



Royal College of Nursing saves over 650 hours a year with our integrated finance and HR solutions

Since introducing the solutions from Advanced, The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has been able to automate a range of manual processes to streamline management reporting, HR administration and fully comply with pension auto-enrolment legislation.



Automated HR Management

RCN is a union membership organisation which supports more than 420,000 UK members of the public and private nursing community. Founded in 1916, the organisation is committed to promoting excellence in practice and shaping health policy. RCN employs 900 staff over 17 sites.

The organisation originally selected Advanced's human resources solution, OpenHR, in 1998 to replace time-consuming manual HR processes. The system is used by RCN's eight-strong HR team to manage all employee information. This ranges from basic contact details to records of attendance, training, salaries and benefits such as pensions. The system is also used to produce detailed management reports which are the foundation for personnel related decision making.

OpenHR sends automated email alerts to senior managers related to contract end dates, probation deadlines, disciplinary events and periods of unpaid leave to remind them of next steps. Any outstanding forms that need to be completed can be returned to the HR

department to ensure all tasks are completed with minimal intervention required on behalf of the HR team.

The system's advanced reporting capabilities provide comprehensive insight into all aspects of personnel performance for regional department heads and board directors. These include reports that show absence rates and the reasons for these, helping managers identify patterns which need to be addressed so that they can take appropriate remedial action. The reports can be customised to meet managers' specific requirements, providing visibility of department headcounts, staff turnover and the number of requests for providing sabbaticals, special leave or flexible working arrangements.

Andrew West, HR Manager at The Royal College of Nursing says, "The reports we produce in OpenHR are key to making informed management decisions. Producing them manually would be a highly time-consuming and painstaking process. The system enables us to extract and manipulate information very easily and provide it in a manager's required format, saving many hours each week since it was implemented."

Client >

The Royal College of Nursing

Sector >

Membership Organisations & Associations

Project >

OpenHR, OpenAccounts, V1 Document Management

"OpenHR is key to everyday HR administration, management reporting and ensuring best practice."

Andrew West > HR Manager
> The Royal College of Nursing

"The HR department's successful use of OpenHR was certainly a factor in deciding to look at OpenAccounts but ultimately it was the functionality and flexibility of the system that really stood out. We evaluated a number of accounting systems and OpenAccounts was clearly the best system as far as we were concerned. We particularly liked the easy to use interface and rich reporting functionality.

eBIS provides us with complete control of financial management procedures and ensures all staff follow standardised processes. As a result, we can ensure that suppliers are paid as quickly as possible and that expenses are reimbursed to staff rapidly."

Alasdair Rennie >
Systems Accountant >
The Royal College of Nursing

Over 400 man hours saved and improved compliance

In November 2013 RCN successfully used OpenHR to automate pension auto-enrolment administration. The system was used by RCN's HR team to communicate pension information and options to 900 employees and automatically record all responses and follow-up correspondence. In total, the system has been used to send out nearly 5,000 automated notifications in the last 12 months.

West says: "OpenHR enabled us to manage pension auto-enrolment quickly and painlessly. Collating emails and responses from 900 staff within the systems without the need for manual data entry has saved approximately 400 hours alone in the last year as a result."

"The solution is also key to everyday HR administration, management reporting and ensuring best practice. As a trade union it is essential that we are ourselves working as efficiently and effectively as possible and that our own working practices stand up to scrutiny."

In 2015, RCN will be introducing employee self-service functionality from Advanced which will enable staff to update personal details stored centrally in OpenHR. Further reducing the need for data input by members of the HR team is expected to result in significant time savings.

A fully integrated finance system

RCN has successfully used Advanced's financial management system, OpenAccounts, and integrated workflow management solution, eBIS, since 2010. The solutions replaced time-consuming manual processes and administration. OpenAccounts is a fully integrated suite of financial management modules that provides accurate financial information in real time, and is central to RCN's management decision making. Both systems sit seamlessly alongside document management software (powered by V1) and enable the web-based storage, circulation and approval of RCN's financial and procurement processes.

Alasdair Rennie, Systems Accountant, Royal College of Nursing comments: "The HR department's successful use of OpenHR was certainly a factor in deciding to look at OpenAccounts but ultimately it was the functionality and flexibility of the system that really stood out. We evaluated a number of accounting systems and OpenAccounts was clearly the best system as far as we were concerned. We particularly

liked the easy to use interface and rich reporting functionality."

Finance documentation including invoices, purchase orders and receipts are scanned and scored using V1. They are then routed to authorised managers at RCN for approval via eBIS which is used to seamlessly distribute information and ensure rigorous financial control through the solution's flexible workflow processes.

Rennie says: "eBIS provides us with complete control of financial management procedures and ensures all staff follow standardised processes. As a result, we can ensure that suppliers are paid as quickly as possible and that expenses are reimbursed to staff rapidly."

Smarter reporting

RCN's finance team is responsible for producing reports for 100 managers throughout the organisation on a regular basis.

Says Rennie: "Although we produce a number of standard reports, we are regularly asked to provide highly specific information and OpenAccounts enables us to do this very easily. As long as there is information in the system we can report on it."

RCN has now introduced smart reporting functionality that will provide managers with even more detailed information and enable them to drill down to view individual transactions related to different projects.

The smart reports will provide departmental managers with instant access to financial data that was previously only available on request from RCN's accounts team. Typically, this information has taken individual accountants an average of three days every month to research and collate. Improved access to information will support management decision making and enable accountants to devote more time to strategic activities.

Smart reports will enable managers to drill down from high-level reports into monthly management accounts to view individual transactions recorded in Advanced's OpenAccounts finance system. They can also view related documents stored in V1 such as invoices, purchase orders and expense receipts."

The Royal College of Nursing



Rennie comments, *"The introduction of smart reports is a major development. Improved efficiencies will save the finance team three days per month and enable RCN's senior managers to access the information they need to make informed decisions far more quickly than in the past."*

The new smart reporting functionality was rolled out within RCN in November 2014.

Electronic Document Management

The introduction of V1's Document Management software has transformed the efficiency of the finance department by enabling members of the team to access and retrieve electronic copies of any document whenever they require. As a result, the team no longer need to spend time searching through manual files for paper documents.

Rennie comments: *"A customer might tell us that they have not received an invoice and in the past, this would have meant that we would have spent time looking for it. V1 enables us to find the missing documents in seconds and send an electronic copy via email. The system and documents can be accessed by different teams within RCN and this means they are no longer as reliant on us as they were in the past".*

"We have much more time to focus on adding value to other projects as a direct consequence of using the system," concludes Rennie.

Moving forward with streamlined services

RCN's successful use of Advanced's solutions has been central to modernisation, enabling staff to work more efficiently and productively.

Automated processes have replaced costly and time-consuming manual procedures and the management team are now equipped with reports that are key to effective decision making. As a result of the improvements, the RCN is now leaner, fitter and better equipped to support its members, now and in the future.

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