

# K2



## WORKING DAY 1 REPORTING

WARRINGTON AND HALTON TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FT

NORTH WEST, ACUTE

With special thanks to this team of innovators for taking part in the pilot of this programme and contributing to its development.



 FOR INFORMATION ON THE  
INNOVATION PROGRAMME  
CLICK HERE

# THE INNOVATORS

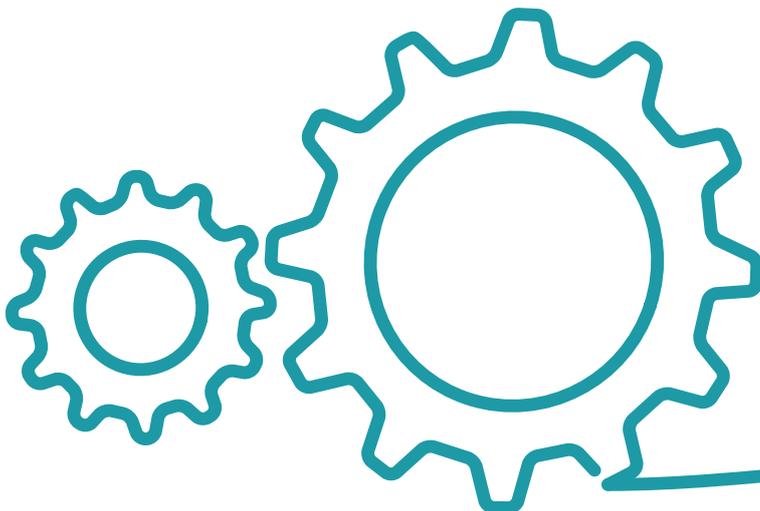
The finance team led by Ben Stevens, a systems accountant at Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals, focused on engagement rather than just dissemination of information. This, combined with Ben's analytical skills and positive attitude has enabled the finance directorate to feel like their views and opinions were considered. The team continuously embraces change, striving to streamline financial information to ensure that the Trust can respond quickly and accurately to ever changing requirements.

## THE PROBLEM

The finance department needed to move the month-end reporting from working day six to working day one, to reduce the delay in reporting to clinical business units (CBUs). Without this the CBUs would be making business decisions based on out-of-date financial information. It enables more timely information to be available for decision making, and finance staff will be able to increase support to managers and budget holders due to the reduced reporting timescale and less time correcting coding and process errors by users.

## THE CHALLENGE

How might we overcome the barriers faced in implementing working day one reporting, so that we can provide timely, up to date and relevant financial information?



# THE INNOVATION

The finance team started by analysing the Trust's financial transactions and profiling when they happened and by whom. They then engaged with the teams, internal and external stakeholders including external financial services provider, agency suppliers, internal information providers like pharmacy, procurement, and clinical information teams to establish a revised timetable for month end financial reporting. Every area of the timetable was reviewed in meticulous detail and an action plan for each area was put in place setting out the changes that were required to meet the new timetable, considering possible implications on other teams or data.

Each process change documented the before and after approaches, with a clear communication plan sent out to the wider finance team. Communication across the Trust was also key, reminding budget holders of their responsibility to receipt goods and services in a timely manner to improve accuracy and advising them that their information would be available sooner.

This was a massive achievement for the Trust as only a handful of other trusts have achieved it. Tangible benefits from the project include the reduction in duplication of effort and time saved on running the month end processes. The intangible added value is the additional time spent with operational front-line teams in understanding their financial results and supporting them through any required workstreams and business changes. These changes have also enabled the trust to respond quickly to any NHSE&I requests and requirements.

In summary the change has enabled the team to spend more time on value added tasks rather than transactional processes and supported better decision making.

# THE LESSONS LEARNT

**We wouldn't do the project over the peak annual leave season of July to September again because the project was intense in terms of reviewing around 100 tasks that contribute to the monthly closedown. In avoiding this period, we would ensure that more staff were available to contribute to the reviews and to reduce the pressure on everyone.**

**The project went very well and was achieved within the planned timetable. The result was a really detailed timetable to achieve the deadline on each day up to close down day. In particular, during the short close down period, we learnt to keep things on track by holding daily short 15 minute progress meetings to review progress and potentially reassign tasks if a particular person or team had too much on.**

**Communications of the plans around working day one and how the project was progressing was a key part of the project. This involved all stakeholders (Internal: information, procurement, payroll, SBS etc. and external providers of information, eg NHSP, temporary workforce providers etc.). The project involved all members of the finance team and was extremely well supported by senior finance colleagues. The input of senior finance colleagues was key when discussing any key task/ process changes, highlighting risks resulting from the change and the steps to mitigate the risks. The project was high on the senior team's agenda to ensure they were kept aware of changes and to make sure that the project was prioritised.**

## THE OUTPUTS

The tangible benefits from this project include:

- financial positions being available to budget holders earlier so corrective action can be taken sooner
- more timely and relevant information for decision making and reporting
- finance staff able to increase support to managers and budget holders due to the reduced reporting timescale, this allows the team to support bids, business cases, complete Covid-19 reporting and complete deep dive analysis into the data.

## THE OUTCOMES

The intangible added value is:

- the team spends less time completing transactional processes and can dedicate additional time to support operational front-line teams in understanding their financial results, and supporting them through any required workstreams and business changes
- the Trust can respond quickly and accurately to NHSE&I requests and requirements
- the finance team feels very positive having been able to review and amend processes to facilitate earlier reporting and which means they have more time to give advice and support to clinical and corporate areas with the Trust.

## THE QUICK WINS

Essential quick wins included:

- engaging with the senior finance team to ensure that the project was prioritised and to ensure that other parts of the organisation were aware of what is being planned and why
- communicating advantages to the Trust to ensure buy in and commitment
- understanding:
  - » how the current closedown timetable works.
  - » current general ledger transactions – When? What? How? Who? Where?
  - » the impact of post working day one transactions
  - » current interdependencies.
- effective engagement from all aspects of finance – they had great engagement with management accounts, financial services, and financial planning with all three groups chaired via one staff member to keep the project on track
- being pragmatic, accepting that its better to be materiality correct earlier than having perfect information late.

This was achieved through:

- closer collaboration and communication within the Trust and external stakeholders
- reviewing and streamlining existing processes
- testing and validating new processes and timetables via the heads of management accounts, financial services and financial planning.

# THE REVIEWERS SAID

**“THIS IS A GREAT INNOVATION WHICH IS HELPFUL TO THE WIDER TRUST, AND NOT JUST THE FINANCE TEAM. GETTING THE INFORMATION TO BUDGET MANAGERS IN A TIMELY WAY CAN BE MUCH MORE BENEFICIAL TO THEM. THE EARLY REPORTING IS ALSO ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE EXECUTIVE TEAM.”**

**“THE AGILITY/ TIMELINESS OF INFORMATION THIS GIVES TO DECISION-MAKERS AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FINANCE STAFF TO ENGAGE IN VALUE-ADDED ACTIVITIES IS IMPRESSIVE.”**

**“I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THIS WORKING DAY ONE REPORTING PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED ACROSS MANY ORGANISATIONS.”**



# WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

## SUBMIT INNOVATION

**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.

## REGISTER INTEREST

**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.

## SUBMIT PROBLEM

**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.

## LEARN MORE

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

## 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)



## 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: [FinanceInnovation@nhs.uk](mailto:FinanceInnovation@nhs.uk)

LinkedIn: [One NHS Finance](#)

Twitter: [@OneNHSFinance](#)



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.