Decision Time

See. Know. Do.

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) - Customer Story

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) has over 11,000 staff and provides hospital and community healthcare to people in the Colchester, Ipswich and local areas. It is the largest NHS organisation in the region, an associate teaching hospital of the University of London and a user of Decision Time.

The governance architecture of ESNEFT has three main components:

- A Membership made up of members of the public and staff.

- A Council of Governors comprised of a Chair, elected public governors, elected staff governors and appointed stakeholder governors.

- A Board of Executive and Non-Executive Directors.

The 1999 Health Act and subsequent Acts (2006 and 2012) placed a statutory duty of quality upon NHS Trusts. The most important decision making forums within ESNEFT, the Board and Senior Leadership Teams, need secure and efficient access to manage information in order to carry out their statutory and non-statutory duties. ESNEFT was formed on 1 July 2018 through the merger of Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust and The Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust. Prior to the merger the Colchester Hospital Trust decided that the prevailing paper and email based meeting processes could be improved by the introduction of board portal technology, an approach which would improve efficiency and satisfy many of the requirements of the independent regulator, Monitor.

Having adopted Decision Time this was rolled out across ESNEFT after the merger.

At a Glance

VALUES

Our mission is to continue to meet the principles of the NHS identified in 1948, that good healthcare should be available to all, regardless of ability to pay.

Our vision is to provide the communities we serve with excellent healthcare and build a better future for East Suffolk and North Essex.

SECTOR

Health

LOCATION

East Anglia, England

SIZE

Over 11,000 staff supporting almost a million people

DECISION TIME USERS

53 Meeting Licences

Challenges

Like all NHS Trusts Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust (CHUFT) faced significant resource constraints. The management of formal meetings for Board of Directors and various Committees was identified as an area for improvement.

The existing process was not the most efficient or effective. Board papers were collated on a network drive using a dedicated PC before being distributed via email to other meeting organisers within the Trust. Papers were subsequently printed and many hours were spent collating them into meeting packs. Finally then, the packs would have to be posted to the Board of Directors.

The same process was used for the following committees:

- Audit & Risk Committee
- Quality & Patient Safety Committee
- Finance Committee
- People & Organisation Development Committee

Clearly this was a huge time constraint, compounded when amendments and updates had to be made, often at the last minute. The level of stress for those tasked with creating and distributing the meeting packs was considerable. The sheer length of time needed to prepare and collate the packs meant it was a struggle to meet deadlines for meetings.

Decision Time in a Nutshell

- Easy to use, highly intuitive software ensures adoption by the board.
- Well prepared and informed attendees produces more engaged and productive meetings.
- Better focus due to the smooth running of meetings.
- Last minute changes are easy to incorporate so packs are distributed earlier.

Something had to Change

It was identified that the main drivers for this project would be:

- Reducing the costs involved in managing meetings.
- Improving the ability of the Board and Committees to access relevant information.
- Driving productivity by increasing effective and efficient governance.
- Reducing the carbon footprint of the organisation.
- Improving the level of security regarding the access and distribution of meeting packs.
- Harnessing proven and available software that could address the current challenges.

Solution

Following a thorough review of competitive products, as well as some alternative approaches, it was concluded that Decision Time was the solution of choice.

Committee Coordinator Shane Jarvis explains his initial impression of the platform,

"I first saw a demo and was impressed with its simplicity."

While not the determining factor, Decision Time also offered excellent value for money. The Trust needed to ensure that the chosen portal not only met all necessary technical requirements for things like security, implementation schedule and connectivity, but was very intuitive to use. It was ease of use that was considered to be pivotal to successful adoption among users. Any solution that didn't deliver on this criteria was considered too large a risk.

The Trust were pleasantly surprised to see that Decision Time was extremely easy to use. Confidence in their chosen solution remained high, from the initial implementation stages and throughout its rollout.

Outcome

Decision Time and The Trust worked closely together to devise a solid and thorough implementation plan. The programme ensured a comprehensive transfer of knowledge and skills to all users.

It didn't take long for the benefits of Decision Time to shine through. Almost immediately the software began to free up a huge amount of time among the administrative and support staff. This also had the direct benefit of relieving much of the stress associated with the old process.

Direct cost savings were instantly visible. From day one a number of the direct costs like printing paper, toner and postage were almost completely eradicated.

The Trust made use of the Decision Time support function during the early "bedding in" stages. When they did, they were pleased that responses were helpful and quick. These initial interactions confirmed in the minds of staff their belief that Decision Time was totally committed to ensuring a successful implementation and would "go the extra mile."

One of the most rewarding benefits Decision Time delivered has been the significant time savings. Committee Coordinator Shane Jarvis commented:

"I no longer need to stay late in the evening to print and prepare meeting packs. Aside from eradicating overtime needed for creating and distributing meeting packs, Decision Time Meetings freed up time to allow the administrative and support staff to focus on other areas of valuable work."

Support

First class product support, especially during the early phase, is critical. The experience of ESNEFT clearly illustrates the commitment that Decision Time has to providing clients with the best experience possible.

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Senior management have reaped benefits too. Meeting packs are in their possession much earlier than ever before. They now have instant, secure and constant access to a huge range of corporate data, archived meeting packs, previous minutes and even supporting documents. This greatly improved their preparation for meetings and offered them increased control and flexibility in how they managed their schedules.

All senior leaders were trained in how to efficiently locate information that would help them make better informed decisions. The powerful 'search' function meant Board members and senior leaders were able to find what they were looking for within seconds, rather than having to delegate a lengthy search to administrative and support staff. This function helped both executives and organisers save time and searches were much more likely to result in success.

Regular Product Updates

Since the introduction of Decision Time in March 2016, the Trust has received regular product upgrades (at no additional cost) that have continued to enhance the functionality and performance of the software. This has further validated their selection of Decision Time to provide the Board Portal solution.

It is widely accepted among meeting organisers, Board members and senior executives that Decision Time has provided an efficient, effective and secure way of managing their important governance meetings.

Want to know more about Decision Time?

Request a Demo by emailing **info@decisiontime.co.uk** and we'll guide you through all the helpful ways our software can transform your organisation for good or visit our website at **www.decisiontime.co.uk**