

## Synuron and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust – Recruitment Streamlined

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (NUH) is a leading healthcare institution and the UK's second largest acute hospital. Divided on three main sites with 87 wards and 1,700 beds, it employs 13,000 employees providing services to over 6.5 million residents of Nottinghamshire and neighbouring counties. NUH also provides specialist services to a further 3-4 million people from neighbouring counties each year. As a teaching hospital, they are at the forefront of many research programmes and medical research.

### The starting point

In 2009/2010:

- 1,800 advertised vacancies
- 54,000 applications
- 1,200 appointments
- Time and resource intensive process
- Uneven balance of responsibility between HR and Hiring Managers

### The Situation

The Trust was faced with managing recruitment with out-dated disparate systems and processes. The HR Team was literally 'drowning in paperwork' and their time was taken up mostly with unfulfilling administration. Jamie Tennant - Head of Recruitment at NUH - realised that there had to be a better approach. After extensive research of the market, Jamie approached Synuron because of their well-known expertise and results in helping organisations streamline their HR/Recruitment processes.

### Challenge #1: Building brand awareness

NUH was keen to enhance its reputation and brand. By advertising their vacancies on the NHS Jobs Board, Nottingham was unable to position itself uniquely as an employer with specific values. This was severely restricting their ability to build up the 'NUH Brand'.

Now, with Synuron e-Recruitment, NUH has access to a fully branded jobsite linked to their main website. This jobsite is used to advertise and process applications, while engaging candidates with NUH and its brand.

NUH has also introduced new 'Working at NUH' pages on their jobsite providing easier access to their values and key aspects of working for the Trust. These changes help them with their candidate attraction strategy as they continually seek to compete for the best talent, and assist NUH in achieving their ambition to be the best Acute Teaching Trust in England by 2016 and an employer of choice.

Strong management and reporting within Synuron e-Recruitment means that they can analyse the best place to advertise vacancies whether it is the NHS Jobs Board, Monster or any other online or offline advertising place.

Like most NHS Trusts in this current financial climate, NUH had to deal with an increased number of staff at risk. Synuron e-Recruitment also gave NUH the opportunity to promote their own Redeployment Portal. This allows NUH to give its own and East Midlands 'at risk staff' preferential access to vacancies. By making this process part of the recruitment service, the burden of managing these cases within HR has been greatly reduced.

### The Results

- Faster time to hire
- Made NUH a recognisable brand
- Recruitment can focus on value-adding tasks
- Released time to care
- managers spending 30% less time on recruitment activity
- Tailored application process
- Greater assurance in the processes

### Challenge #2: Large volume of applicants

Advertising vacancies has the great advantage of allowing you to reach a larger candidate pool especially if Policy and Diversity have to be addressed.

However, online advertising and the current economic climate have combined to create an 'avalanche' of applications. Unfortunately for Recruitment Teams, this means having to manage large volumes of inappropriate applications – skills and experience not matching the Job Spec.

Sifting through those hundreds of applications is counter-productive and time consuming for the Recruitment team but also line managers that have less time for patient care.

Synuron e-Recruitment has drastically changed this situation at NUH through:

- The introduction of a range of tailored, position specific application forms, meaning that precise information can be gathered.
- The use of filtering questions coupled with corresponding text based answers. This allows to easily remove inappropriate applications.
- The use of application limits, where a job automatically stops being advertised once it reaches a certain number of candidates.

### The Results

- Improved communication with candidates and hiring managers
- Increased brand awareness
- NUH Job Boards
- NUH Candidate Portal
- Easier management of Redeployment solutions
- Value added to the recruitment process and strategy

- The implementation of a new fast and easy shortlisting system, user-friendly for line managers and ensuring that objective criteria are used.
- Automation of low-value but time-consuming admin tasks associated to recruitment. By taking more than 30% of administration away, NUH's clinical staff could focus more time on patient care and the Recruitment team could provide more time on attraction and retention strategy advice.
- Reduction of no-shows at interviews by 60% through self-service interview booking. This also freed up substantial time for the Recruitment team by getting candidates to choose their own interview slots online whilst clinical staff avoid the frustration of no-shows

### Challenge #3: Poor communication

Communication with applicants and internal staff is critical, but too often suffered as a result of the out-dated systems and processes. Now, through Synuron e-Recruitment, the Trust is able to easily keep candidates up-to-date with the progress of their applications at the touch of a button through automatic e-mails triggered through certain actions or bulk communication from the Recruitment team.

Internally, communication has been greatly improved as anyone involved with a vacancy can get an immediate status update. This enhanced visibility throughout the entire process (authorisation to on-boarding) ensures a consistent view and understanding of all involved. This is particularly important to identify potential 'bottleneck' to the hiring of a specialist position.

*"Since implementing Synuron's membership benefits, both candidate and NUH staff feedback has been very positive. We have made significant savings on administration time, HR capacity has almost doubled and candidate quality has increased while quantity has decreased."*

Jamie Tennant, Head of Recruitment, NUH

### Challenge #4: Too many independent systems used

NUH really upgraded its recruiting management functions with Synuron. The organisation went from using several disparate systems and spreadsheets that didn't communicate to manage all their recruitment using Synuron e-Recruitment.

This enables the Trust to streamline its processes and manage all its recruitment from one system. Synuron's fully integrated solution completely automates recruitment administration within a single web-based portal, driven by a user friendly, intuitive dashboard accessible by the Recruitment Team and recruiting managers.

The Management Dashboard allows for accurate and comprehensive reporting (for day-to-day workload management, key performance indicators, equal opportunities monitoring, media channel effectiveness analysis). Track the entire journey each candidate takes, right from first seeing a print or online advert, all the way to becoming a new employee.

### Challenge #5: The Offer stage and pre-employment checks are slow to complete

A major headache for NUH was disproportionate time spent on pre-employment checks. Having found the best talent for a particular vacancy, they wanted to ensure the candidate could start right away or they risked the candidate going elsewhere.

With the implementation of Synuron e-Disclosure, the administration time to conduct a CRB check has been reduced by 90% and the checks are now back within 5 days on average.

Synuron e-Recruitment also helps NUH to conduct the offer and pre-employment checks more efficiently through:

- Automatic contract production
- Online management and gathering of references
- A task list helping the recruitment team and keeping the line managers informed at all times of where the recruitment process is.

### The Overall Results: recruitment excellence!

With Synuron's membership benefits in place, NUH was able to successfully improve and streamline its recruitment processes and deliver a better and faster service to the trust while saving substantial costs. The Recruitment Team have moved from being administrators to fulfilling one of their primary objectives: offering value-adding consultative advice and support to help recruiting line managers attract, select and retain the best candidates in a cost and time efficient way.

In just a year, Synuron has helped make NUH's recruitment process more cost-efficient, with the projected year-on-year recruitment cost per hire expected to go down substantially.

#### Feedback on the system

NUH has now been using Synuron benefits for a year and from the evaluation work done, key data shows they are moving in the right direction. This is expected to increase as the Trust is still working to fully harness all of the tools at their disposal.

- 40% improvement over previous system
- 30% less time spent on recruitment activity

#### Quotes from line managers

*"Enables better use of person spec"*

*"Information laid out clearly"*

*"Paperless"*

*"Criteria are displayed along with the appropriate sections"*

*"...the system clearly shows the best candidates"*

*"great new service"*

*"HR check before interview is a great innovation"*

### About Synuron

Synuron enables health and social-care organisations to improve the efficiency and reduce the cost of their HR & Recruitment activities from attraction to on-boarding.

Private Health Care, NHS Trusts, Care Homes, Charities and other social-care organisations have all benefitted from Synuron's portfolio of Recruitment solutions.

Synuron reaches over 50,000 employees in a cross-section of healthcare providers including Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust, East London NHS Foundation Trust and more.

#### Contact

To find out more about how your organisation could benefit from a Synuron membership:

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