

# INNOVATION - I1

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FOR INFORMATION ON THE  
INNOVATION PROGRAMME  
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## THE INNOVATORS

My name is Phil Harrison, I am the current Divisional Finance Manager for the Cancer & Diagnostics department at ESNEFT. Before joining the NHS as a Finance Manager I was an auditor at Grant Thornton and PwC.

### THE PROBLEM

During the pandemic the operational, clinical and finance teams **need to** approve the quality impact assessment (QIA) for all Cost Improvement Programme (CIP) schemes **because otherwise** the impact of decisions made may not be adequately assessed.

### THE CHALLENGE

**How might we** allow for the accurate evidencing that this review process has been undertaken at a time when physical signatures on documents are hard to obtain with colleagues working offsite and away from their usual workspaces **so that** we can continue to evidence that the correct governance is being followed for all CIP schemes in a timely way?

## THE INNOVATION

To overcome this problem, we utilised the functionality contained within Power Automate (a programme within the Microsoft Office suite) to create a process flow and database to contain all of the information required to evidence the review had been undertaken. This included creating a simple electronic approval process within the process flow, with responses to the approval recorded within the central database. By utilising existing Microsoft Office products at our disposal, we were able to bring in this process at no additional cost to the trust. The use of Power Automate also allowed us to utilise existing security features contained within the trusts IT infrastructure to ensure that the process was secure and reliable, again at no additional cost.



## THE LESSONS LEARNT

- We would not release a new process like this to all users at once based on the testing performed by those involved in the project because valuable information about what was required and issues in the system itself were identified by users that would have helped with the implementation. By testing with a small cohort of users to get this valuable information, we will be able to implement new processes more effectively in the future.
- We learned how to create process flows using Power Automate that have a multitude of applications, particularly the electronic approval process by simple Google searches at times as well as through discussion with IT colleagues who were familiar with the programme.

## THE OUTPUTS

The 'tangible' outputs that came from our innovation were

- that a robust process was introduced to evidence the QIA process
- a new way of documenting data contained within a SharePoint list was also discovered
- an easy way of creating an electronic approval was also discovered

## THE OUTCOMES

The benefits to the teams of this process were that they are now able to evidence their approvals wherever they are, which is necessary in a world where teams are not necessarily in the same spaces. We have been able to reduce the time it takes to evidence approvals for the users. We have been able to free up considerable time for the Chief Medical Officer and Director of Nursing who can now review QIAs separately, when previously they were required to meet together for a period to review these documents.

## THE QUICK WINS

Our simple advice to others with a similar problem is that they should look to use the systems/tools around them to overcome issues – not necessarily bring in new technologies. They should broaden out any testing of new processes to a sample of users. They should not be afraid to use resources like Google and technology forums to help them come up with solutions

## THE REVIEWERS SAID

**POWER AUTOMATE IS A FREE MICROSOFT ADD IN, SO NO ADDITIONAL COSTS. POTENTIAL TO USE IN A NUMBER OF AREAS, NOT JUST THE IDENTIFIED AREA**

**THIS LOOKS TO BE A GOOD INNOVATION THAT HAS MET THE OBJECTIVE SET OUT TO ENSURE QIA FOR CIP ARE EVIDENCED AND REVIEWED**

**STRUCTURED CLEAR GOVERNANCE PROCESS FOR THE SIGNING OFF OF EIA/ QIA EFFICIENT LOG OF THE TRAIL AND WHERE THE SIGN OFF PROCESS UP TO ENSURES AUDIT TRAIL OF DECISIONS**

## WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

**If you recognise the problem stated and have implemented your own innovation** to overcome it please submit this innovation to the programme and give others more examples to learn from.

**SUBMIT INNOVATION**

**If you recognise the problem stated and would like to know more details about this innovation in particular**, we will be hosting showcase and workshop sessions throughout the year, so all interested staff can gain ideas and inspiration from innovators in a manageable one-to-many format.

**REGISTER INTEREST**

**If you have a problem but don't currently know of a solution to it**, then please submit it here and in 2022 the Forum intends to crowdsource solutions to problems that don't currently have known innovations.

**SUBMIT PROBLEM**

**If you would like to learn more about about the innovation programme** please click below for more details

**LEARN MORE**

## IN SEPTEMBER 2021 THE FORUM LAUNCHED...

- A national Innovation Programme for NHS Finance staff to submit their innovations for peer review. Successful innovations will be published and accessible to all on the One NHS Finance website
- A 'Software Skills For Finance Staff' event series taught by NHS Finance for NHS Finance including MS Excel, PowerBI, SQL etc.
- An 'Art of the Possible' briefing which explains two new technologies AI & Blockchain and discusses the opportunity for NHS Finance
- An Automation Group to review and improve the efficiency of existing national processes and returns

## WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Submit your innovations for peer review
- Sign up to be an innovation peer reviewer
- Read Art of the Possible
- Sign up for Software Skills for Finance
- Register your interest in automation and all things innovative

### Innovation Programme



### Software Skills



### Automation sign up



### Be a peer reviewer



### Art of the Possible



### FURTHER INFORMATION

Website: [FinanceInnovation.nhs.uk](https://financeinnovation.nhs.uk)

Email: [finance.innovation@nhs.net](mailto:finance.innovation@nhs.net)

LinkedIn: [One NHS Finance](#)

Twitter: [@OneNHSFinance](#)

### ENDORSEMENT DISCLAIMER

The Finance Innovation Forum's Innovation Programme asks NHS Finance peer reviewers whether the "Innovation overcomes, successfully addresses, or solves the problem identified". The programme does not endorse, recommend or provide any assurance of software used or mentioned in any of the published innovations. If you think a published innovation is being used to falsely validate a commercial product or company please contact [finance.innovation@nhs.net](mailto:finance.innovation@nhs.net)



One NHS Finance brings together the Future-Focused Finance, National Finance Academy, and the Finance Innovation Forum programmes and networks to make sure that everyone working in NHS Finance has access to skills, knowledge, methods, and opportunities to influence and enhance patient services.



Identifying and developing innovative ways of working and new areas of improvement.