



Charitable Accounting Case Study Northamptonshire Health Charity



Northampton Health Charity uses Harlequin Charitable Accounting to manage their 200 funds over the 3 trusts.

Northamptonshire Health Charity raises funds to improve the facilities and resources of the three trusts in their region.

With active fundraising and by securing donations, legacies and sponsorship, the charity seeks to provide the additional support to make a real difference for the patients, their families and the staff who look after them. In the 2020/21 financial year their income was £1.43m with an expenditure of £1.23m.

Northamptonshire Health Charity first implemented Harlequin CRM in 2010 then later in 2013 added Harlequin Charitable Accounting system.

We spoke to Charity Director Keith Brooks to see what impact Harlequin has had in his role.

Why did you choose Harlequin?

We chose Harlequin Charitable Accounting originally because we already had their CRM solution which we had been using for several years and with the take-on of the accounting equivalent we could have the advantage of an integrated system.

Our previous system had also been constructed to compliment NHS accounting practices but didn't have the same level of functionality as Harlequin's product. The new system offered both fund analysis and full SORP-compliant account production as its main drivers. Fund managers could be advised of their accounts

each month by way of statements and trustees were equally kept informed by specific reports.

How did Harlequin Charitable Accounting stand out from other suppliers?

Unlike most business orientated systems, Harlequin Charitable Accounts has been specifically developed for NHS charity accounting.

Fund managers can easily keep up to date with the fiscal state of their funds, including budget comparisons, accruals and commitments. The accounts in the prescribed format saves a lot of man hours as does the analytical reporting carried out at a touch of a button. Essentially, the system offers us the vast majority of our accounting needs without too

◆◆ *We would struggle to find an alternative solution that delivers what we are currently using through Harlequin Software.* ◆◆

much analysis work our end.

How does the software fit your needs?

We can easily see fund movements and statements which is essential for us if we are asked for information from our users. As an independent charity supporting the NHS we need more functionality than a corporate charity as we manage 200 funds over the 3 trusts.

What advice do you have for others looking for a new software?

We found working backwards was a good rule of thumb. Define your reporting requirements and deliverables before starting the process and make sure you have good functional control of your income as the system should dovetail with your procedures. In our case dealing

with the NHS we need to produce reports for fund managers, senior management and committees plus output income and expenditure each year and statutory accounts.

What are the key benefits of the software for you?

Commitment accounting is a really good feature which brings benefits to the central office team and all the fund managers, keeping them all aware of budgets. The fund statement detail including the period selected is also a good and useful function. We also rely on the link with the CRM when producing the charity accounts.

Why have you found Harlequin to be the best technology partner for the long term?

Harlequin has been developing financial systems for the NHS for over

What 3 phrases describe Harlequin Charitable Accounting?

- ◆ Tailored to meet our needs
- ◆ Delivers what it promises
- ◆ Easy to use

30 years and know their stuff. The charitable accounting system is used by over 60 NHS charities and is under constant development taking on board advice from my counterparts. There would need to be a significant increase of functionality elsewhere for us to ever consider changing providers; for example, Kettering Hospital Charity has come under our umbrella and used another system nothing like as functionally-rich as our Harlequin.

How has it been working with Harlequin and what has impressed you the most?

We have been supported well, both on-site and online. The team at Harlequin have got to know me over the years and I feel they offer a more personable service. As to what impresses me the most, I would say their knowledge in the specific field of hospital charity accounting.



Please contact us

See our software in action in an on-site demo or have an online taster tour.

We can provide you with an indication of costs to help you scope your project.