



★ Case Study

A healthy approach to ICT services

Big bang ITIL adoption, underpinned by Sostenuto ITSM software, paves the way to record service level performance and National Accreditation.

Pennine Care **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction



Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health and specialist drug and alcohol services to a population of almost 1.2 million. Having been established in 2008 as the 100th NHS Foundation Trust, on the strength of excellent performance and robust

plans for future development, Pennine Care sets a standard of excellence within the NHS.

In fact, fittingly, Pennine Care was rated 'Excellent' by the Healthcare Commission in its Annual Health check for both its 'Quality of Services' and its 'Use of Resources' in 2009. This rating by the health watchdog for England places the Trust amongst the highest performers in the country.

Against this backdrop, and as part of this quest for excellence, the Trust has also taken giant steps forward with its IT service operations, becoming the 44th Trust to receive National Accreditation, supported by Sunrise's service management solution Sostenuto.

Big bang adoption of ITIL

"We could have carried on as we were, but decided instead to bite the bullet. Everyone in the department was given notice that sweeping process changes were going to take place."

Pennine Care's ICT team is responsible for supporting five hospital sites and fifty four clinics spread over 200 square miles. It has acquired a reputation as a proactive, 'can do' department, reaping yearly nominations for Trust awards.

The Accreditation process requires ICT departments to demonstrate strategic alignment to the business and the right technology tools to achieve their goals. Technical Support Manager Jiten Patel describes how the team decided to pull out all the stops to tackle the complex process involved in achieving National Accreditation: "We could have carried on as we were, but decided instead to bite the bullet. Everyone in the department was given notice that sweeping process changes were going to take place."

It took two years to map out the new processes while the department still carried out its 'day job' of supporting all of the Trust services, and during that time, a selection process took place to find the best technology tool to implement them with.



Pennine Care ICT Team

Introducing Sostenuto

“The Sunrise business consultants were outstanding, they sat down with us and listened to our requirements. Then it was a case of: ‘this is what you want to do’ and ‘this is how you can do it in Sostenuto’.”

Jiten explains that Sostenuto was chosen because other solutions were above budget and didn't provide the same level of functionality.

“When Sostenuto was demonstrated to us,” he says, “it just looked the part. It was flexible

enough to fit our needs as well as being ITIL compliant out of the box, and it came in within budget. The Sunrise business consultants were outstanding, they sat down with us and listened to our requirements. Then it was a case of: ‘this is what you want to do’ and ‘this is how you can do it in Sostenuto’.

Having worked with Sunrise for a number of years using their earlier helpdesk software, the Trust also liked the idea of tackling such a challenging project with a trusted supplier.

“Since then our experience of dealing with the Sunrise consultancy team and service desk has been just the same,” continues Jiten. “They work with us. Any issues we had on day one, the response was: ‘Don't worry, we'll deal with that now.’ They have been really helpful.”

Sostenuto was implemented in the spring, in time for a full audit at the end of July, which resulted in Pennine Care receiving National Accreditation, demonstrating that its working practises match the national standard.

“Using Sostenuto as a catalyst for change, most elements of ‘what we did’ were reviewed and questioned,” says Jiten. “We looked at everything and asked: ‘is this the best way of doing it?’ This led to all IT processes being re-designed in order to reach ITIL standards, and to ensure that our processes were both effective and efficient. What we have now are processes which

ensure that ICT Service Delivery is effective and provides value for money.”

“Now we have the tools we need to take us beyond the fire fighting helpdesk,” says Jiten. “If you focus solely on incident management in the first phase, you risk getting bogged down in day to day activities and never go further. With our approach, it was a bit of a shock to the system on day one, but then we had the opportunity to stabilise everything rather than putting the team through ongoing change for the foreseeable future.”

Transparency across the board

“Sostenuto has helped us achieve more transparency across the board, fulfilling one of the key requirements for National Accreditation.”

says Jiten. “Performance and SLA management are now core to our operation, we publish our statistics across the business, have achieved improved teamwork within ICT and better communication with Trust employees and third parties.”

Reports from Sostenuto are published on the intranet, showing Trust services information such as the time taken to resolve calls and how many calls the ICT service desk has to deal with. The team has been able to show marked improvements in SLA performance, which has climbed from 86% before the new processes were implemented to 97% today.



The engineers find the real time statistics and escalation arrows extremely helpful to manage their calls in a visual way. They can immediately home in on calls that are amber or red, and if they are going to be out of the office, they can flag their workload to their manager, who can make a decision to reassign for example. If any calls are about to breach their SLAs, the deputy technical manager receives an alert, allowing him to manage the engineers in a supportive way and ensure the SLA is met.

Trend analysis in Sostenuto has helped steer the team's decisions, so for example being able to spot a high incidence of password resets has meant the decision could be taken to implement appropriate technology based on a sound ROI (return on investment) case.

At the same time, automatic email alerts keep employees and third parties more involved in the service process, requesting them for instance, two days after the resolution of a call, to confirm whether they are happy for it to be closed.

“Not only are our end-users more self-managing, Sostenuto has also given us more control,” says Jiten.

“We've locked down a lot of features as part of our processes to improve our performance, so for example engineers can't put calls on hold without authorisation.”

Managing IT assets throughout their lifecycle

“Being able to see when contracts are due for renewal allows us to intervene at the right time to negotiate more favourable terms with suppliers, saving the Trust money.”

The Trust's IT asset management requirements are complex to say the least. “We make full use of the ‘associations’ functionality within Sostenuto to link up all of our configuration items throughout their lifecycle,” says Jiten. “An item will move from the ‘products’ area of Sostenuto into ‘orders’ and then into ‘items’ and later gets routed to various options such as: ‘active’, ‘spare stock’ or ‘scrapped’. Being able to track all of our assets to specific buildings and then to individual rooms has led to significant

improvements in the management of Trust ICT assets.”

With all ICT asset information being stored within Sostenuto, the team can buy equipment in bulk through analysing the data. An example was when the Trust identified a large proportion of desktop PCs were about to end the warranty period, and using this information the Trust was able to negotiate a significant discount from the supplier to extend the warranties,” says Jiten. “Sostenuto is now our asset management system, allowing us to track everything, particularly through the use of barcode scanning.”

Sostenuto's contract management functionality has also been put to good use by Pennine Care, allowing them to manage more closely all of their ICT contracts with suppliers. “Being able to see when contracts are due for renewal allows us to intervene at the right time to negotiate more favourable terms with suppliers, saving the Trust money,” explains Jiten.

And finally, a few words of advice:

The National Accreditation process represents a massive cultural change. According to Jiten, success was only possible at Pennine Care thanks to buy-in and support from the ICT Director, as well as having an exceptional support team that was always willing to go the extra mile.

Jiten says that it was very important that he stayed rigid with the processes he'd laid out in order to deliver the level of quality the Trust set out to achieve. The initial phase of the project was rigorous - if any part of a process was queried, it had to be clearly justified, but once accepted, there was no going back.

In a nutshell, Jiten's main tips are:

- Ensure you have management buy-in before you start
- Having a supportive team is paramount, as is the willingness to work hard all round - the team at Pennine Care put in some long hours!
- The person delivering the project should have enough authority to push the changes through
- Good communication is key, and regular meetings keep the project on track
- Be strong and committed to the processes you have mapped. As long as they are logical and meet the needs of the organisation, instead of the needs of the software.

About Sunrise

Sunrise was founded in 1994 and is a leading independent provider of IT Service Management solutions.

Our customer base includes over 1,000 blue chip & public sector organisations, including many names within the NHS, such as Northamptonshire Health Informatics, Birmingham Children's Hospital, Central and North West London Mental Health Trust, Camden and Islington Shared Services, St Mary's Hospital, Mersey Care NHS, Birmingham Primary Care Shared Services Agency.



About Sostenuto

Sostenuto ITSM is a powerful, fully browser-based IT Service Management solution. Its latest ITSM3 version is among the first software tools to have received Pink Verify 3.1 accreditation, which is officially recognised by the OGC (Office of Government Commerce) and APM Group as meeting the ITIL Version 3 verification requirements.



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