

Hospice Palliative Care Association

Industry: NGO

Head Office Location: Cape Town

Technology Deployed:

- Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Standard Edition
- Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Express Edition
- Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services
- Microsoft SQL Server Synchronisation Services
- Microsoft Windows Presentation Foundation
- Microsoft Windows Communications Foundation
- Microsoft Windows Server

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Liz Gwyther (HPCA CEO)

Client Overview

Hospice Palliative Care Association (HPCA) was founded in 1988 and is a membership organisation for South African hospices. 155 HPCA members currently care for over 60,000 patients and 180,000 family members annually in 202 service outlets in South Africa.

While some of HPCA's member hospices receive a small government subsidy, they rely primarily on corporate and individual donors to allow them to continue providing services.

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Executive Summary

The Hospice Palliative Care Association (HPCA) is a national organisation operating in all 9 provinces in South Africa with 155 member hospices. Airborne Consulting was contracted to develop a Hospice Data Management System (HDMS) to generate valid, reliable and comparative data on HPCA member hospices for the purpose of hospice development, donor information, research and public use.

Business Challenge

With 155 member Hospices responsible for recording details on the care they provide, collating this detail into monthly demographic statistics and reporting to HPCA who in turn need to aggregate the statistics regionally & nationally, the organization was faced with a number of challenges.

Because these massive volumes of data were mostly paper-based, monthly reporting was manually intensive, frequently delayed, and prone to error and inconsistency with independent processes followed at each Hospice. This was compounded by geographically distributed and often remote sites with limited IT infrastructure and internet connectivity.

To ensure that international funders have confidence in these statistical demographic details, it was vital that HPCA established a more effective and consistent process of gathering data from their member Hospices. Because each member Hospice is an independently run NGO to whom the HPCA does not dictate, the solution would only be viable if it received buy-in from all members.

Airborne’s Solution

Hospice HDMS consists of two distinct, physically separate components. A smart client application is installed on the client machine and a consolidated data

store is hosted on a central server. Due to the environmental and connectivity constraints of the application this approach was followed so that the application could function and perform day to day tasks without the need for connectivity to the central server. To accomplish this, the smart client (developed using Windows Presentation Foundation) leverages a locally installed instance of SQL2008 Express.

SQL2008 was selected to make use of the new change tracking functionality and hosted Reporting Services built into this version of the database. The client works seamlessly against the local SQL 2008 Express database: When a connection is established, the application determines what changes have occurred since the last synchronisation and then submits those changes, leveraging Microsoft Synchronisation Services, via a Windows Communication Foundation channel to the central server where changes are updated to the consolidated database.

For the extensive reporting requirements both at the Hospice level and for a consolidated view across all hospices, Microsoft’s Reporting Services were incorporated into the consolidated database. These reports are generated as server-hosted reports, with report development occurring completely separately from the application development, allowing the reports to be ported from the client machine where they are executed through the smart client application to the server where they are executed using the Reporting Services web interface.

Satisfied Customer

Says Liz Gwyther, HPCA CEO, “Airborne’s HDMS solution has already stepped up our professional profile, credibility and therefore our sustainability, and funders are impressed with the quality and scope of our data. We have more accurate knowledge of the impressive work being done by

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our hospices, hospice managers have good management tools to plan the service and to approach their own funders, and staff and volunteers have strong affirmation of the work they are doing.”

“HPCA's Monitoring and Evaluation team currently spend 100% of their time on data collection and collation. Once the HDMS has been rolled out to all members the M & E team can devote their time to building the M & E capacity of HPCA members and interpreting the data generated through the HDMS for the benefit of HPCA members and potential donors.”

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Other benefits of the Airborne solution include:

- Ease of Use – intuitive, visual & responsive user interface
- Consistent and efficient recording of patient details and the care provided
- 24x7 access Web access to information pertaining to the HPCA member Hospices
- Capability to analysis staff/care-giver time allocation to care
- Extensible architecture enabling evolution of data management requirements

Airborne's Contribution

Airborne is committed to the social upliftment of all South Africans, and is inspired by the work of HPCA and its members. Airborne has heavily subsidized the solution development by providing development resources at cost with a total investment at 31 October 2009 in excess of R 2.5 million.

Looking Ahead

The HDMS is currently in production at thirty pilot Hospices, with rollout to the remaining member Hospices scheduled in a phased approach over the next year. Airborne's solution has also generated interest from international Hospice associations.

The solution architecture lends itself to seeking other efficiencies that may be brought to the distributed affiliated network and Airborne is actively exploring solutions that might deliver additional business benefit while reducing operating costs.

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