



Integrated HR and payroll software.



## Case study

### East Suffolk Mind

The HR department at mental health charity, East Suffolk Mind, was finding it challenging to accommodate the HR and payroll requirements of its intricate and complex workforce. Multiple applications were being used to manage staff data, duplication was rife due to an abundance of paper-heavy processes and HR reports were becoming difficult to collate in a timely, precise manner.

When an external consultant confirmed these weaknesses across the HR department and other areas of the organisation, it became apparent that East Suffolk Mind needed to obtain a fully configurable system that could tackle the current issues, whilst also being sufficiently adaptable to deal with the HR department's evolving needs. TeamSpirit Software was selected to revamp and unite the charity's HR processes by providing a system that was comprehensive, easy and quick to implement plus incorporate a payroll function which had previously been outsourced.

### Company strategy

Established in 1946, Mind is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales which encompasses approximately 180 local Mind associations throughout the country. East Suffolk Mind offers supported housing, crisis help lines, community resource centres, counselling and various rehabilitation and training schemes to any members of the local community suffering from mental health problems.

East Suffolk Mind employs over 130 members of staff in total, 88 of which are full time, the remainder being part time, plus a compliment in addition comprising of hourly paid relief staff and volunteer posts. With numerous different pay rates encompassing head office staff, counsellors, multi-contracted and part-time employees, East Suffolk's multi-faceted staffing mix created a highly complex payroll process.

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Julie Bridges, Central Services Director at East Suffolk Mind explains, "It was essential for us to have an integrated payroll and HR system that could fully support our complex pay structure and the mixture of different roles and hours undertaken by our staff. The outsourcing model and Access database previously employed meant that there was duplication of data entry but also prevented us from easily processing the split-shifts and multiple contracts that our employees work to, and with the company expanding, we ran the risk of over complicating our internal procedures and not being able to capture/store vital personnel/pay data".

### All under one roof

The need to invest in a fully integrated payroll and HR solution came after East Suffolk Mind realised its existing HR model was time-consuming, costly and ineffectual from a business management perspective. Bridges explains, "Before TeamSpirit, our payroll was being managed through an external outsourcing facility through the Primary Care Trust, meaning that we had become hugely dependent upon another body. Messages and business data had to be relayed from the employee, through various different departments and then finally through to the outsourced agency. The entire process was therefore overly prolonged, prone to error and paper heavy. Essentially, we were operating a multiple application approach for storing HR data which involved a significant volume of manual data entry and ran the obvious risk of document duplication. As the company expanded this was fast becoming an unsound situation and it soon became apparent that we would need a more comprehensive system capable of managing both HR and payroll data entirely in-house."

East Suffolk Mind decided upon TeamSpirit's fully integrated HR and Payroll software, "TeamSpirit offered us exactly what we were looking for and they were able to fully comply with the stringent criteria we had put forward," Bridges explains. "A total of 10 different software companies initially pitched for tender, but TeamSpirit really stood out as ticking all the right boxes for us. Unlike many other solutions

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we considered, TeamSpirit could cope effectively with multiple contracts and offered a user-friendly, straightforward system that could truly revitalise our HR department.”

### Reporting

The introduction of TeamSpirit to the HR department at East Suffolk Mind, has also improved the simplicity and depth of reporting, resulting in considerable time-savings across the organisation. Bridges explains, “When it came to writing our monthly and bi-monthly HR reports, we previously had to wade through multiple pools of information just so that we could manipulate it into an appropriate format to run a report. It would take us almost a week to collate the data, extract relevant statistics and present this information in a legible manner, yet there was no drill-down capacity to fully analyse what we saw. With TeamSpirit, we can access this information in a matter of minutes and really interrogate the system to identify key trends within our staff base.”

TeamSpirit has given East Suffolk Mind unprecedented visibility across its employee base allowing them to introduce a Staff Sickness Policy for managing and monitoring absence levels. This has led to dramatic reductions in staff sickness levels – from over 20 days average sickness in 2005/06 to only 7.9 days at present, together with the obvious productivity improvements this brings.

### Training records and staff analysis

Inherently through being a company limited by guarantee and registered charity, East Suffolk Mind operates a rigorous training scheme where staff are required to complete training courses and NVQ's relevant to their job roles. This supports a company-wide goal to improve quality of life for those with mental distress through targeted and proficient support services.

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As Bridges comments, “Previously we had always kept information on staff training in hardcopy, but never had the facility to access and store this data electronically. This caused huge room for error and procedural issues and with no system available for flagging when staff needed to attend refresher courses, we found that employees were often failing to keep their qualifications up-to-date and current.”

“Having immediate access to each employee’s training record alongside their personal HR and Personnel history gives us the ability to analyse the type of staff we are employing and ensure that they are progressing as they should be. The drill-down facility has highlighted information on our workforce that was previously invisible to us and has helped significantly with training budgeting by allowing us to assess whether our training is necessary, consistent, relevant to the job and most importantly, effective.”

### The future...

Since taking TeamSpirit on board in 2006 East Suffolk Mind has achieved a return on investment within just two years rather than the anticipated four years by running payrolls for two other local charities – West Suffolk Mind and ESAN (East Suffolk Advocacy Network) as part of a shared services scheme. Furthermore, the solution has enabled the company to eliminate costs previously spent on the maintenance of its Access database and PCT outsourcing modules.

As part of its aim to maximise the efficacy of its HR and payroll function, East Suffolk Mind plans to utilise its TeamSpirit system further over the coming months. Bridges concludes, “Now that we have managed to strengthen and tie up our internal procedures and extend our HR department in terms of both size and functionality, we hope to build upon our existing infrastructure with the implementation of additional modules from TeamSpirit and also roll the system out further across the organisation.”

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