

Allocate Case Study

The Grampians Alliance



Introduction

The Grampians sub-regional Payroll Alliance is a Victorian Healthcare consortium, made up of three public health Services. East Grampians Health Service (EGHS), East Wimmera Health Service (EWHS) and Stawell Regional Health Service (SRH) consisting of a combined workforce of over 1000 employees.

Challenge

In 2015 the EGHS undertook an internal audit of rostering practices across the organisation. Made up of three main parts; Rostering, Time & Attendance and Payment, their current processes managed over \$18m of wages at EGHS alone, using a very labour-intensive and predominantly manual system. The internal audit identified a number of issues and inconsistencies with rostering across the organisation.

“There were a number of different rostering practices across different areas of the organisation. We wanted more consistency and better rostering fairness and equity for our staff”, said Tony Roberts, Director of Finance for East Grampians Health Service and Executive Sponsor for the Grampians Sub Region Project.

The internal audit lent weight to the need for better rostering practices throughout the health services, identifying 19 recommendations for improvements. From this it was decided that moving to an e-rostering system would solve a number of these recommendations and provide a robustness around their rostering that they hadn't previously had.

The Selection Process

As a sub-regional area EGHS, EWHS & SRH use a shared payroll group, it made sense to choose a consistent rostering vendor across all three health services. The alliance undertook thorough due diligence of the market, which included speaking with and visiting other Health Services to understand which software they are using, why they chose it and what works well and what doesn't. This process was time consuming and as the Executive Sponsor for the project, Tony Roberts made sure the job was done well.

“Success with any product would need roster manager buy in. As such, we ensured that 4 or 5 managers were present for product demonstrations and were ultimately the ones who endorsed the final selection Allocate's solution over the other systems was seen as very user friendly and far more accessible than other products”, said Tony Roberts.

“Our roster managers could really identify with the product. In particular features such as the drag and drop functionality, fortnightly roster costing and the SMS find and fill. Even the little things like accessing the colour pallet really struck a chord with them as they could straight away see how they could use it”, he added.

From a financial perspective, it was also very important for the Alliance to choose the best solution to manage their single greatest expense.

“When you implement a product to comprehensively manage the single biggest expense in your business you want confidence in it. We have that in Allocate's rostering solution.”

It was also key that the solution they chose was comprehensive and covered the three main elements of rostering, time & attendance and award Interpretation.

“Through our due diligence process, we found that the organisations that wanted a comprehensive solution from rostering to award interpretation to payment, were looking at Allocate. Others who were more concerned about time and attendance to get an easy win and manage staff behaviour tended to go to other products. They effectively only implemented Time and Attendance and were still completing rosters on spreadsheets. They missed what I see as the foundation step.**”**

Post Implementation

Allocate's solution was approved by the EGHS, EWHS & SRH Boards of Management, to be implemented across the three health services via a collaborative project. The system brings the 3 of them into line with contemporary payroll practices and has resolved several of the audit recommendations identified at EGHS.

With over 25 years of rostering practices in spreadsheets, uptake of all functionality within the system was always going to be a big task. Nevertheless, the system has been quickly adopted across the 3 health services. This is due in no small part to the involvement of the roster managers through the selection process.

"Roster Managers' personal investment was the big key to success of the implementation. Adoption of the system was very quick. They were promoting it to their staff which greatly assisted the transition phase", said Tony Roberts.

The Roster Managers have seen a significant reduction in the time and effort it takes them to build their roster, plus time & attendance data capturing has been automated.

"We now have a really good tool for our managers to use in order to build and manage the rosters. With regard to time and attendance, we have seen that staff are more aware of start and finish times, which means fairness"

Overall the system has provided the Alliance with a robustness and control over their rostering, time and attendance and Award interpretations functions that wasn't previously available. Moreover they have confidence in the accuracy of their pay and have seen a drop in offline payments between cycles from about a dozen to one or two.

Allocate's system has placed strength of control around our Rostering, Attendance and Award Interpretation functions, and by doing so has given the health services confidence that what's being paid is accurate.

“Efficiencies are being gained in reduced time spent on rostering, stronger and more accurate leave management processes and reduced time re-working pays for errors and payments out of cycle.”

With the overall success of the implementation, attention has now turned the reporting capability within the system and analysis of the data. The depth of reporting capability including customising the reports to their own requirements has been a key benefit for the Alliance. Particularly around the ability to report on what was rostered, in comparison to what was worked and paid.

"Our focus now is on data analysis and interpretation to drive better and better workforce practices and ultimately efficiencies. The database and reporting capabilities of RosterOn is allowing us to do this in ways we have not been able to do in the past."

"Adoption of the system was very quick"



Tony Roberts, Director of Finance