

Allocate Awards 2019

Highly Commended: Working Inclusively Across Boundaries

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Two merged trusts brought onto a single version of HealthRoster quickly and smoothly, saving agency spend



When two trusts merged together, the e-roster team successfully moved to a single version of HealthRoster, ESR and finance ledger, which not only brought significant cost savings but was implemented over a two-month period with no impact on staff or patients.

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust formed through the merger of two trusts, creating the region's largest NHS organisation employing 9,896 staff, of which approximately 6,000 cover shifts 24 hours a day.

In February 2018, the board gave a directive for the trust to be on a single version of HealthRoster, ESR and finance ledger from 1 July 2018.

The immediate challenge was the four-month timescale. This was exacerbated by the team working over two sites and the risk of adverse effects on staff pay and morale if the merger was unsuccessful.

Strategic planning was key. The merged team quickly built good working relations and split into two groups – one dedicated to the merger and the other focusing on business-as-usual work.

The roster team worked closely with an Allocate consultant and stakeholders to move to one finance ledger, ESR, bank staff provider, payroll provider, tax office and expenses system.

Despite the pressured timescales and the sheer scale of the project, the

The team had to run two concurrent payrolls on HealthRoster until ESR merged, yet ensured that all employees were paid on time. Generally, staff were unaware of any challenges as they were able to view rosters from day one. This ensured patient care continued negating concerns around safe staffing.

In addition, the trust has saved £170,000 per month on nursing agency spend.

Pre and post-merger staff being rostered on HealthRoster went from 5,545 to 6,922, and the eRmi score went from 55 to 64 post-merger.

Top tips for other organisations:

- Have a solid team with the right skill set. Plan tasks in the right order and don't underestimate how long things take.
- Check data constantly.
- Be in regular communication with the Allocate consultant.
- Manage expectations and issue clear communications.
- Try to align everything before the merger. Ensure external bank structures are aligned.

Sue Blunsten, head of ESR, e-rostering and payroll, said:



Some of the East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust eRostering team accepting their trophy for being Highly commended for the Working Inclusively Across Boundaries category

“Being on one HealthRoster has enabled us to work on the deployment of SafeCare and given visibility of rosters across sites for safer staffing. Work now starts on the roll out of medics!”