Aspyre helps South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust (SWFT) monitor their improvement projects to ensure delivery of corporate objectives...

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Needing to understand the full agenda of projects going on across the Trust, SWFT identified the requirement for a Programme Management Office function to support this work.

Having mapped out the service design, it soon became apparent that a paper-based solution would not be the answer and that only a software solution could move the Trust forward to achieve their goal...

CHALLENGE
- The Trust Board required assurance around which projects were delivering and which were off track.
- The were keen to promote a standard way of working on projects ensuring that all were supporting delivery of the Trust's objectives, meeting the cost improvement plan (CIP) challenges and delivering the expected benefits.
- Project reports and updates were being produced in several different formats and consistency was needed.

SOLUTION
- SWFT set up a Programme Management Office (PMO) and rolled out Aspyre to support this. Aspyre is a web-based application that holds programme and project information in a secure, central repository.
- Aspyre's reporting functionality is simple to use and saves a great deal of time in the production of reports for project management and board meetings.
- Succinct, real time information can now be seen by the Chief Executive and his senior management team.

RESULTS
- 'Board to ward' level engagement for all projects and programmes.
- Consistent methodology for project management across the Trust
- Monthly highlight reporting/updating on over 200 Projects/CIPs
- Transparency and support for Project Managers.

South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust were well aware of the huge amount of improvement work taking place across the Trust, but felt they did not have the overview needed to ensure that all the work was complementary and working towards the same aim. The Trust decided that it wanted to form a PMO function to support projects and programmes and had initially carried out design work on a paper-based process.

Through this work they identified all the pieces of the "jigsaw" that were needed for such a PMO service and it soon became apparent that a software solution would be necessary to support this work.

Challenge

When Karen Hodgson, Deputy Head of Service Improvement, looked at what was required, she knew that a centralised IT system would be the answer and, working with Mosaique and their Aspyre software tool, the PMO team pulled together the current projects and entered them onto the system to enable centralisation and ensure transparency of monitoring and reporting.

Undertaking this work clearly highlighted the need for standardisation of project management methods in the Trust covering the way a project is described, its method of approval as a project and how the various elements were captured e.g. the benefits to be delivered, the risks to delivery, resource requirements, milestones and measurements plus ensuring that all projects approved were contributing to the Trust's overall corporate objectives.

The PMO at SWFT set up a monthly Exec level meeting of the Programme Delivery Board (PDB) where information on all projects and programmes is available. Any risks or issues are highlighted in Aspyre as are difficulties in achieving the benefits of projects/programmes.

Jayne Blackley, Deputy Chief Executive of the Trust, reported that the newly formed PDB used Aspyre from "the word go" and the Trust adopted the system as the way the organisation would manage and report on all its projects. Furthermore, the Chief Executive and the senior team schedule a regular slot in their week to log on to Aspyre and look at the overview reports to check on the status and progress of projects.

Jayne also stated that having Aspyre in place now gives more assurance to the Executive Team on the "Big Ticket" items which is very valuable.

The PMO Team stated that the main benefits of Aspyre in the Trust is the ability to monitor the progress of projects and to ensure they are all on track from a risk, timescale and benefits delivery viewpoint. Melanie Griffiths, Head of Service Improvement, also reported that using Aspyre is helping the Trust staff to really think about how to define the benefits realisation and to ensure they think about how to write up projects in a standard way.

The main advantages from the Executives' viewpoint are:

• Increased visibility of all projects and their status

• Provides easy access and control to each Project Manager

• Consistency of reporting

• Up to date information

• Support can be provided to Project Managers where necessary

When asked if the PMO team were happy with the support and communication provided by Mosaique, Karen Hodgson stated that they were very satisfied and that the team were helpful, knowledgeable and supportive.

Solution

Aspyre is a cloud-based, portfolio, programme, project and PMO tool. Information is centrally and securely stored on a fully compliant NHS N3 server. SWFT users now have easy access to all of the relevant programme and project information that they require. Importantly, the information is presented in the same format so everyone works in a consistent way.

Aspyre has been developed in close conjunction with a wide variety of NHS organisations so that it exactly meets their requirements.

Results

South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust began to use Aspyre to pull together their current projects. Each of them were scrutinised to ensure they met their criteria of contributing directly to the organisation's corporate objectives and supporting delivery of the CIP and QIPP challenge. During this process some projects were closed, some reconfigured and new ones introduced.

Aspyre follows the key principals of PRINCE2 and MSP methodologies. Now that Aspyre is being used across the Trust there is a standardised language which can be used to educate and train everyone involved in projects.

This supports Aspyre being used successfully by staff at all levels, even for those with little or no experience in project management. The PMO team delivers its own training sessions to help the teams input their projects on to the system, and are on hand to support users through the first stages until they are ready to be more independent.

The meetings functionality within Aspyre now allows regular meetings to be recorded, planned, and actions assigned in real time. Action notes and minutes are then automatically created and distributed far more efficiently.