



CASE STUDY DOWN LISBURN TRUST

Summary

Needs

- To reduce variation, risk and opportunity for error
- To manage continuity and connectivity between hospital and social services
- To comply with government standards and legislation

Benefits

- Increased patient and client safety
- A more rigorous and smoothly-running audit and inspection process
- Improved control, accountability, standardization of procedures, and the use of resources

Background

Down Lisburn Trust is one of 18 health and social services trusts within Northern Ireland and one of four integrated trusts in the province, which provides both hospital and community services.

With an annual income of approximately £151 million, the trust serves a population of around 180,000 and employs 3,500 staff.

It is made up of a number of different departments. These include challenging areas of care ranging from social work, day care, residential services and health visiting, to mental health, disability, the elderly and children's services and hospital care, as well as corporate departments such as Finance, HR and IT.

Customer Needs

Down Lisburn Trust has to bridge the gap between hospital services and social services over a huge area, and it is vital it manages continuity and connectivity. The two different services have to work closely together and need a detailed understanding of each other's processes. Meeting government requirements also means the Trust has to work towards a mass of different goals, where performance needs to be rigorously monitored and any problems quickly identified and corrected.

The Trust has fostered a culture of continuous improvement since its creation in 1994 and decided to involve BSI early on with improving its quality management systems and procedures. BSI came on board as an integral part of the Trust's framework known as 'Quality Triangle', which also involved Charter Mark and Investors in People.

The Trust continues to need a certification body that can complement and improve its quality management and reduce risk, variation, and opportunity for error – vitally important when it comes to the care and safety of patients and clients. As the Trust aims to roll out ISO 9001 across its organization, and prepares for a planned amalgamation with Ulster Community and Hospital Trust in April 2007, BSI's documented quality system will continue to help the integration process.

Benefits

A number of major departments are now registered to ISO 9001, including Children's Services, Disability, and Elderly and some parts of Mental and Acute, plus most of the Corporate Directorate, with plans to gain full certification across the Trust. Multi-disciplinary teams were used to audit department processes, which gave staff a much greater understanding of how other professionals work in different departments. This tied in with the Trust's drive towards integration, resulting in better working relationships and ultimately improving patient/client care.

Applying the standard meant procedures that could potentially have caused a risk to the health or welfare of patients and clients were identified and changed. An example of this included district nurses bringing vaccines to people in their homes. The temperature of the vaccines was tracked from manufacturer onwards, but the nurses then put the medicine in their car, and the 'cold chain' could be broken in warm weather. Cool bags were introduced, and a potential danger eliminated. ISO 9001 helped the Trust standardize its Universal Service Process, which it uses for all service delivery departments to monitor its patients' and clients' experiences every step of the way, through the health and social care system and beyond. This process has been adopted by other organizations.

In 2003 Down Lisburn Trust was the first Trust to be awarded the Northern Ireland Quality Award, and has been selected to participate in the Northern Ireland Best Practice Scheme, designed to assist improvement across the public sector.

BSI's Role

BSI's high profile and reputation for excellence made them a logical choice over competitors, according to Tom Ward, Service Development Manager with Down Lisburn Trust. "Unlike some other bodies, BSI is certified to health and social services, which we also felt was extremely important," explained Tom. "We wanted someone with a 'feel' for what we did, and an insight into the particular demands of health and social care. Our first client manager had extensive experience in hospitals around the world. We have now had four client managers, each extensively trained by the last before handing over, and this continuity is very important," he added. "ISO 9001 is a worthwhile and robust tool and we take great pride in our achievements in this area."



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