SMI

Staff.Care Case Study – East Cheshire Hospice

East Cheshire Hospice have been providing services to their surrounding areas including High Peak and Buxton for 30 years. They started their initial Staff.Care implementation back in 2013 for the management of their staff rostering and HR. However having staffing numbers reach 150, they decided to work with SMI to provide a customised Payroll Interface, which links directly from Staff.Care to their Sage Payroll, providing accuracy, more precise calculations and time savings instantly.

SMI have produced this Case Study by providing the exact questions and answers provided by the customer whereby letting Staff.Care speak for itself. No amendments and no mis-interpretations; we think you will find this an interesting read. No sales gimmicks, no re-writing of the answers, just pure facts!

What made you decide to implement Staff.Care Initially?

We were looking for a rostering system that could cope with the complexity of a 24/7 working rota. We looked at a number of systems and were impressed with the functionality of SMI.

Having used Staff.Care for a few years now, what TIME SAVINGS have been realised?

- As a staff rostering system preparing and publishing our rotas takes a quarter of the time compared to our 'paper days'. It is transparent, allows us to manage our nursing skills mix in an instant, approves holidays and training.

- The sickness absence function allows us to report our absence stats per quarter or per year in minutes, calculate working time lost and occurrences per individual.

- HR and Payroll spend significantly less time dealing with payroll queries every month.

- Staff.Care interfaces directly with payroll so we no longer have to chase for paper timesheets and records for sickness, extra hours, night shift uplift.

We can accurately manage TOIL to ensure the team members take time back for additional hours worked.

Having used Staff.Care for a few years now, what COST SAVINGS have been realised?

- We are no longer paying Clinical Professionals to spend disproportionate amounts of time managing the rotas.

- We are able to effectively manage our skills mix so we have a balance of trained professionals on each shift making the most effective use of our nursing resources.

- Our use of more expensive Bank Staff has fallen to negligible levels as our team members are aware when they 'owe' hours.

- We have been able to more accurately manage pay, allowances, holiday pay, compensation and sick pay.

- We have been able to 'iron out' contractual and pay anomalies with the additional transparency and management information provided by Staff.Care.

- Simplified our payroll bureau processes which have kept our costs static despite increased complexity in our pay arrangements.

- We use Staff.Care for our HR System which means we have not had to purchase expensive separate software.

- We only pay holiday pay up to 37.5 hours (as the law allows) when previously we paid on all bank hours worked, as we had no effective way of capping this payment, the Payroll Interface solved this.

"Our monthly Payroll Processing time has reduced from 45 to 7.5 hours"

Why did it take so long from your initial Staff.Care implementation to finally introduce the Payroll Interface to Sage?

We introduced the Payroll Interface to enable us to implement complex NHS style pay arrangements for some staff. Also, as advised by SMI, you HAVE to learn to use Staff.Care properly first. We were initially concerned that to link Staff.Care to Payroll would cause many issues as some managers were unable/unwilling to learn to use Staff.Care correctly. In fact, the link to pay really concentrated our minds and provided the impetus to really understand Staff.Care, work at our line manager tasks and ask for assistance to get it right **every time**. We wish we had taken this step sooner!

Have you realised any Payroll Processing time savings?

This is a difficult statistic to clarify as the complexity of our pay arrangements has increased (guided by SMI), it used to take 45 hours and this has reduced to 7.5 hours with greater accuracy.

Staff.Care claims to make rostering fairer for staff, do you agree?

Staff.Care has provided transparency regarding shift patterns, holidays, sickness, extra hours and TOIL which we did not have before. It has also allowed us to update our pay arrangements to make payments for unsocial shifts worked which were 'wrapped up' before.

What manual paper functions have been replaced?

- No more paper timesheets.
- Requests managed fairly.
- Essential documentation scanned and attached to individual staff records.
- Sickness absence is recorded electronically using 'soft forms' for items such as 'return to work' interviews and staff questionnaires.

Was the Hospice having any particular issues with your staffing that Staff.Care was able to manage or rectify?

- Complex 24/7 shift patterns that were paper and labour intensive to manage.
- Multiple Staff Contracts.
- Custom and practice arrangements that had grown over the years but were not reflected in our contracts.
- Sheer volume of paper and manual intervention.
- The time it took to calculate and check all our additional paper based, handwritten submissions.
- Errors in timesheets.
- Inability to apply the unsocial hours payments for a specific shift because the administrative burden was too great.
- Reporting. Running organisational reports was time consuming and inaccurate.
- It was difficult for staff to book holidays as they couldn't see the forecast staffing levels of their unit.
- We sometimes used more expensive bank staff even though our own contracted team members had hours to work.
- We had no electronic HR system in place.
- Booking and organising training was difficult while maintaining operational staffing levels.
- Bank and contract staff not listed/accessible as part of core teams.

Did Staff.Care and/or SMI influence any policy changes within your organisation?

- Paying 12.07% holiday uplift to bank staff only up to 37.5 hours per week.
- Paying 12.07% holiday uplift to part time staff working additional hours up to 37.5 hours per week.
- We have been able to introduce Agenda for Change (NHS) arrangements for our clinical staff which has hugely improved recruitment and retention.
- We have been able to improve our management of our existing attendance, pay and training policies with the additional transparency offered by the system.

What were the 'big' wins overall for your organisation?

- A solution for many of our 'staffing issues'.
- Smooth, efficient transactional roster management, HR and Payroll, all in one place.
- No more queries!

You have 150 staff, have you still benefitted from Staff.Care and the core functionality?

Yes. It allows us to do so much more with the resource we have, concentrate on the innovative, interesting people-centred work whilst the payroll and staff administration is delivered by Staff.Care.

An unexpected benefit was the increased understanding and acknowledgement from our staff around staffing levels, skills mix and taking collective responsibility for an efficiently staffed unit. Plus an increased understanding of HR and Payroll processes.

What advice would you give to another organisation who were thinking of implementing Staff.Care?

Do it!

Invest time in Line Manager training, workshops, 1:1 sessions, workbooks, practice sessions, Q&A's, visits from SMI, 'buddies', champions, super users …… and then do it all again. The success of the implementation depends on the engagement of your Line Managers.

'Talk Up' Staff.Care during the implementation phase, there is a point in the implementation of any system where it seems difficult. Focus on the benefits and don't allow pockets of non compliance.

Use the expertise of the SMI Team. They have been invaluable in the support, patience and expert guidance.

Don't run paper/alternative systems alongside Staff.Care beyond the implementation period.

What's next?

We are looking to use the Training Module and make sure we get the most out of the Events Tracker to manage compliance (DBS Checks, Insurance, Registration etc). We are also looking to put key Volunteer Groups on Staff.Care to integrate our paid and non paid workforce.

Please comment on the contact you've had with the SMI Support Team.

Always responsive, always there when we need them. A balance of humour and expertise.

"We are a better organisation for having Staff.Care as one of our key systems"

Please comment on the involvement of your Project Manager, Ed Smith.

During our implementation phases Ed felt like a member of our team. His expert knowledge of the system, best practice and employment law left us feeling in safe hands.

Ed's particular skill is applying his expert knowledge of each individual business and adapting to their individual needs. Ed was very patient with us as we worked through our internal issues and was always able to adapt to particular problems and issues. Ed always did everything he said he was going to do.

Do you have any further comments at all regarding Staff.Care, the implementation or the SMI Team?

We are a better organisation for having Staff.Care as one of our key systems.

SMI wish to thank Shelley Seabourne Head of Finance, Clair Watson HR Manager and Mike Drew ICT Manager for taking the time to feedback their opinion of SMI and Staff.Care.

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