

Case Study

How CHKS accreditation is helping Centric Health demonstrate commitment to its values and give greater confidence to partners, clients and patients



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Chris Goodyer, *Quality and Risk Manager*,
Centric Health.

Background

Centric Health is a diversified international healthcare services company providing medical recruitment, primary care and diagnostic imaging services in Ireland, the UK and Australia. It aims to provide a range of innovative and accessible healthcare services in local communities and currently employs over 300 staff within Ireland, the largest sector of the organisation now accredited by CHKS.

The management team started looking at accreditation in 2010, primarily to meet the requirements of tenders from the Health Service Executive (HSE) and also contracts for services from health insurance companies.

The challenge

As a diversified business operating across primary care, many day-to-day processes did not have adequate documentation in place. While there were guidelines and instructions for mandatory/legislative requirements (such as health & safety, radiation safety and financial processes), little of this was formally documented or controlled. Chris Goodyer, Quality and Risk Manager, Centric Health says: *"The situation was typical of an entrepreneurial organisation that had grown rapidly and was in need of greater rigour in this area."*

The solution

Centric Health decided to go for accreditation with CHKS and started working with a dedicated client services manager to look at the standards required, using the accompanying guidance documents to establish what was needed.

Chris says: *"Although our first motivation was to ensure our services were accredited, along the way we discovered a great deal more about good governance. Initially we didn't appreciate the importance of continual oversight, along with retaining evidence to prove that we had good processes in place which we were actively monitoring."*

Chris advises other organisations looking to become accredited that it involves a great deal of work involved which requires someone to be assigned to it. *"It is not something you can tackle on a part-time basis and there is a significant resource commitment leading up to the first survey. The larger the organisation, the more important it is to recognise this,"* he says. However, he also says the support from CHKS made a significant difference. *"Having a dedicated and responsive client services manager was really helpful and we found we would get answers to questions quickly whenever we called or emailed."* He also advises committing resources to oversee and maintain the quality

management system. *“You cannot achieve accreditation and then hope that the processes put in place will look after themselves.”*

Chris also notes the challenge of continually promoting employee self-sufficiency. In other words, helping employees find documents themselves, reading relevant ones, and assisting with risk assessments and audits pertinent to where they work. There is also the need to keep tracking databases up-to-date, and recording and reporting on quality initiatives.

The benefits of CHKS accreditation

Chris says that becoming accredited started the company on an improvement journey which has seen it become an expert in standards. The company is now sharing this expertise with its GP practices and business partners. Having a controlled system of policies, procedures, forms and guidelines means that there is no confusion over which is the right way to do things, and referencing appropriate documents when submitting tenders is a powerful marketing tool and makes the tendering process much simpler.

The senior management team has also seen the benefits. The Managing Director of Centric Health counsels new staff at induction that accreditation is not just about risk management and processes, but is also congruent with the company’s five values, both enhancing the service to patients and improving the quality of working life for the staff.

Chris says CHKS accreditation has brought consistency, confidence and credibility. In addition, it means employees throughout the company have taken on greater responsibility for processes in their area of work, which helps to reduce risk. As for governance, the process has heightened awareness of necessary structures, and significantly reduced assumptions.

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