

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Case Study

From a rapid consultant job planning project to greater workforce transparency



Job planning is a professional as well as contractual obligation for consultants and employers and with a workforce of over 280 consultants and doctors, St

Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust set out on an ambitious programme to ensure all job plans were fully signed off within an eight-week time frame.

By using Allocate Software's eJobPlan the trust was able to meet its deadline, ensure job plans were submitted to NHS Improvement's electronic job planning system in time and reduce the administrative burden associated with job planning.

Meeting the job planning challenge

Claire Srafton is Deputy Director of Human Resources at the trust and says that concerns about the quality of job plans led the trust to begin a review of policies and sign off processes. "We realised that if the policies were not being implemented and processes for developing job plans was not consistent then the quality of information going into the job plans wouldn't be reliable," says Claire.

The trust started a programme of workshops and telephone training with consultants to help them use eJobPlan. The training was tailored to each consultant taking into account computer literacy. Claire says: "Clinical engagement was key to the success of the project. This required regular communication from the Clinical Lead for Job Planning and Medical Director."

The trust provided guidance documents and video tutorials to ensure that the consultants had as much remote support as possible when it came to completing their job plans online. Allocate Software also hosted a drop-in session which was well-received and useful for the more complicated job plans.

Claire believes the emphasis on partnership working between the electronic resourcing team and medical staffing team was also instrumental to the success of the project. A project plan was fully agreed and reviewed by both avoiding potential issues that could have limited its success.

A job plan for every consultant

The trust is now in a position where it has 100 per cent of job plans in eJobPlan and this means that NHS Improvement is getting the information it needs. For consultants, it means they can demonstrate what they are doing and ensure they are paid for the work they do. From a trust management perspective, the trust knows that it is paying the right amount for consultant activity. "Before eJobPlan if we wanted to find out how programmed activities (PAs) had been delivered we would have to pull a report from payroll and cross-reference with the Electronic Staff Record (ESR). The ESR had its limitations because it could only record 10 PAs."

Greater workforce transparency and potential time-saving

The implementation of eJobPlan has highlighted a number of miscalculations in the trust's job planning and Claire says the next step will be discussion with consultant teams about service need and how this aligns with the work that is being done. "We know there will be some time-saving, although it is too soon for us to quantify," says Claire. "Our plan is that later this year we start rolling ActivityManager. This will align with eRota which is now being used by junior doctors."

"Throughout the project we have benefitted from outstanding support from Allocate Software. The team there was quick to get on board with the ambitious project plan from the outset and we could not have achieved the deadline without their support."

Feedback from consultants and managers about eJobPlan has been positive and they have found it easy to use," says Claire.

"During the implementation, we used a three-stage sign off process which is available within the system and we also set up a Consistency Panel whereby all job plans were reviewed and signed off by the Medical HR Manager and Clinical Lead for Job Planning."

Claire Srafton, Deputy Director of Human Resources