

Case study:
Derwent Shared
Services



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Nicola Smith, Assistant Director of Finance, Workforce and Performance, Derwent Shared Services

Overview

Derwent Shared Services is an NHS organisation which has faced continual change since its creation in 2002.

On 1st July 2006, the NHS in the UK was re-structured with the 28 Strategic Health Authorities merging to form ten Strategic Health Authorities.

Before this, Derwent had used Agresso to look after the operations of their own organisation, and seven other NHS clients in Derbyshire.

In Northampton, another shared service organisation was using Agresso to look after, among other clients, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire & Rutland Strategic Health Authority.

The data from Northampton was migrated to the small team at Derwent and within a couple of weeks the newly formed East Midlands Strategic Health Authority was up and running with all the historical data. This was achieved without a single day of consultancy assistance from Agresso. However, even greater challenges were just around the corner.

On 1st October 2006, a major merger of Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) took place across the country. In Derbyshire there were eight PCT's before the merger. In the north of the county, the three other PCT's were also operating a local shared service running a different financial system. As a result of the merger, the eight organisations were to merge into two - Derbyshire County and Derby City.

A decision was taken in January 2007, to merge onto the Agresso application at Derwent. One of the key benefits was that the Derwent Systems team of three people felt they could make this change without any consultancy assistance from Agresso.

The Need

Derwent Shared Service has gone through a period of intense organisational change. It has adapted rapidly to these changes thanks to the flexibility of Agresso. The system has enabled it to add new clients quickly, cost-effectively and deliver added value, with improved access to vital management information.

Nicola Smith, Assistant Director of Finance, Workforce and Performance at Derwent Shared Services, says: “The NHS is constantly addressing change. The fact that at Derwent we have been able to manage this change, merge environments and add new clients, almost entirely in-house, shows the flexibility that Agresso offers.”



The Benefit

Derwent Shared Services cites the following benefits from using Agresso:

1. Flexible

It is the flexibility of Agresso that has enabled the team at Derwent to react rapidly to change and adapt the system to ongoing organisational change. Nicola says: "The main benefit of Agresso, from my experience, is the flexibility. For example, when we have gained new clients or needed to manage organisational change we have been able to adapt the system in-house. This has helped us to keep and expand our client base while also delivering added value."

2. Agility

Having a system that can easily be reconfigured after implementation has been essential in an environment where change is an ongoing fact of life. "We have been able to cope with periods of intense change with relative ease," says Nicola "we were fortunate to have an excellent financial systems team capable of doing the development work. The technical system change didn't cause us any significant problems. This is partly down to the flexibility of the system and partly to the excellent work of the team that was involved."

3. Cost-effective

It is important to make maximum use of resources within the NHS, where there is constant pressure on budgets. Nicola Smith says the inherent agility of Agresso has delivered significant cost savings. "Because we do manage change ourselves, we have been able to keep the costs down on Agresso consultancy."

4. Reporting

The ease of use of the Agresso system also makes it easier for management teams to extract and use the information they need. "The Agresso system has made it much easier to extract information" says Nicola, "the system has the ability to automate reporting and it is very easy for users to go into the ledger and extract *ad-hoc* information. From my experience a lot of other systems don't allow you to do that with such ease."

5. Site licence

Under the Terms of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Agresso and OGC Buying Solutions on behalf of UK Government in November 2006, Derwent was able to upgrade to a site licence to enable the full benefit of the

Agresso application to be embraced by the existing and new organisations. This allows Derwent to develop the system on behalf of existing clients cost-effectively, whenever the need arises.

"The site licence is helping us to reduce our client's overheads," says Nicola, "it helped us develop the system in a cost-effective way enabling our clients to benefit from system enhancements. Now, if we need to add new clients in the future, we will know in advance exactly what the licence costs are, as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding."

"Organising the site licence through the OGC Memorandum of Understanding was also very simple. All I had to do was speak to the Agresso account manager about it."

6. Added value

The functionality and flexibility of Agresso has enabled the team at Derwent Shared Services to maintain and improve the service they provide. Nicola Smith says: "Throughout all this change, we have been able to provide a consistent service to all our clients. The flexibility of Agresso and ease of use has also freed us to deliver added value for our clients. Ultimately, that's what you want from a financial system."

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Nicola Smith, Assistant Director of Finance, Workforce and Performance, Derwent Shared Services.

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The ERP Market's *Definition* of Agility

Agresso has labelled a horizontal layer across multiple vertical markets as 'Businesses Living IN Change' or in short "BLINC™" – a segment that is characterised by organisations that are experiencing almost frenetic levels of dynamic business change. This is particularly apparent in the services sector, in both the public and commercial world, where Agresso has traditionally strong worldwide presence built up over the last 15 years. Agresso's post-implementation agility capabilities have been the differentiating factor for the 2600 'BLINC' organisations that comprise our customer base.

Today, Agresso's unique underpinning architecture is being enjoyed by thousands of BLINC businesses, with over 1,500,000 worldwide users, through hundreds of mergers, reorganisations, consolidations, etc. The company is focused on correcting the CXO's longstanding and expensive "re-architect-or-die" assumptions promoted by the ERP leaders, whose lack of post-installation agility is cutting deep into corporate margins. **Agresso is ERP...with no Expiry Date™.**

For more information, please visit www.agresso.com

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