


Hornbill's Supportworks ITSM Delivers ITIL Service Management System to Support the New NHS NPFIT Patient Systems



Buckinghamshire Hospitals 
NHS Trust

Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust (BHT) was established in April 2003 with the formal merger of South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust and Stoke Mandeville Hospital NHS Trust. The Trust serves a combined population of 500,000 with three hospitals - Amersham Hospital, Stoke Mandeville Hospital and Wycombe Hospital.

The Trust introduced the new National Care Record Scheme (CRS) in October 2006, part of the NHS National Programme for IT (NPFIT) which aims to ensure that every individual's medical and social history is accessible at any NHS site throughout the UK.

To deliver the National Programme, the newly formed NHS department 'Connecting for Health' (CfH) divided the country into five clusters. Each of the clusters has the responsibility to deliver and support the rollout of the new IT services, including CRS, Digital X-Rays (PACS) and Choose and Book (booking appointments directly online with doctors and consultants) and put out the service requirements to tender.

Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust forms part of the Southern Cluster, which has awarded Fujitsu Systems the contract as Local Service Provider (LSP). It is the role of the LSP to deliver the services locally and support them, either through partnership with the local support organisation or centrally through the new First Line Support Contract.

Adopting ITIL Best Practice

The Trust was selected as an early adopter of the CRS and it was quickly identified that it needed to implement an ITIL compliant service management solution to provide support for the new NPFIT systems.

Having looked at Pink Verify, the ITIL certification standard, Peter Drage, IT Service Support Manager, short listed five suppliers. Hornbill's Supportworks ITSM solution was recommended by Northumbrian Health Authority and it became apparent very quickly, following a demonstration of the product, that it was the right choice for BHT.

"Supportworks ITSM demonstrated the breadth of functionality that we needed and the versatile, open architecture that we required to link in with the other Trust systems. It was important that as a local support organisation we could link up with our LSP's service desk who provide second and third line support for NPFIT systems, what we call 'seamless ticketing'. In this, Supportworks ITSM came into its own," explained Drage.

Supportworks Provides Seamless Ticketing

The key to this communication is 'OTI' - Open Telephony Interface, whereby different service desks can communicate with the Local Service Provider (in this case Fujitsu's Peregrine based Service Desk) to provide two way updates on the status of all incidents to both support teams. Within the NHS, this communication is termed 'seamless ticketing' and although an important part of the requirements, prior to the implementation of Supportworks ITSM there was little knowledge of how this might work. Seamless Ticketing enables the Trust support desk to gather the CfH minimum data set which is required if a call is to be passed to the LSP for resolution. All calls regarding the new Care Records System (CRS) are triaged locally before being referred to the LSP.

Business Benefits

- Out of the box functionality provided a fast start ITIL Service Management System.
- Fast adaptability and customisation supported rapid implementation to deadlines.
- Open architecture enabled integration with LSP's 'Open Telephony Interface' for Seamless Ticketing.
- Call tracking and logging has improved service levels to end customers.
- Call statistics enable service levels to be measured against SLA's.
- Versatility of system enables it to be adopted as service desk for other departments with the Trust.
- Customisation around minimum data set reflects call priorities.

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Once the LSP has dealt with the call, data is sent back to the Trust and this data is then fed back into Supportworks ITSM for the call to be closed. This two-way communication has been key to the success of the project.

Currently, Seamless Ticketing is used for Incident Management and there are plans to develop it further for use with Problem and Change Management. Indeed originally the plan was for the Trust to adopt a phased approach, going live with Supportworks ITSM initially for Incident Management. However, this has since been amended to incorporate Change Management and in time Problem Management, in order that calls passed between the LSP and first line support team can be effectively closed. Both aspects have been required sooner than expected - nine weeks after going live rather than the estimated nine months.

Out of the Box Yet Highly Adaptable

One of the key factors for selecting Supportworks ITSM was its ability to be easily modified to meet the required CfH Minimum Dataset requirements for NPfIT Systems and OTI integration with the LSP.

"For us, the great benefit of Supportworks ITSM is that most of its functionality comes 'out of the box', with rapid modification and implementation of processes to suit our needs and deadlines. This delivered all the functionality we required, including Seamless Ticketing and Service Level Agreements (SLA) to go live with an ITIL compliant system at a very cost efficient price," said Drage.

Modifications were also made to meet the Trust's SLA requirements that it had already in place and the new CfH NPfIT contractual SLA's. The CfH SLA's define support response times against a complex requirements matrix. Priority is calculated based upon the NPfIT system, Impact of the failure and the Urgency of the incident. Supportworks was adapted to automate these requirements.

The BHT has a single Service Desk which provides first line support, including advice and guidance on all BHT IT supported applications. The Service Desk aims to provide a first time fix to 70% of callers.

The BHT IT department comprises three Desktop teams that provide second line support and Technical and Server teams at two of the sites providing third line support. There is also a Networks team and Corporate Applications team that provide Trust-wide specialist second and third line support. The Development team also use Supportworks ITSM to log and manage their workload.

Meeting the Demand

In total, the Trust supports over 5,000 users with the majority at the Wycombe and Stoke Mandeville sites, and a smaller number including Trust HQ at Amersham. "We normally handle around 3,500 calls per month, of which 2,750 are inbound," said Drage. "Volumes have increased 30% since CRS went live and with the minimum data requirement calls take longer to log. Without Supportworks ITSM there is no way that we could have coped with the increase," he added.

Seamless Ticketing has also helped significantly - without this in place the service desk would have to phone calls through to the National Service desk, greatly increasing outbound traffic and reducing inbound capability.

When the Trust Service Desk passes a call to the LSP desk, the resolution countdown clock on its own SLA starts running, and counting down on the LSP's service agreement. Both clocks can be seen at a local level, so that each IT team can quickly see when they are about to breach a service target.

The Condition field in particular is used for OTI, according to Drage; "It provides a quick visual of the call queue and updates in real time so you can see what is happening, working like a traffic light system. Although simple it is a very effective tool to help us manage our service levels."

Call scripting has also been recently introduced. The scripts have been designed by the second and third line support to ensure that agents capture certain details that can help with incident management more effectively when passed on for resolution. Currently, the IT team does not accept email support queries, since they are written in freeform and do not collect the minimum data set required. However, plans are in place to introduce the web SelfService option that will then enable users to log calls.

Improved Service

Since implementing Supportworks ITSM, Drage claims that both response times and the service to customers has improved. "We aim to answer 90% of calls within one minute and have an abandonment call rate of less than 5%. There is no doubt that service has improved - I used to get regular complaints about wait times - and I haven't had one in weeks."

Following the success of Supportworks ITSM in the IT arena, it has been rolled out to other departments within the Trust - Radiology, Business Change, Registration Authority and Information Governance.

As an example, the Radiology Department has two specialist IT Support personnel who look after their systems. By giving them access to Supportworks, the Service Desk is able to handle their calls and leave them more time to deal with second and third line support. Also it enables IT to have an overview of what is going on in IT terms in other departments.

"As a Trust we needed an IT Service Management System that would enable us to be ITIL compliant and easily grow as processes matured. Supportworks ITSM fitted this bill. There is no doubt that installing Supportworks has put us in a position where we can easily cope with future Trust, CfH and NPfIT requirements." said Drage.

HORNBILL

Hornbill Systems Ltd.
Ares
Odyssey Business Park
West End Road
Ruislip
HA4 6QD
UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 8582 8282
Fax: +44 (0)20 8582 8288

Hornbill Systems, Inc.
245 Park Avenue
39th Floor
New York
NY 10167
USA

Tel: +1 212 803 8100
Fax: +1 212 792 4001

Email: info@hornbill.com
Web: www.hornbill.com



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