



>
accenture

High performance. Delivered.

Accenture's Global Health
Industry Practice

Helping a Health Care-Related Shared Services Organization Position Itself for Short- and Long-term High Performance

Client profile

Eastern Health Shared Services (EHSS) was established in 2000 to provide a wide range of professional and technical support services— including finance, human resources, procurement and information technology—to Ireland's Eastern Regional Health Authority (ERHA) and the three area health boards in the country's eastern region. By tapping into these centralized services, health care providers can concentrate on planning, arranging, overseeing

and coordinating health services for nearly 1.5 million people who live in eastern Ireland, including individuals in the cities of Dublin, Kildare, and Wicklow.

On January 1, 2005, the new Health Service Executive was established, with full operational responsibility for administering health services in Ireland. The former Eastern Regional Health Authority is now part of the Health Service Executive (HSE), and is known as the HSE Shared Services-Eastern Region.

• Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

Business challenge

Accenture's global client experience and ongoing research into the characteristics of high-performance businesses and governments reveal

that leading organizations strive to rationalize, simplify and standardize services whenever possible to manage costs and enhance productivity.

Clearly, with the establishment of the HSE Shared Services, the Irish health care system was on the right track.

By applying a shared services model to the HSE Shared Services, regional health executives believed that health care providers would be able to share expertise and overhead expenses, more readily encourage innovation and development, and focus on their core business of service delivery.

The HSE Shared Services wanted to develop a roadmap that would allow it to improve its operational

efficiencies and level of customer service further. It wanted to learn what it could do to improve its operations in the short-term. It also wanted to develop a clear vision of the role shared services could play in Ireland's health care sector in five years. Specifically, this future vision would help define the scope of services to be provided and the markets served, and provide a blueprint for how the HSE Shared Services should be organized to meet its health care sector's evolving needs.

For help in developing its short- and long-term strategies and understanding how it could continue to add optimal value in its support of health care service delivery, the HSE Shared Services turned to Accenture and Prospectus, a leading consulting organization in the health sector in Ireland. Based on its solid relationships with ERHA and the Area Health Boards, Prospectus brought

a first-hand understanding of the strategic and operational issues facing these organizations. Accenture brought deep skills in the health care industry, as well as proven experience in planning, designing, implementing and managing world-class Shared Services organizations. Accenture also had a head start in understanding the HSE Shared Services' "as-is" processes, thanks to an analysis previously conducted to help the organization develop an e-services strategy. This previous experience not only demonstrated Accenture's commitment to helping the HSE Shared Services become a high-performance business, but would also allow Accenture to manage the project effectively and focus on future opportunities more quickly.

How Accenture helped

Accenture and its partner, Prospectus, quickly assembled a highly qualified project team with appropriate skills in health care management and delivery, shared services operations and strategy development. They also created an advisory group—comprising executives from Accenture’s shared services operations—to provide additional insights and ongoing support for an optimal solution outcome. Together, these resources worked closely with the HSE Shared Services staff to carry out two strands of project work.

In Strand 1, the team conducted a workshop-based operations review that focused on the HSE Shared Services’ existing range and scope of services, markets served, core operating principles and governance practices, as well as its organizational capacity to meet current and emerging business requirements. By drawing on Accenture’s experience in designing and managing other Shared Services models, the team was able to quickly identify areas for improvement. It also was able to develop a future operating blueprint.

In Strand 2, the Accenture/Prospectus team once again used a workshop-based approach to assess the HSE Shared Services’ scope and markets for the next five years. Drawing on recommended practices from Accenture and strategic insights from Prospectus, the team developed a vision for future shared services. This vision provided a basis for discussion, debate and questions with key stakeholders from the HSE Shared Services, ERHA, Area Board management, and representatives from other regional health care providers.

Based on these discussions, the Accenture/Prospectus team was able to refine the future strategy for the HSE Shared Services and provide a set of recommendations that covered service scope, market scope, gap analysis and infrastructure development. The team worked with the client’s Management Board to identify immediate actions so that operational stability in key areas could be provided. It also identified longer term projects as part of an improvement program. Throughout the project, the team used a number of Accenture’s tools and methods to optimize the productivity of all team personnel and maintain the project’s momentum. These Accenture “Project Accelerators” included data collection surveys, benchmarking services, shared services capacity models, shared services organization templates, shared services management process templates and business case templates.

High performance delivered

With Accenture’s help—and in less than four months—the HSE Shared Services had developed a short-term action plan and a longer-term roadmap that allows the organization to improve service quality and cost effectiveness on an ongoing basis. Armed with a long-term strategy and implementation plan, the HSE Shared Services is expected to continue its record of improving and expanding services so that the regional health care organizations can concentrate on their core business of health and social care delivery. In this way, the HSE Shared Services is not only advancing on its own journey to high performance, but also enabling health care providers in eastern Ireland to continually improve their ability to serve the area’s nearly 1.5 million citizens who rely on them to meet their health care needs.

About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With approximately 177,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$21.58 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2009. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

About Accenture's Health Industry Practice

Accenture's health service group provides innovative solutions to both the private and public sectors of the health care industry, including integrated health care providers, health insurers, managed care organizations and public health organizations. The company has thousands of resources dedicated to helping organizations in the health industry achieve and sustain high performance.

Copyright © 2009 Accenture
All rights reserved.

Accenture, its logo, and
High Performance Delivered
are trademarks of Accenture.