

## West Hertfordshire NHS Trust



*West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust enjoys a rare luxury with its financial management and procurement systems. Since 2003, all the hardware, maintenance, networking and security requirements have been provided by Capita IB Solutions in a comprehensive and cost-effective Managed Services solution. This has provided a host of time and cost savings benefits, including reduced capital expenditure, and has removed the need for specialist IT hardware resources on site.*

<b>Customer</b> West Hertfordshire NHS Trust	<b>Country</b> United Kingdom	eSeries	Purchase Ledger
<b>Market Sector</b> Health Sector	<b>Solutions</b> Attachment Manager Budgeting Cash Management	Fixed Assets General Ledger Integration Gateway Invoice Approval Purchase to Pay (P2P)	Purchase Ordering Sales Ledger Workflow

### Focus on Managed Services at West Hertfordshire NHS Trust

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust was formed in April 2000 with the merger of hospitals in Watford, St. Albans and Hemel Hempstead.

It has more than 4,000 members of staff and serves a catchment area of around 500,000 people.

In 2003, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust updated its systems to incorporate the new Client/Server version of Integra, as well as the Integra eProcurement system, eSeries.

### Managing Efficiency

The hardware infrastructure for this update was hosted by Capita IB Solutions from its data centre in Prestwich, and this has set the pattern for the Trust's ongoing IT strategy.

Satish Kumar from the Trust explains, "Right from the start we wanted to focus on the software and how this could best support what we needed to do. We are finance people rather than IT, and we didn't want to have to house, install, maintain and support the whole client/server infrastructure if there was a reliable, secure and cost-effective alternative."

The Trust has around 60 users of the full Integra system and a further 20 procurement users operating the system on a client/server basis. With the addition of a web browser interface, anyone can now enter the system, with secure access, to carry out a purchasing requisition or enquiry.

“We manage this access centrally, operating as a help desk for our users,” says Satish, adding, “All users have their own secure login, and this gives them access to the areas of the system that they are authorised for. For further security, we set these passwords to expire after 90 days. We now have around 500 people who can access the eProcurement system via the web interface, and we are able to manage the 100,000+ orders per year comfortably.”

### Managing eProcurement

West Hertfordshire hospitals NHS Trust is part of the Hertfordshire Supply Management Confederation (HSMC), which provides a centralised operational buying team for transactional procurement for the NHS in Hertfordshire. This service provides greater buying power for the region, reducing costs and generating consistency across the NHS in Herts. Satish explains, “The HSMC’s catalogues need to integrate with the eProcurement systems within the Trusts it supports. We manage our own catalogues locally, and these are updated seamlessly by HSMC so we always have the right prices and the right, consistent information.”

When going live with the Integra eProcurement system in 2006, the Trust had a target to eliminate paper-based orders within two years. This has mainly been achieved and has generated significant benefits for the Trust. “The turnaround time for orders has improved dramatically. One of the key areas is in the approval process, which is built into the workflow of the order requisition. It means that managers can give approval online, querying or escalating where necessary, but achieving this in a much more efficient and timely manner. Once approved, orders are automatically passed on to the finance department and then to the supplier. It is a fast, accurate system that has revolutionised purchasing throughout the Trust,” says Satish.

He continues, “The system has also improved our reporting capabilities because it provides complete visibility of accurate, up-to-date information throughout the purchasing supply chain. With the right approval, people can go into the system and see the precise status of their orders. Managers can also pull out key reports to help them make better decisions based on relevant and correct data. ESeries provides more intelligent purchasing, and its ease of use means that end user support and satisfaction has been very high.”

### Managing the Infrastructure

Earlier in 2011, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust agreed a three-year extension to its Managed Services contract with Capita IB Solutions. This covers all the accounting ledgers as well as eProcurement, Invoice Approval, Budgeting and Forecasting, Web Reporting and enquires. As part of the new contract, the Trust has added Business Intelligence and Optical Character Recognition to its portfolio.

“The OCR system allows us to scan paper invoices and integrate the information on them into the core finance system. This is helping to reduce administration time, as well as creating a more streamlined process for accounts payable. We have a target to reduce expenditure by £50million this year, and applications like this are helping us to achieve this without impacting on our core frontline services,” says Satish.

The BI system enables online reporting so that authorised managers can access reports via the web. “Previously, these reports had to be sent by email or post and has led to faster decision making, based on accurate data that can be held for as long as is required. Previously, everything needed to be printed and copies retained to help with reporting. Now it’s all to hand, which makes the whole process much more efficient and cost-effective,” he says.

The Managed Service allows the Trust to focus on developing the system and optimising it to ensure maximum benefit. Satish Kumar says, “Thanks to the contract we have in place, we can focus all our efforts on our operations without having to worry about the hardware. We know that all updates, patches, technical issues, security and disaster recovery are handled by Capita IB’s team, far more effectively than we could manage them ourselves. The process has always been very reliable, and we enjoy a fast, secure connection to our servers at all times. Updates are carried out over the weekend so they don’t affect our operations.”

He concludes, “Integra has a very user-friendly system interface, which means users are up and running with the software very quickly. We have been able to integrate the system with other applications, such as the Pharmacy and NHS Logistics systems, so that we can handle their transactions quickly and efficiently. The Managed Services contract allows my department to focus on keeping users happy and also on developing the reporting side of the system. It is a comforting feeling to know that everything is in safe hands.”

## About Capita IB Solutions' Managed Services

Capita IB Solutions provides a cost-effective model for supporting financial applications, and brings together its financial management expertise and vast experience in application support to offer an efficient managed service model.

It enables application support through a shared resource pool, so clients can be assured of much higher productivity, flexibility and access to best practices.

### Fast Facts

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust consists of:

- Watford General Hospital
- Hemel Hempstead Hospital
- St. Albans City Hospital
  - 4,000 staff members
  - 60,000+ invoices per annum
  - 100,000+ orders per annum

### Benefits of Managed Services

- Low capital expenditure
- Controlled fixed costs
- 100% availability
- Disaster recovery in place
- High security
- Updates and patch fixes
- Seamless integration with partner systems
- No hardware support resource required
- Fast access to new applications/modules
- Support team focused on operations
- Regular service management review meetings

The Spirella Building  
Bridge Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
Herts SG6 4ET England

[www.ibsolutions.com](http://www.ibsolutions.com)