

Expenses Management Software Solutions for the NHS



The challenge

By 2014 the NHS must achieve efficiency savings of £20 billion whilst improving the quality of services.

The NHS currently employs over 1.4 million staff within the UK and trusts are looking to find ways to automate as many manual paper based processes as possible in an effort to drive improved productivity and realise tangible cash-releasing financial savings.

With travel and expenses being one of the highest costs to an NHS organisation, and an average of a third of the workforce claiming, this means that the deployment of an automated solution will deliver an immediate impact.

The Solution

Effectively control and manage staff expenses

The most experienced web based expenses claim system on the market, Expenses(NHS) is currently used by 33 NHS organisations and is processing expenses to more than 68,000 NHS employees. The system is designed in accordance with NHS Agenda for Change and Medical & Dental Consultants Policy whilst also managing local terms and conditions through a straightforward means for staff claiming travel and subsistence expenses online.

Developed by Software Europe, Expenses(NHS) is the only expenses system transporting expense data through a bi-directional interface between an expenses system and ESR. Operating to ISO/IEC 27001:2005 certification and supported with 20 years' experience delivering software solutions, NHS trusts can be assured of the high security controls needed to deliver a secure online solution continue to meet the information security needs of NHS trusts on an ongoing basis.

Drive down processing costs and resources

Over 90% of NHS trusts still process their travel expenses manually, which represents a significant cost from inefficient checks against policy and lengthy reimbursement processes potentially losing the NHS millions of pounds each year. Furthermore, the administration process associated with submitting and reimbursing claims adds substantially to this cost.

By controlling employee expenses effectively NHS trusts can reduce their annual expenses spend. Expenses(NHS) will provide the control and reporting facilities that will ensure policy compliance, and make quantifiable savings on expenses expenditure, typically 15% to 18% of the expenses spend.

As HM Treasury continue to drive forward projects for all organisations within the public sector to increase efficiency in back office processes and set high targets for annual savings, automation should be a prominent factor in any NHS organisation's overall financial strategy.

“Expenses(NHS) has vastly improved the claim process as it has speeded up the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses; users have stated that they would not want to revert back to the traditional paper based system.”

East Lancashire Financial Services Client

The Benefits

Improved claim accuracy and policy control

Since implementing Expenses(NHS), Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust have found that claims have been more accurate and timely and there are no errors in interpretation or input. Their employees can clearly see what they can claim for and what their limits are and the approvers have visible prompts for items that exceed limits or appear to be duplicates.

The internal controls within Expenses(NHS) enforce policy compliance and provide transparency of claims to staff members approving each claim. Through the use of a unique mileage address look-up feature, mileage is accurately calculated in accordance to agenda for change and enforces adherence to local policy rules, in particular the deduction of home to office mileage when needed.

Standardising claim reimbursement, policy enforcement and expense claim validation trusts will realise a prompt reduction in expenditure.

Reduced processing times

Expenses(NHS) takes away as much of the manual form processing as possible. Intuitively auto-filling claimant's payroll and vehicle details, visibility of policy limits and automatic mileage reimbursement calculations simplifies the completion of claims. Payroll and expenses departments can be assured that columns are totalled correctly and expense items and mileage rates are allocated against the correct element. Payment details are

automatically sent to ESR to populate the staff remittance for reimbursement, removing the burden of manually inputting the information.

One NHS trust has reduced the final inputting time from 2 staff taking 2 weeks down to 1 member of staff taking 30 minutes.

Seamless ESR integration

Expenses(NHS) is proven with an ESR bi-directional interface to an expenses system. The inbound interface sends payments automatically into ESR, and the outbound interface updates Expenses(NHS) synchronising staff details with ESR, ensuring all required personnel details are up to date and automatically creating new records for new starters and archiving leavers without the need for administration.

Duty of care management

With the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 in force many companies are becoming increasingly aware that duty of care is an area that requires attention. If duty of care is not properly monitored this exposes significant financial risk both to the trust and additionally to the individuals responsible in not managing duty of care obligations.

Through Expenses(NHS) trusts can effectively record and upload documentation essential to employees driving whilst on company business, perform and monitor checks on vehicles used for business purposes; and highlight when excessive mileage is driven in a day by a single driver.

"We introduced the duty of care feature to check the vehicle details for all employees driving their own cars on company business and

found a third of them did not have sufficient insurance cover" Brian Woodhouse, Accountant, North West Business Link.


Turning your data into business intelligence

Seamlessly integrated, Expenses(NHS) reporting allows trusts to report on employee expenses information quickly and simply providing a powerful analytics tool. Trusts can select from a suite of management reports or produce custom reports providing a heightened level of visibility and transparency of an organisation's overall spend and claiming habits; allowing trusts to analyse and drill down into individual areas of spend, enabling more informed decision making for cost reduction opportunities and policy change.

Expenses(NHS) facilitates the analysis of spend providing real evidence to make changes to expenses policy which will bring continuous savings to the trust.

For example, if an organisation has multiple sites they are able to analyse the cost of employees travelling between sites. A cost effective alternative could be a regular shuttle bus, which may not only save money, but could also relieve parking congestion and reduce CO2 emissions.

Under the Freedom of Information Act trusts are obliged to respond to requests within 20 working days. With the request for expenses details ever-increasing, information can be reported on from Expenses(NHS) instantly, removing the administration and reducing the time taken to assemble the information.



“Since implementing expenses, the claims have been more accurate and timely and there are NO errors in interpretation or input. The employees can clearly see what they can claim for and what their limits are and the approvers have visible prompts for items that exceed limits or appear to be duplicates. Overall, we have seen many advantages and continue to realise additional benefits as we continue to use expenses.”

**Ian Child, Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust**



About Software Europe

Software Europe is the UK's leading supplier of web-based employee expenses management solutions to the NHS. Since 1989 Software Europe has been delivering exceptional products and high quality service that strive to streamline business processes and reduce corporate spend.

Software Europe's Expenses(NHS) is designed to transform how the NHS delivers expenses reimbursement to its employees. We know that every NHS trust is different and have developed a configurable solution to fit in with the unique way each organisation operates.

Our support philosophy is simple, "we do not go home if we can do more to help our customers". It is viewed as Software Europe's responsibility to ensure all users at a Client site get the most from the products provided.

"The people at Software Europe are professional, helpful and friendly; they have provided us with immense support through the implementation of Expenses(NHS) for each of our clients and have continued this effectual support for these clients as they use the system."

Ed Hafeji, Finance Systems Manager, East Lancashire Financial Services

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