

Newcastle Hospitals Maximizes Time for Frontline Patient Care with Bots Running 24/7



ORGANIZATION PROFILE

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has provided patient-centered healthcare to communities in northeast England for more than 250 years. With 14,000 employees, it is one of the biggest teaching hospitals in the country and is an Outstanding rated organization by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

CHALLENGE

As part of the interim NHS People Plan developed collaboratively with national leaders and partners, Newcastle looked for a way to maximize 'time to care' while also being able to meet the challenge of a sustainable workforce by keeping costs down. Time-consuming work such as administrative processes and systems maintenance took away valuable time that could instead be spent with patients. After identifying the need to change work streams, the organization looked to RPA as a way to enhance workforce processes, further improve employee morale, and enable more time to focus on care.

SOLUTION

Through the implementation of a Center of Excellence (CoE) model, Newcastle Hospitals was able to get staff involved, upskilling them as bot creators to really get to the heart of their work processes. This federated approach has accelerated progress and increased job satisfaction for those involved.

One of the major benefits of RPA is that it is completely limitless in terms of its interactions and compatibility with applications. Newcastle was able to start automating e-forms and the processing of staff records right away.

BENEFITS

4,000

Management hours released annually

24/7

Processing

95%

Decrease in data input time

100%

Accuracy

Processes Automated

- Data processing
- E-forms
- Employee records

Industry

Healthcare

"We're making sure our approach to RPA is people-centered. This tool should enhance staff engagement and have a positive impact on the work we do."

— Neil Picton,
Head of Workforce
Engagement and Information

STORY DETAILS

Newcastle created an online HR portal, a single point of access where employees could go for transactional processes. Prior to this, there was no structured platform to manage information coming in from across the organization. Staff previously worked with a combination of old forms, Word docs, and PDF forms that were handwritten and scanned or typed in and e-mailed. Interpreting and managing the data required a lot of work. RPA is enabling Newcastle to structure front end e-forms, with bots now picking up data quickly and effectively.

This automation implementation is now opening the door for other transactional activities, such as onboarding new employees and managing forms when someone leaves the organization, to be processed through the HR portal. Having one central workforce management system, an Oracle-based Electronic Staff Record (ESR) solution that every single trust in the country uses, allows for automation to be easily integrated and shared with other NHS organizations.

Automation runs 24/7 with 100% accuracy, resulting in a 95% decrease in data input time. Newcastle sees the powerful potential its bots can deliver when they are used at full capacity.

Saving up to 4,000 hours annually with RPA, the organization looks to continue increasing the amount of time saved, giving staff more time for valuable frontline patient care.

THE FUTURE

Newcastle is looking to incorporate RPA more broadly into areas like clinical environments. It has started scoping work for its cancer services, e-referrals, finance, and Trac recruitment systems.

A bot that processes cardiac catheterization and lab data on behalf of consultants and doctors is about to go into production and will help save an average of four hours of consultant admin time per day.

The organization is also working with Automation Anywhere to create its own NHS Community Bot Store. This would enable bots already in production to be uploaded and shared with other internal associations.

"One of the many benefits of RPA is it is completely limitless in terms of the applications it can work with and access—this breaks down barriers and allows us to think more creatively about the way we work."

— **Neil Picton,**
Head of Workforce
Engagement and Information

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