

South Yorkshire Alliance Sheffield teaching Hospital

Integra Centros Case Study

“ Integra Centros offers value for money”

The Customer

South Yorkshire Alliance, a collaborative consortium of four prominent healthcare organisations, embarked on a strategic initiative to enhance their financial management systems. This consortium comprises Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, a sizable acute trust, Sheffield Children’s Hospital, another renowned acute trust, and two mental health trusts - Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust and Rotherham Doncaster & South Humber Mental Health NHS Foundation.

“ Bringing the Trusts together in one system means we have a much higher level of collaboration and relationships within the trusts, everybody’s learned a lot about good practice.”

The Challenge

System consolidation

These four trusts, each utilising the Integra financial management system, decided to pool their resources and expertise in a systems alliance several years ago. The goal was to leverage a collaborative approach, seeking opportunities that would mutually benefit the entire alliance in terms of system efficiency, effectiveness, and resilience.

Prior to this initiative, each trust operated its own Integra system, with distinct processes, customisations, chart of accounts, and reporting structures. Despite the extended period of use, ranging from 20 plus years in most cases, the systems were maintained separately by individual staff, leading to a diversity of configurations and operational variances. The effort to synchronise these disparate systems marked a significant step forward for the South Yorkshire Alliance, fostering a cohesive financial framework that aligns with the collaborative spirit of the consortium.



Benchmarking

Conducting a benchmarking exercise, the alliance systematically evaluated Integra Centros alongside several alternative systems. The scrutiny extended beyond the Integra suite to include a comprehensive value-for-money assessment. The outcome of this exercise led to a unanimous decision that Integra Centros offered the best value for the trusts. However, the realisation was not merely confined to upgrading the existing systems; instead, it called for a comprehensive reimplementaion, moving from four separate systems to a singular environment.

Process Transformation

This decision was driven by a recognition that transitioning to a new version of Integra was not a straightforward upgrade but rather a transformative process. The move involved a complete overhaul, leveraging multi-company functionality to create a unified system. The objective was to establish a standardised environment, ensuring that all trusts adopted the same reference data and adhered to best practice processes.

However, the realisation of these benefits came with a set of challenges. The project was not a straightforward upgrade but an intricate reimplementaion, requiring the alliance to essentially start from scratch. The complexity was not only confined to the technical aspects on the system side but also extended to the considerable effort required to align four trusts in terms of processes, charts of accounts, and other reference information. This underscored the scale of the undertaking and the need for a meticulous and collaborative approach to ensure a successful transition.

Implementation Expertise

The consultants and project management staff provided invaluable advice, expertise, and engaged in extensive conversations to determine the most effective strategies. For example the data migration process posed a particular challenge, however, the difficulty was significantly mitigated, thanks to the ingenious method devised by the IBSS consultants. Their approach allowed for a more seamless data extraction process. Instead of the conventional method of extracting raw data and then translating it externally, the data was already translated as it came out of the system. This innovative solution streamlined the migration process, making it more efficient and reducing potential translation errors.

“ The key to success was using the IBSS consultants... The consultants and project management staff we used were excellent.”

While the implementation journey encountered a few challenges, such as deciding not to take over certain suppliers initially, the teams efficiently addressed these issues. The integration of E forms into the central data proved invaluable, facilitating streamlined requests and approvals across different trusts. This automation significantly enhanced efficiency, aligning with the strategic goals of the alliance.



The Outcome

The transition to Integra Centros for the South Yorkshire Alliance marked a significant milestone in their pursuit of a unified and streamlined financial management system. The collaborative efforts of the consultants and project management staff involved were instrumental in ensuring a successful implementation.

Improved reporting

The post-implementation phase saw the emergence of a new suite of reports, covering various work streams and alerts. Trusts now have access to reports that were previously unavailable to them, fostering improved visibility and decision-making capabilities. The introduction of reporting more closely linked to national reporting in the General Ledger contributed to a higher level of collaboration and standardised practices across trusts.

Workspaces

The new functionalities of Integra Centros, including integrated payment runs and the use of workspaces, received positive feedback from the Accounts Payable (AP) teams. The advanced filters and links to data within workspaces simplified processes and actions, contributing to improved workflow efficiency.

“ The new functionality is very good, the integrated payment runs went down very, very well with the AP teams.”

Improved help functionality

The alliance plans to leverage customised help documentation to further enhance user support. Despite some initial bugs, the transition to Integra Centros resulted in a clean system, resolving long-standing issues from the previous version. The digital transformation within the trusts, transitioning from paper to digital processes, has been facilitated by the platform's features, especially the workspaces.

“ The users say this is the best version of Integra they have worked on.”

Improved Upgrade Processes

Adding a subsidiary after the initial implementation was streamlined, showcasing the adaptability and efficiency of the model.

The plan for unified upgrades ensures that the South Yorkshire Alliance stays current with the latest releases, avoiding the challenges of having disparate module versions. The combined reference data simplifies future data cleansing efforts, providing a standardised set that enhances resilience and collaboration among trusts.

Operational Efficiencies

Looking ahead, the alliance anticipates time savings, ongoing cost efficiencies in licensing and hardware, and continued process optimisation as the system becomes more ingrained in day-to-day operations. The South Yorkshire Alliance has successfully navigated the challenges of transitioning to Integra Centros, realising significant benefits and positioning themselves for continued success in their financial management processes.

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