

Shared Business Services

NHS East Midlands Family Health Services Transforming and modernising the delivery of Family Health Services



Key facts about NHS East Midlands Strategic Health Authority

- Catchment population of 4.4 million
- Comprises nine Primary Care Trusts
- Family Health Services annual budget of £6m

Case study summary

- Consolidation of multiple operational centres into one
- Shared services model to achieve efficiency savings
- Successful transfer of NHS staff
- 30% saving in operational expenditure
- Streamlining and modernising service delivery

delivering value to the NHS

Delivering quality and efficiency

NHS East Midlands Strategic Health Authority (SHA) oversees the healthcare of 4.4 million people. It sets strategic direction, supports and helps develop nine Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and 14 NHS Trusts.

“Our partnership with NHS SBS goes beyond saving costs: it’s enabling us to transform and modernise our whole approach to regional service delivery of Family Health Services”

Richard Wheeler, Deputy Director of Finance, NHS East Midlands



The nine PCTs all face the same Family Health Services challenge to ensure their business processes are operationally efficient in line with the £15 to £20 billion of efficiency savings earmarked in the NHS Operating Framework. In addition, the PCTs are striving to meet the Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) requirements for improving the quality of care they deliver while making efficiency savings that can be reinvested to deliver year-on-year service quality improvements.

Streamlining services

In NHS East Midlands the administrative support for Family Health Services was being delivered from multiple operational centres, each with its own ways of working and of procuring services. This meant that there was little consistency in the quality and method of service delivery, making it difficult to identify where operational efficiencies could be made. NHS East Midlands sought a partner able to consolidate these multiple centres in order to provide both consistency and cost savings across the region.

The PCTs also demanded a rigorous approach to Key Performance Indicators and a transparent Service

Level Agreement in order to be able to manage performance against specific benchmarks.

The NHS SBS solution

Already providing Finance & Accounting back office processing services to a number of clients in the region, NHS Shared Business Services (NHS SBS) proposed a Family Health Services solution that would consolidate the multiple operational centres into one shared services operation with a single management structure. This would be based out of two Centres of Excellence, one in Derby and the other in Leicester.

The proposal identified cost savings in excess of £9 million over a contract period of six years, the equivalent of a 30% cut in operational expenditure. These savings would accrue as a result of both a programme of consolidation and an integrated service delivery model. The proposed model uses both on-shore and off-shore resources operating as a single seamless team; the on-shore team will handle all the client facing activities including any voice interaction, and the off-shore team will concentrate on the back-office transactional processing. This model provides efficiency & cost savings, but also enables a more responsive service as the working day has been extended through the time difference between the UK and India. The services included in this proposal were:

- Patient Registration
- Medical Records Management
- Call and Recall for Screening
- Payments Processing

Working in partnership with NHS SBS would enable NHS East Midlands to rise to the challenge set out by the Secretary of State for Health for all those working on the frontline of healthcare to use the QIPP process to “think carefully and imaginatively” about how to do things differently. In particular, NHS SBS’s commitment to service modernisation and innovation, such as the introduction of a web-based solution for ophthalmic claims (Ophthalmic Web Located Solution OWLS), was in line with the SHA’s declared objective to deliver services that are “continuously improved and developed”.

Approach

NHS SBS worked closely with the PCTs to understand their requirements and tailor their proposed service model. The SBS proposal was reviewed within each of the PCTs and through a number of working groups representing each of the service lines, their feedback and input was managed through a Project Steering Group which had representation from both the NHS and SBS.

Following a decision to award the contract to SBS, the Steering Group was disbanded, and a Transition Board was created; by working as a joint team, it was possible to take a collaborative approach to decision making thus ensuring that the service reflected the needs of the community. The Transition Board also provided a formal Governance structure providing transparency as well as quality assurance.

Phased transition

NHS East Midlands requested a phased approach to change, with consolidation and transition taking place over a period of seven months. This would mitigate the risk of change and give the time needed to transfer many existing employees over to NHS SBS, thus retaining valuable NHS skills and knowledge. NHS SBS has always striven to combine its own commercial strength and industrialised business processes with the knowledge and sector expertise of NHS health professionals.

“Our ability to safeguard patient data is of paramount importance. The rigour NHS SBS brings to data security measures is invaluable, notably its IGAF compliance and commitment to being a leader in the field of data protection.”

Andrew Booth, Director of Finance and Deputy CEO, NHS Derby City

A joint NHS SBS and NHS East Midlands team worked together to identify best practice and put in place a transition programme. The involvement of PCT staff throughout this process ensured that sector-specific lessons could be shared and knowledge of local conditions brought to bear.

In January 2011 Derby and Leicester became the first to transition to NHS SBS Family Health Services. The remaining operating centres in Nottingham, Lincoln and Northampton will transition on a phased basis, and full transition will be complete by August 2011.



Delivering added value benefits

The region is already beginning to benefit from consistent, industrialised processes for tasks such as the processing and validation of registration details from GP practices and direct payments to performers, including GPs, optometrists, pharmacies and dentists. Data security is also a region-wide priority for NHS East Midlands. NHS SBS is committed to the highest levels of data security and, as such has achieved Level 3 under the Information Governance Assurance Framework (IGAF) - an NHS benchmark for the protection and security of NHS data. This means that NHS SBS is one of the leaders in the NHS for data security and protection.

Procurement too is an area that will benefit from the shared services model. Where previously each individual operating centre procured its own services, NHS SBS can now offer economies of scale to negotiate better, more cost effective contracts. This is something that NHS SBS will be investigating further over the coming months in a bid to build on the contractual savings already guaranteed.

NHS East Midlands hopes to share many of the lessons learned with other PCTs looking to transform their services and reduce the costs of Family Health Services delivery. As the needs of the NHS evolve over the coming years, ongoing investment and a focus on continually refining processes and improving productivity will future proof the service provided by NHS SBS to NHS East Midlands.

To find out how NHS Shared Business Services can help your organisation, please contact our business development team on 0113 307 1500

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