

CASE STUDY HINCHINGBROOKE NHS

(MEDICAL IMAGING DEPARTMENT)

Summary

Needs

- To ensure the department was working as safely as possible
- To reduce waiting lists
- To comply with the government standards and regulations

Benefits

- Increased safety and welfare of patients
- Reduced insurance premiums
- Quality Management System certification is respected by other agencies dealt with

Background

The Medical Imaging Department of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital offers a wide range of diagnostic facilities. It deals with around 90,000 patients each year and carries out around 120,000 examinations from chest X-rays and ultra sound scanning to MRI scans, CT scans and mammograms.

Hinchingsbrooke Hospital itself was built in 1983 and is the smallest district hospital in the country. It is made up of a variety of different departments and is based in rural Cambridgeshire. However, many patients from outside the area also seek treatment to avoid longer waiting lists at hospitals closer to home. Hinchingsbrooke benefits from its own orthopedic department, specializing in day and short-stay surgery. The hospital is also well known for its ophthalmic work, such as cataract operations.

The hospital employs 1,800 people from doctors to porters, and serves a population of around 170,000.

Customer Needs

Two of the most important issues within the Medical Imaging Department are accuracy and safety. As the department's diagnostic services involve the use of radiation, failure to work to strict safety guidelines at all times could result in a danger to patients – through overdose, for example – though these incidents are extremely rare. Strict guidelines are also in force to ensure the avoidance of error with regard to patient diagnosis. With these issues at stake, the department's working practices are heavily regulated by the government and any breach of the regulations could result in the hospital being fined.

The Medical Imaging Department's registration to the ISO 9001 standard provides the added assurance that the department and its staff are complying with the required safety guidelines.

BSI's Role

The department has been registered to ISO 9001 with BSI since 1994.

The department's Medical Imaging Manager Kevin Powdrill, a qualified radiographer, commented: "We definitely feel that BSI registration to ISO 9001 was the right choice for us. The ongoing assessments keep us on our toes. It is like a partnership. We benefit from their observations but at the same time they often learn from our ways of doing things which can then be passed onto others."



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