelihood of data leakages."*

When asked to summarise the benefits of the system, Jasvier commented *"As soon as the system went live we saw a return on investment. The system combined with our wider project to transform working practices has delivered huge savings both in cost and in improved efficiencies and it will be a key component as we develop new ways to deliver patient services, as the NHS moves into a new, cost conscious era."*

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SMART is a leading provider of web-based solutions for workforce management. For over two decades, we have been helping our customers to achieve agility and cost efficiency from their greatest asset – their people.

SMART's integrated solutions for workforce management provide efficient people management anywhere in the world. Developed using Microsoft .NET technology, our zero-foot-print web solutions are flexible, reliable, scalable and easy to implement.

From time and attendance through to workforce planning, scheduling, absence management and comprehensive automated reporting, the SMART solution suite offers a wide breadth and depth of functionality. Whether fully installed on site, delivered as a managed or hosted service, the architecture enables organisations to focus on specific areas of priority, and reconfigure the system to meet new challenges.

The core systems are of leading-edge design, enabling planning, data capture, alerts and authorisation to take place anywhere and everywhere you need it. Web-based advanced self-service, touchscreen kiosks and mobile activation via telephony and PDA, ensure that employees can interact with the system wherever they may be.

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