



Aspyre helps NHS County Durham and Darlington support multiple commissioning organisations...



Needing to support CCGs with their numerous reporting requirements, NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support chose Aspyre – Mosaique’s cloud-based Portfolio, Programme and Project Management (PPM) solution...

CHALLENGE

- For Programme Office Lead Shirley Wrann, the main problem was trying to co-ordinate multiple projects, ‘With information being stored in different areas and in many formats, reporting was slow and inefficient.’
- There were also a variety of methods of working being used across the organisation which didn’t work well and often resulted in duplication of effort.
- NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support needed a clear and easy way to monitor the progress and delivery of projects being undertaken for the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and to keep track of the CCGs’ own internal projects.

SOLUTION

- Aspyre is a web-based application that holds programme and project information in a secure, central repository. Shirley Wrann points out, ‘All the relevant information is now accessible in one place. Any data only needs to be entered once but this can then be viewed and reported on in a variety of different ways.’
- Aspyre’s reporting functionality saves a significant amount of time - ‘My Monthly report which used to take a whole day to complete now just takes me one hour.’
- NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support now have a simple, yet robust, mechanism for assuring the successful delivery of their programmes and projects.

NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support is responsible for the delivery of over 60 commissioning projects at any one time. As the NHS heads towards the April 2013 deadline, when Clinical Commissioning Groups will take over responsibility for commissioning services, it is becoming increasingly important for Commissioning Support staff to have an effective and intuitive tool to help them manage this change.

Challenge

When Programme Office Lead Shirley Wrann first came into the Programme Management Office (PMO), there was little experience of formal programme and project management amongst the commissioning leads. In addition, information was being stored in different formats using disparate spreadsheets and databases. This meant there was poor visibility of the status of projects and that reporting was very time consuming. What was needed was an intuitive, web-based system that would bring all the information into one place and would help project leads to work in a consistent way.

Additionally, it was vital for the fledgling Clinical Commissioning Groups to have a system which enabled them to share information quickly and easily with their colleagues, whose role it is to support them through the transition period.

Solution

Aspyre holds all information centrally, on a cloud-based, NHS N3 compliant server. Users have easy access to all the relevant programme and project information that they require. Importantly, the information is presented in the same format so everyone works in a consistent manner and produces reports in the same format.



NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support began to use Aspyre predominantly for recording and reporting of project and programme information, with particular emphasis on commissioning projects, in particular the six main areas which include Mental Health, Unplanned Care, Planned Care, Long Term Conditions, Children's Commissioning and Public Health.

They originally purchased a 100-user licence but within a few months upgraded to an Enterprise Licence, as they realised that they would get even greater benefits by giving access to all key stakeholders. The Enterprise licence now enables them to rollout Aspyre to as many users as required across the Cluster.

Aspyre can be used successfully by staff at all levels, even for those with little or no experience in project or programme management. Shirley Wrann's department even carry out their own training sessions now so that they can become more autonomous. They also run a course in 'MiniTs' - an extremely useful tool within Aspyre which helps organisations significantly improve the effectiveness of their meetings.

A number of individual CCGs including Durham, Dales, Easington, Sedgfield and Darlington are also using Aspyre internally for their own projects, some of which have already have a significant number of projects in progress.

NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support is also using Aspyre to provide the assurance function with individual CCGs on their progress towards formal accreditation.

Results

Speed and efficiency of reporting has significantly improved. Wrann comments, 'Aspyre allows for the management of multiple programmes with cross cutting projects, which means that project information is only entered once, therefore reducing duplication. However the information stored in the system can be articulated and reported on through multiple levels of reporting.'

She particularly likes Aspyre's ability to display one single project in two or three different areas. For instance, it is possible to enter data for a project in one area of the 'tree-structure' and then allow this folder to appear in a number of different areas and organisations. This makes it possible for NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support to respond to each individual customer and answer their needs without having to spend time creating discrete databases for each one.

Aspyre follows the key principles and vocabulary of PRINCE2 and MSP. This means there is now a standardised language which can be used to educate and train everyone across the Cluster.

Shirley Wrann explains, 'Aspyre has helped us support the 'changing culture' by providing a structured framework based on sound project management principles, enabling stakeholders across organisational boundaries to speak a common language about on-going projects and programmes of work.'

Savings have been made because reporting overheads have been significantly reduced, 'just by having things in one place makes a huge difference', comments Wrann.

Having become proficient at the tracking and reporting aspects of Aspyre, NHS County Durham and Darlington Commissioning Support intend to employ more of the available functionality in the future such as Benefits, KPIs and Resources. Wrann is also looking to extend use of the Finance module. 'The expectation is that all project and programme information will be held centrally in Aspyre and we will continue to add additional functionality over time.'

As the fundamental structure of the NHS changes leading up to April 2013, each individual region throughout Britain is facing massive organisational change. Shirley Wrann is convinced that using Aspyre will help with this process as it provides continuity through the changes - 'In using Aspyre we now have a comprehensive source of project and programme information which can be accessed easily using secure web based services. Our reporting overheads are significantly reduced and the system offers great future potential as the new commissioning organisations mature.'