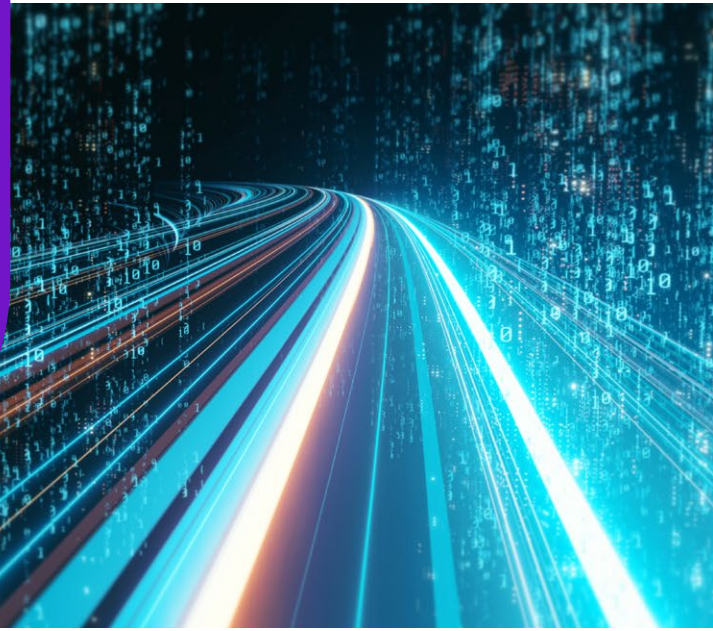**NHS** Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

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How Buckinghamshire NHS Trust sped up their service

The Challenge

A leading NHS Trust needed to migrate their IT service to a new platform and implement new ways of working to transform their delivery.

Please note: Kerv Consult was recently rebranded from Monochrome Consultancy when it joined the Kerv Group. This project was delivered at a point when the team was known as Monochrome Consultancy.

Overview

Buckinghamshire NHS Trust (BHT) IT team offer services to over 6,000 healthcare professionals supporting over 500,000 patients per year. The BHT team have a clear mission to be the highest performing NHS Trust IT team across the UK and have started a transformation journey to achieve that goal.

Background and Context

During the height of the COVID pandemic, the BHT leadership team made a bold decision to implement a new IT Service Management (ITSM) solution to allow them to better manage the huge spike in demand they were experiencing. They selected ServiceNow as the ITSM tool and commissioned Kerv Consult to manage a one-month implementation project.

Due to the significant pressure the NHS faced, the team rallied together and applied agile best practice to deliver a solution within 3.5 days of the project kick off (not weeks or the full month). This was the fastest deployment of ServiceNow in NHS history (You can get access to our internal lessons document here). The solution immediately demonstrated considerable benefit to the team delivering the service.

Due to the success of this, BHT decided to extend ServiceNow to replace their ITSM solution used to manage their entire IT service, not just for the COVID related demand. **That decision sparked this project.**

The Solution

The BHT team engaged Kerv Consult to deliver a further agile project, a three-month initiative to replace a legacy Support Works ITSM solution with ServiceNow as well as develop and embed new processes and ways of working. Unifii Ltd. were also engaged to deliver the technical elements of the ServiceNow solution and the project team consisted of Kerv Consult, BHT and Unifii working in unison.

A key focus of the project was developing the Incident Management and Service Request Fulfilment processes to be as transparent and efficient as possible as that is where the vast majority of the BHT team focussed their efforts. Therefore, the automation we delivered could drive the most significant benefit in that area.

From the outset, BHT Chief Technology Officer Phillip Neal stated: "We want this project to be an example of Agile done well. We have allowed 12 weeks, so we must deliver within 12 weeks. If we have to shift anything, it will be the scope". However, the scope was not compromised, but instead, the project team considerably exceeded that which was agreed. Despite delivering more than planned, the solution also went live several days before the agreed milestone date (10 weeks into the project).

> **A great example of team work and agile delivery, this was a fantastic achievement in support of the Trust's COVID response and has made a big difference in our ability to manage urgent requests from our colleagues across the Trust."**

Phillip Neal
Chief Technology Officer,
Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust

Rather than simply define and build the Service Requests on behalf of the IT team, the project team invested the time to train the IT team to allow them to build their own within the system. The full credit for proposing this approach goes to the BHT Team; it was their suggestion, Kerv Consult and Unifii agilely accommodated the approach. Put into practice; instead of 15 key requests that the project was scoped to deliver, there were 85 built, tested and released, including those from the BHT IT team. The approach had the added benefit of ensuring that future service request items could be added at speed without the need for a project to update the system as the knowledge had been successfully transferred into the Trust.

The project was delivered early, under budget and much more was delivered than the scope defined at the start. Every piece of capability within the Support Works tool had been replicated within or superseded by the new solution, and the BHT team have fully embraced it.

One of the highlights was the positive engagement across the teams. There were regular drop-in sessions and town halls to keep the team informed. There is a lot of training and reference material available to help the team be as productive as possible with the new solution. Data shows that the team is actively using over 50 Knowledge Articles, 28 user guides and a range of video recordings which share best practice within the tool.

As a project team, we came from three organisations, with team members across three continents within three time zones. However, we worked and operated as one as we all shared a common goal; success for BHT.

ServiceNow Director of Transformation, Graham Curran, said: "The project team's focus on collaboration and communication with users really helped make this such a successful implementation and showed the power of strong business change disciplines" which was an excellent endorsement of the project and the team.

The Benefits

The clearest benefit is that incidents are resolved, and service requests are fulfilled much faster now that the new solution is in place. This is evidenced by the robust SLAs which were developed and the reporting which was built to measure them. Customers of the IT service were also delighted by the new solution as the first batch of CSAT surveys received indicated.

At the final of the fortnightly Steering Board meetings Neelesh Patel, BHT Service Desk Manager, said:

> **This has taken the service forward by years, I would recommend it to any organisation,"**

Neelash Patel
BHT Service Desk Manager

One of the key benefits is that BHT's customers are now using the self-service portal to raise tickets rather than have to engage by phone. Reducing the number of calls the service team have to manage each day frees up valuable time for ticket enquiries.

The customer also sees a significant benefit as the self-service tickets are assigned directly to the appropriate team to resolve those items. The result is that not only do customers save considerable time on the phone, but their tickets are automatically assigned for resolution. The shift from manual to automated assigning of tickets is a significant factor in the speed to resolution of tickets for the customers.

Interestingly, this auto-routing introduced a brand-new challenge to the BHT teams as a very small percentage of tickets are mis-classified by the customers and so are auto-routed to the wrong team. These teams mentioned that in some cases they were unsure which other team to send these tickets to as previously they would have been triaged before arriving with them.

Fortunately, this is actually a positive for the overall service, as teams do not want incorrect tickets in their queues so act quickly. Those incorrectly classified tickets are viewed within minutes of being raised and quickly passed to the Service Desk or another team which ensures that the tickets do not stagnate or age.

The Future

Building on the success of this project, BHT have requested that Kerv Consult and Unifii continue to support the Trust to improve their IT service by delivering against the transformation roadmap.

We have discussed a series of agile projects to implement further ITSM capabilities, wider business capabilities and ways of working as we continue to deliver against the longer-term transformation roadmap for the service.

Final Word

BHT has clear plans to be the best IT team across the NHS and has already demonstrated significant progress towards that goal. Kerv Consult is genuinely excited to continue to be part of the team which will make that a reality.

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