

Hinchingbrooke Healthcare NHS Trust

Turnaround



What our client wanted

Labelled as “bankrupt” by the Guardian, and one of the smallest District General Hospitals in the country, Hinchingbrooke had significant financial problems, yet provided excellent clinical services: a strategic solution was required. Reports of closure were headlined in the local press. Meanwhile, the Trust needed to continue to deliver services, meet national targets and reduce its monthly overspend.

What Frontline did

On behalf of the health economy, Frontline designed and led the process to determine the strategic future of the hospital, the organisation, and its services, up to the stage of public consultation. Four wide-ranging options were assessed on the ground of clinical viability, financial affordability and local access. There was significant public and media interest, so that stakeholder involvement both within and outside the Trust was key. We worked very closely with the local PCT and SHA, both of which were undergoing significant reorganisation. We also initiated a financial review to reduce expenditure over a 2/3-year period, and coupled this with supporting changes in the governance of the Trust, to promote the change and service reengineering required.

What difference we made

The recommended strategic solution is affordable to the health economy and, instead of the anticipated significant closures, almost all services should remain at Hinchingbrooke, albeit managed by another organisation. This is delivered through:

- a 20/25% decrease in acute activity, so that this is affordable to the PCT
- significant reductions in acute capacity
- the merger of the Trust
- innovative working practices
- a subsidy of maternity services
- modest expansion in some areas of clinical expertise

Within the Trust, a series of service re-engineering initiatives resulted in a financial recovery plan to save £14.5M long term. In the short term, a projected £34M loss in year was reduced to £13.5M. Plans to manage the Trusts debt are in a final stage of crafting with the SHA and DH.

What our client said

“Frontline were just what we needed: their consultant helped us to find a strategic future for the hospital, one that could be afforded by the health economy and was acceptable to local people”

Sue Smith Chair Hinchingbrooke Healthcare

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