



CASE STUDY: ACUTE TRUST HOSPITAL PATHOLOGY SERVICES



Microbiology
Biochemistry
Histology / Cytology
Haematology

OUTLINE

All four services were included across the three sites as the Project Objective was to develop consolidation plan to centralise each service onto individual site as the first step towards consolidating all services to a centralised Laboratory Facility, to be built and occupied with three years.

First priority was to produce consolidation plans for Microbiology & Histology / Cytology as the building occupied in site 1 was due for demolition.

STUDY FINDINGS

Following a three week study, working with the local management team Meridian identified a number of areas which if addressed would substantially improve Management Information, Capacity & Resource Requirement Planning & Scheduling and the potential

to develop economy of scale in the Management Structure.

KEY FINDINGS OF STUDY

The study was carried out using a “Rough Cut” Capacity Planning Methodology. Resource Requirements were calculated and Hours were rostered as required by incoming workloads & SLA turnaround targets. Comparison of Hours actually worked and on-call hours were found to be out of balance i.e. full crew in at 9:00 with very little to do till the first specimens arrived at 10:30 and everyone on the way home at 5:00 as the last GP van with 30% of the day’s work leading to overtime and some workload left over ensuring the on-call person was called in much more frequently than required by the out of hours urgent work load. These finding apply to the “Hot” Sciences of Biochemistry & Haematology. In all areas, analysis of the complexity of the

work load demonstrated the skill mix was top heavy with more Biomedical Scientists than required and fewer Medical Lab Assistants. All areas had too many higher grade B.M.S.’s and not sufficient in the lower grades & trainees.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ELEMENTS

1. Develop detailed Capacity & Resource Requirement Plans for the current situation and for the future, consolidated situation.
2. Develop crewing guides & rosters to minimise overtime & on call. This was a very contentious issue which was resisted very forcefully by the staff.
3. Identify the economies of scale in management & equipment which would be realisable as part of the consolidation.

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4. Develop a simple Management Information System based on monitoring Inputs & Outputs & correct rostering of staff & monitoring overtime & on-call costs.

PROJECT RESULTS

1. The Capacity Plans Identified significant savings which could be realised as part of the consolidation of the laboratories in all services except Histology / Cytology.

2. Histology / Cytology required a small increase in staff as two of the three labs were non-compliant with Standards and all Capacity Plans were developed on the basis of fully compliant Operating Procedures.

3. Agenda for Change negotiations were ongoing between Management & Staff. The revised shift patterns required to realise the overtime & on-call savings formed part of these negotiations.

4. The Client accepted that realisation of the identified results would only happen as the consolidation plan & the Agenda for Change negotiations were complete.

5. A nett reduction of 9 WTE's was identified. This includes converting the cash value of overtime & on-call saving to WTE's

6. An outline plan for consolidating the biochemistry & haematology service into a single Blood Sciences Laboratory was developed with the Haematology Manager, to be incorporated into his Business Case for a single Blood Sciences Lab with a fully automated front end. This plan was not costed as the hardware alternatives were several months away.

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the *right* resources, in
the *right* place,
at the *right* time,
providing services at the *right*
quantity, quality and cost.**



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