

Costing and informatics

Webinar summary

Introduction

To generate and make the best use of cost data, costing teams need to work closely with informatics staff. Collaborative working can cover a number of areas including the provision of non-financial data to support the generation of cost data, ensuring non-financial data is good quality, supporting the extraction of cost data for local use and analysis of data to produce business intelligence.

Collaborative working at Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

This webinar is presented by **Gerard Cassidy**, Head of Costing and PBR and **Hayley Morgan**, Senior Report Builder and Data Specialist, both from **Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust**. They describe how they have built a successful working relationship between their teams which has resulted in an improvement in the quality of costing information.

Within the trust there had historically been limited joint working between the costing and business information (BI) teams, other than the production of reporting data for the service level agreement with local commissioners. There had been very little collaboration on national data sets.

The impetus for closer working between the two teams was the departure of the individual in the BI team who was the expert on the Mental Health Services Data Set (MHSDS), leaving the trust without anyone in costing or BI who had any knowledge of this key national data set.

Through bringing their teams together to learn about the MHSDS, Hayley and Gerald realised that this could provide an important tool for both local and national reporting, as well as progressing the quality of costing data.

Improving the quality of the data in the Mental Health Services Data Set

Early success came from linking the trust's electronic staffing record system to activity, meaning staff time on patient contacts could be costed. Working initially with just one clinical team, using Power BI to present that service's activity data, a common understanding of the data set was achieved between the clinical, costing, and BI teams. Improvements in data quality were identified which have now been rolled out on a larger scale.

The staff contact data will now form the basis of the 2019/20 National Cost Collection submission. The new requirements in the national costing guidance are discussed and solutions agreed jointly across the teams. Discussions are underway to use the MHSDS in the contract monitoring process.

Other benefits of collaborative working

Joint working between the costing and BI teams has continued for other projects, such as tracking the impact of Covid 19 within the trust.

Gerald ends the webinar by providing some tips for costing practitioner colleagues to think about when building a relationship with informatics colleagues, cautioning them to:

*“remember you need BI, but they **don’t** need you”*

Particularly important, he cautions, is to remember an informatics team has many other customers in the organisation. Emailing them the costing guidance with very short notice is certainly not a sensible approach to get the right data you need for your costing submission!

To view the **webinar**, click [here](#) ensuring you are logged into your account on the HFMA website.

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