

**G4**



# ESTABLISHMENT CONTROL OPTIMISATION

**NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST**

**MIDLANDS, ACUTE**



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INNOVATION PROGRAMME  
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# THE INNOVATORS

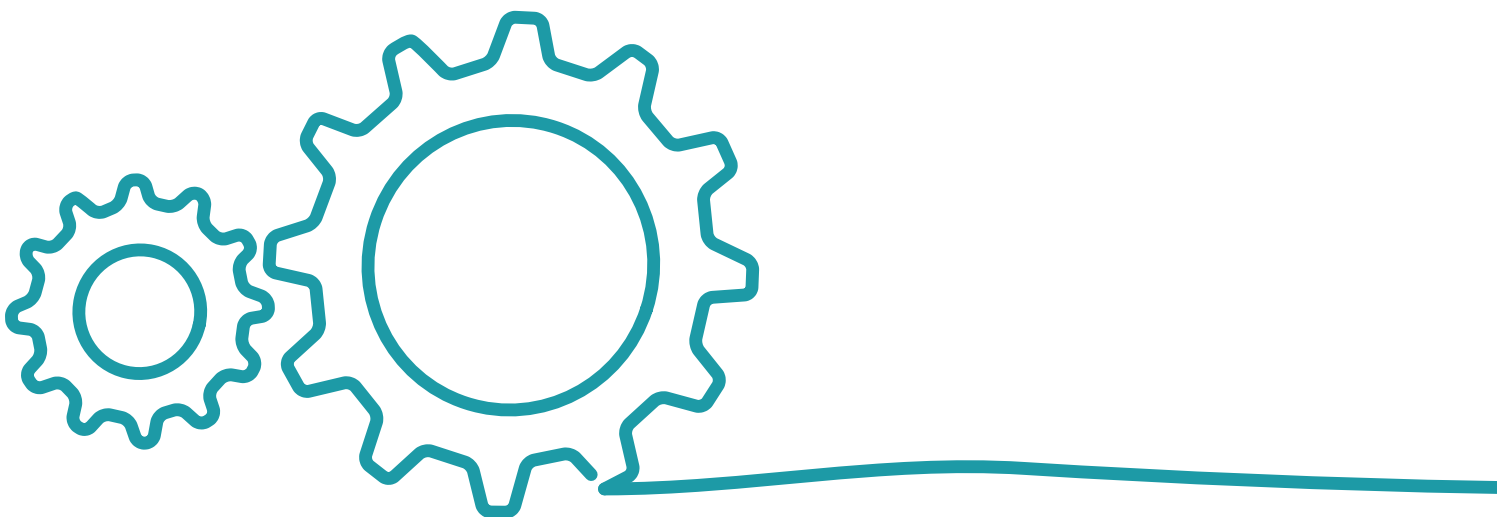
Wes Hall, Daniel Harvey, Stephanie Ellerby and Luca Paderi. The innovation has been developed by a multidisciplinary team made up of colleagues from financial management and finance systems, with input from colleagues working in workforce information and planning, occupational health, service improvement, recruitment and the budget holders.

## THE PROBLEM

Budget holders need to have clarity on staffing budgets and post holders in real time otherwise vacancies are not recruited on time or forms are submitted for posts that do not exist.

## THE CHALLENGE

How might we join up the HR controls around establishment, budgetary controls, and recruitment/ vacancy panels so that there is a clearly defined establishment budget dataset at position level for the whole trust?



# THE INNOVATION

A project was initiated focusing on four main key deliverables:

- changed budget reports in the accounting software to include person derived pay budgets
- report of position level vacancy listings for use by vacancy control panel available as a 'live' dataset
- clear establishment control policies and procedures
- tracking of vacancies through the recruitment process.

The project was delivered across three phases:

## Phase One

1. Validate the number of vacancies and over established posts.
2. To determine the budgeted establishment and hold in the ledger (excluding consultants).
3. A review of the current control processes and systems to enact position level establishment control. Identification of the key stakeholders and setup a new change and review governance process.
4. Evaluate functionality of ESR and Integra enhanced budgeting system.
5. Populate system with updated information.
6. Cleanse the HR and finance system datasets.

## Phase Two

1. Determine a measure to hold consultant establishment in ESR and Integra as WTE.
2. Ensure consultant WTE is correctly held in ESR.
3. Create consultants budgeted establishment.

## Phase Three

1. Add recruitment data into dataset to account for vacancies in the process of being filled.
2. Identify payments made to employees not covered by basic pay. Allowances such as on call payments etc.
3. Create scheme of delegation using position number to cost centre link.

The output delivered was a set of dashboards accessible via the existing business intelligence tool and linked to the monthly electronic report sent to budget holders. Those dashboards facilitate the view of the overall trust establishment, employees in post, vacancies, unfunded posts and net position, allowing filtering and drill down to employee level.

The alignment at position level between the financial ledger and ESR establishment allows a dynamic approach to establishment analysis and permitting posts to be recruited to only if there is a budgeted establishment.

# THE LESSONS LEARNT

- We would not start the data cleansing exercise without the ESR team again because there were issues within ESR being reviewed and corrected.
- We learnt to connect the HR and finance dataset through exploiting digital technologies. We learnt to engage better with stakeholders by involving them in the decision-making process and using their feedback to underpin the output specifications.

## THE OUTPUTS

The outputs delivered were:

- a set of live dashboards accessible via the existing business intelligence tool and linked to the monthly electronic report sent to budget holders
- dashboards that facilitate the view of the overall trust establishment, employees in post, vacancies, unfunded posts and net position, but also allow to filter and drill down to employee level
- clearly defined establishment budget dataset at position level for the whole trust
- improved workforce plan such that it can be reconciled to the trust's budget.

## THE OUTCOMES

- Budget holders can rely on one single source of live information for the establishment under their control, having the ability to make informed decision and avoid establishment related errors, such as paying employees who have left the organisation.
- The recruitment process is not delayed by vacancies being submitted to unfunded posts, as the funding is validated ahead of the vacancy being requested.
- Savings in unnecessary premium pay costs incurred because of recruitment delays.
- Ability to identify unfunded posts and take action towards addressing overspend.
- Ability to identify long term vacancies at position level, allowing us to explore the possibility of redeploying the budget to other areas.
- Improved relationships between budget holders and finance as consequence of solving budget holder problems.
- Enabled the automation of the scheme of delegation process.

## THE QUICK WINS

- Maximise the use of business intelligence tools already available to the organisation.
- Build strong relationship with the HR data team to establish the common goals and shared terminology.
- Sharing the vision with the budge holder to facilitate engagement with the process as they are the true enablers of the establishment control process.

# THE REVIEWERS SAID

**“THIS IS A REAL PROBLEM THAT IS COMMON FOR MANY NHS TRUSTS AND THE END RESULT SEEMS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM AND BE AN INNOVATION THAT CAN BE SHARED BY OTHER NHS TRUSTS.”**

**“CONFIRMING THE CONTROLS AND STAFF POSITION IS A FUNDAMENTAL KEY FOR ALL TRUST, SO THE INNOVATION IS ABSOLUTELY CORRECTLY FOCUSSED.”**

**“THIS IS A REALLY IMPORTANT INNOVATION THAT GOES TO THE HEART OF MANAGING COST AND IMPROVING EFFICIENCY. IT IS FIRMLY, AND RIGHTLY, FOCUSSED ON STAFF, AND HAS HAD THE BENEFITS OF INCREASING ENGAGEMENT, CLEANSING DATA, IMPROVING DATA AND SUPPORTING EFFICIENCY BY PRODUCING A SINGLE, CREDIBLE, USEFUL RECONCILIATION OF ESR AND THE LEDGER. HUGELY IMPRESSIVE.”**



# 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)



## WHAT ARE WE DOING

- 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
- Software Skills is a network of likeminded NHS Finance staff which exists to help its members see what's possible when using accessible software to its full potential.
- An 'Art of the Possible' briefing which explains two new technologies AI & Blockchain and discusses the opportunity for NHS Finance
- We helped develop a Provider Finance Return (PFR) Automation Project tool, to save NHS Finance teams excessive manual time in their monthly returns.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

- Submit your innovations for peer review
- Sign up to be an innovation peer reviewer
- Share you problems and ideas with us
- Join the Software Skills network
- Register your interest in R&D and automation

**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.



An NHS Finance platform for the discovery and development of problems, ideas and innovations.