Solent NHS Trust Sail Towards Self-Service Analytics

Data modernisation improves governance, speed of insights and aligns with Microsoft cloud-first strategy

When Solent NHS Trust needed to align its data technologies and ways of working with a wider Microsoft cloud-first strategy within the trust, it turned to Adatis. Following a complete modernisation of its data technology and services, the mental health and community hospital provider is moving towards data self-service across the trust.

Solent NHS Trust provides mental health and community healthcare to the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton and employs a staff of 5000.

Situation

Solent NHS Trust has been modernising its technology and adopting a cloud-first approach that uses the Microsoft platform. With its data management technologies reaching the end of life and no longer able to meet the needs of the trust, it was decided to modernise the data technologies.

With the trust's ICT team implementing a new Microsoft cloud-first technology platform, it was decided that the business intelligence team should also opt for Microsoft data and analytics technology.

Approach

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>
> **Zoe Pink**
> *Head of Business Intelligence*
> *Solent NHS Trust*

As a leading Microsoft Solutions Partner specialising in Analytics and AI, Adatis was selected to implement Microsoft Azure Synapse Analytics, Power BI and an Azure data warehouse. This followed an initial Adatis review of the data architecture at Solent NHS Trust. "The Adatis development team were fantastic; they couldn't do enough and gave 110%. They were Agile on steroids." Zoe Pink, Head of Business Intelligence Solent NHS Trust says.

The implementation project began in May 2022 and was completed by November 2022. "Adatis have always listened to us and come back with a fair approach, and it has been a positive working relationship." Pink says.

In addition to implementing the Microsoft technologies, Adatis also provided training and resources to ensure that the Solent NHS Trust data staff gained the skills to use the new technology and move to an agile DevOps way of working. Adatis delivered an extensive collection of documentation as well as video library resources to the NHS Trust. "As part of the project, there was excellent knowledge sharing with videos, each of which was indexed so that our team have resources to go back to," Pink adds.

Outcome

Since implementing the Microsoft data platform-as-a-service, Solent NHS Trust has improved data access and disaster recovery. "We are now working towards data self-service modules so that we can expose the data to all levels of the trust," Pink says. Solent NHS Trust has developed a set of transactional reports that are available to members of the trust via Microsoft Power BI. "If the information is not there, then users can self-serve, or if the request is really complex, then you go to an analyst," Pink says. She adds: "What we are trying to do is release capacity. An analyst is a skilled and expensive resource, so we are trying to focus them to where they are most needed rather than churning out the statutory and mandatory reports that we have to do. So we are automating them as much as possible through the data warehouse and Power BI."

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The implementation has also improved data governance at Solent NHS Trust. "Now we have strict governance control, and we can carry out impact assessments in a few hours, where it used to take months. So the ways of working are better. We have tight governance on our data, but also change management and function release is in our control," she adds: "We have data lineage so that when data comes into our data warehouse, it flows into both Power BI and the reports, which increases the speed of delivery."

With the implementation completed, Solent NHS Trust is now using the Adatis managed service to keep its data technology up-to-date and well-maintained.

This has given the Solent NHS Trust team the time to learn and develop their Microsoft data skills. "We have development days with Adatis, so if there is something that our team don't understand, then one of the Adatis people take the time to run through how they dealt with it," Pink says. "We wanted a continuation of the one-team approach they brought to the implementation. They work as part of your team. Adatis have that high level of skill, and for us, with a small team, the support was key."

This is really beneficial to Solent NHS Trust as it ensures their staff develop. "In the NHS, we want to give people development opportunities and satisfaction, and the relationship with Adatis plays into that," she says.

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