Groene Hart Hospital

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Rob van der Vijgh, ICT consultant and project manager, Groene Hart Hospital

For Dutch hospitals, the era of budget financing is over. Under the new rule, health insurers and care providers negotiate financing on the basis of healthcare costs. These costs are laid out in individual Diagnosis Treatment Combinations (DTCs). In 2003, the Dutch Ministry of Health established an initial 100 DTCs for 'pioneer' hospitals to start using.

Groene Hart Hospital in Gouda was well prepared for the change. Thanks to a management information system based on Cognos solutions, staff was able to view parameters for all of its relevant DTCs long before required. Managers will use this same reporting and analysis environment to monitor capacity planning and service quality.

Challenges faced

Dutch hospitals began registering their DTCs in 2002 in order to have a good basis for negotiations with the health insurers by 2003.

"Groene Hart Hospital was one of the 'pioneer' hospitals," says ICT consultant and project manager Rob van der Vijgh. "Supported by a subsidy from the Ministry of Health, we have been entering DTC data into our operational systems since 2001. We immediately began to investigate how we could obtain insights from this data to help us in our negotiations with health insurers."

The hospital also wanted to provide a growing number of users in the organization with a simple way to access the management information important to them. The ultimate goal is to introduce an INK (Dutch Quality Institute) model—a scorecard designed for the healthcare sector—to manage operations based on financial and personnel data and other statistics.

Industry:
• Healthcare

Geography:
• The Netherlands

Information Needs:
• Existing HIS reporting possibilities insufficient
• Management information needed from DTC source data
• Gradual transition to a new financing structure
• Link to scorecard required

Solution:
• Cognos and Oracle solution
• Data warehouse in ten weeks
• Three-tier structure
• Knowledge kept in house

Benefits:
• Structure ready
• Insight into DTCs
• Users are independent
• Ready for scorecard

"We faced quite a long transition phase," says van der Vijgh, "due in part to the previous financing method and in part to the DTC structure, each with its own parameters. It became clear that the management information distilled from our X/Care Hospital Information System—in compliance with the standard Central Data and Analysis guidelines—was not suited to this use. We needed a management information solution that we could continually adapt and expand."

Strategy followed

Groene Hart Hospital opted for a data warehouse, initially to store the relevant DTC data and later to store other data and partially replace the old management information.

"We envisioned a three-tier structure," says van der Vijgh, "including strategic, tactical, and operational information. We wanted this structure to be available to users. What we did not want was a supplier who would install a data warehouse and a reporting environment as a 'black box.' Together with our IT partner Synergetics we selected and implemented solutions that are transparent and that we ourselves are able to work with, which allows us to keep the knowledge in house. This makes us less dependent."

Synergetics advised the hospital to give form to the data warehouse—an Oracle 8i database—using Cognos DecisionStream.

"Their experience with this product combination had been positive," says van der Vijgh. "They were also well acquainted with the DTC material. So after ten weeks we had a data warehouse containing all the DTC data from our Hospital Information System: arranged, dimensioned, and pre-processed for all the desired reports and analyses."

A combination of Cognos Enterprise Server and the Cognos Upfront web portal sends the right reports to each user.

Benefits realized

The management information environment structure is in place, and the hospital is concentrating on operational reports.

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The hospital is working on reports for areas such as the emergency room and intensive care, and are continuing to fill the data warehouse with source data concerning the use of personnel and services provided.

"In addition to financial monitoring," says van der Vijgh, "we will also be able to focus on capacity planning and quality. The same Cognos environment will also allow later implementation of a scorecard. In this, we are considerably ahead of the rest of the hospital world. Whereas others are only now beginning to register DTC data or struggle with a data warehouse, we have been able to capitalize on our 'pioneer' status."

About Cognos

Cognos is the world leader in business intelligence and enterprise planning software. Our solutions for corporate performance management let organisations drive performance with planning, budgeting, and consolidation, monitor it with scorecarding, and understand it with business intelligence reporting and analysis. Cognos is the only vendor to support all of these key management activities in a complete, integrated solution. Founded in 1969, Cognos now serves more than 23,000 customers in over 135 countries.