

AWP Roll out RosterPro

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Care NHS Trust (AWP) provide mental health services across the population living in Bath, North Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Swindon, South Wiltshire, and Kennet, North & West Wiltshire. It provides a comprehensive range of adult acute, elderly, intensive care and rehabilitation services as well as a full range of community services including day care, community care and crisis and home treatment. Presently the Trust has an annual income of approximately £140 Million, employs approximately 3,600 staff and operates from around 70 main bases.

RosterPro was initiated within AWP primarily because of the management information it was able to produce. The other potential benefits of money saving on agency staff and staff retention should be evident after RosterPro has been rolled out across all of the Trust.

One of the biggest benefits becoming apparent to the Project team are the positive comments from staff who, having been using the system now for a few months are clearly saying they are getting more shift requests than ever before. Roster managers are much happier because their roster is becoming much easier to produce due to the amounts of requests users are inputting onto the system. It is well documented that if staff are more satisfied in the hours they work, then staff retention improves and staff sickness reduces. The AWP project team are satisfied that the claims made by HMT regarding Improving Working Lives appear to be substantiated.

AWP is typical of the complex environment of NHS rostering and shift work, with little consistency when it comes to staff record keeping within wards. Ward managers/modern matrons are beginning to appreciate the electronically held staff information regarding sickness, absence, annual leave, training, contract time and time in lieu.

These no longer need holding in paper format as they are accurately recorded from the 'actual' shifts worked. The system standardises the production of rosters trust wide and enables, for the first time, collection of standard attendance/shift data in an easy to use reporter tool which can be accessed at all sites linked to a server. The collated information can be interrogated to provide statistics Trust wide/ locality wide/ hospital wide/ ward level and individual level.

AWP are hoping to commence roll out of a centralised bank in 2007. One of the benefits of using RosterPro is that self rostering can be used as a stand alone or can be integrated with the bank module to provide easy and immediate notification of vacant shifts to the bank office with an ability to populate the specific ward with bank staff as they are booked. This has been tested by AWP and appears to work well. It is anticipated that the integrated system will make sending vacant shifts and filling them a much more seamless and auditable process.

AWP also expect other benefits with RosterPro such as the ability to cost shifts, rosters, bank and agency shifts so in theory a roster can be produced based not only on skill mix but also be cost effective.

The reporting tool, within RosterPro is proving to be extremely powerful for AWP. This is currently being used within wards for monitoring of sickness/ absence, and all types of leave including annual leave. We are now able to monitor how vacant shifts are covered in terms of substantive, bank, overtime or agency. This will enable us to better assess establishment, skill mix, staff shortages and make an informed decision on how and if we should fill these vacancies. Again not only is this information available at ward level, it is also available Trust wide.

After shifts have been worked, the reporter gives detailed information on numbers of all extra shifts used within any specified period, including information on overtime, bank and agency. This will be used to explain monthly budgetary spend, and measure Key Performance Indicators.

RosterPro has provided standardised rostering across the trust, the ability to monitor how our staff resources are being used from individual level to trust wide level, and has prompted the Trust to produce a rostering policy thus ensuring consistency.

Conclusion:

The project team, which consisted of a project manager, a business administrator and an IT trainer, believe that the introduction of RosterPro within AWP has been successful and of benefit to date. This is due to a few key actions being implemented. It is essential that this project is supported fully by both management and the Trust board. AWP went as far as to have a directive from their Chief Executive informing staff that using RosterPro fully on their ward was not an option but a necessity. This clear ownership has been key to the success of the roll out.

Coupled with ownership and support is a clear project plan. AWP's project plan has clear objectives for rolling out the software. Implicit within this is adaptability and flexibility and good lines of communication.

Roll out has not however been without its problems. Where there has been resistance to change, there has followed an inevitable delay. This has been managed again with management support and with encouragement. Training has been developed to encompass all IT abilities. This has been done with the help of extremely easy to read training manuals and also the offer of basic IT skills training before commencement of self roster training. Because of this approach, AWP have now got a workforce with much greater IT skills than before.

Roster manager training has been broken down into several modules ensuring that each person can learn at their own speed and choose the level of support/training they feel they require. Whilst the ward is configured before training, it is then tailored to meet ward needs, thus ensuring greater buy in from ward managers and staff.

The project team have great expectations for further developments and use of the system within the trust.

HMT's RosterPro Self Rostering System has been developed specifically for the UK NHS market. RosterPro is used by over 30 NHS Trusts providing optimal staff utilisation and assisting in staff retention, monitoring of its sickness/absence, monitoring the high cost of agency, adherence to the Working Time Directive, compliance with the Improving Working Lives Directive and the improvement in the quality of Workforce Management Information.