



IT solutions for accounting issues

Survey report



Background

At the end of 2018, two IT related questions were identified by members.

Firstly, as a result of our webinar on 28 November, members wanted to know whether NHS bodies were purchasing lease portfolio management systems and, if so, which systems.

Secondly, a number of members identified that there is at least one commercially available agreement of balances database for NHS bodies. Those members asked whether other members were planning to use that solution and whether there are alternative solutions available.

A short survey¹ was therefore sent to those who had listened to the webinar, people booked onto the pre accounts planning conferences in January 2019 and members of the HFMA's Accounting and Standards Committee and Technical Issues Groups.

Overall results

By 3 January, 64 responses were received from:

- 9 CCGs
- 3 CSUs
- 34 acute providers

¹ The survey remains open and can be accessed via this link www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QLCC/

- 6 mental health providers
- 5 community care providers
- 2 mental health/community care providers
- 2 ambulance providers
- 3 regulators/ NDPBs.

Not all individuals answered every question and the percentages referred to are percentages of respondents answering the specific question. (Some tables may not add up to 100% due to rounding.)

Lease management software

In the lease webinar on 28 November, we asked ‘have you, or are you planning to buy bespoke software to manage your lease portfolio?’ In response 8 listeners (6% of those who voted) said that they had already purchased a solution and another 8 said that they were actively looking for a solution. Another 24 (17%) said that they thought they might.

After the webinar, we were asked which solutions NHS bodies had bought but did not have that information.

This survey therefore asked the same question but with the follow up question of which solution was bought or is being considered.

The results are as follows:

	Number of responses	Percentage response
Yes, we’ve bought it already	1	2%
Yes, we're actively looking for a solution	3	5%
Maybe, we think we might, but we haven't got any further	14	22%
No	46	72%

The four respondents who have already bought a solution or who are actively looking are all acute trusts.

Respondents who responded yes to this question were asked which solution they had either bought or were considering:

‘FMIS through SBS is being considered by an acute provider.’

‘CARS Asset register system which also accounts for leases has been purchased by an acute provider.’

‘We use the real asset management system for our asset register and have the lease bolt on. Not sure if we are using this or not at this point.’

‘Our finance system supplier is supposed to be working on a module but we are also keeping an eye on other solutions just in case this doesn't work.’

Agreement of balances

We understand that there is at least one commercially available agreement of balances database. We have been asked whether there are alternative solutions and whether NHS bodies are planning

to use them. We therefore asked, 'have you, or are you, planning to buy bespoke software to help with the agreement of balances process?'

The results are as follows:

	Number of responses	Percentage response
Yes, we've bought it already	1	2%
Yes, we're actively looking for a solution		
Maybe, we think we might, but we haven't got any further	12	19%
No	51	80%

The respondent who has already bought a solution is an acute trust:

"AOB Financial Solutions Limited".

Two respondents referred to the system being promoted by Assista – a community care provider one has trialled it but not signed up and an acute which is aware of the system.